# Oct. 10, 2022

**Statement about the planned negotiations and Call for Ethiopian CSOs working on Peace Building in Ethiopia**

# The Alliance of Civil Society Organizations of Tigray commends the positive responses by the Ethiopian Government and Tigray Regional Government to the call for negotiation being facilitated by the African Union. Taking lessons from the devastations caused by the war so far, we call on the parties to the conflict to engage in genuine negotiations to end the deep humanitarian crises and bring about lasting peace. Similarly, we call on the African Union and the mediators to facilitate the mediation process impartially and transparently.

Yet, ACSOT firmly believes that local actors have significant role in stopping the war and bringing about lasting peace.

Our alliance, a consortium of 72 regional and national civil society organizations operating in Tigray, has been witnessing the catastrophic consequences of the ongoing war in Tigray and neighboring regions which was started in November 2020. The following are some of the devastations and damages the war has caused to civilians and civilian interests in Tigray so far:

* More than 2 million citizens are internally displaced from Western Tigray and other areas; some 50,000-70,000 fled to Sudan. Most of the IDPs have not yet returned to their place of origin due to the ongoing war;
* The people of Tigray are denied essential services such as telecom, electricity, bank, transport. As a result of this and other war-related factors, about 6.3 million people now depend on emergency relief;[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Unconfirmed no of several civilians have been mass-murdered or killed separately and many more women and girls were sexually abused or gang raped in different parts of Tigray;
* More than 90% of health facilities in Tigray were either destroyed and/or looted and the remaining few health institutions can’t provide health care services because of lack of medicines, lack of essential medical equipments, shortage of health professionals due to starvation and other war-born challenges. As a result, children, pregnant and lactating women, people with chronic diseases and other vulnerable member of the society have been exposed to death, pain and other health related crises. As an instance, it suffices to mention that the child and maternal mortality rates are increasing 4-5 folds compared to the pre-war era due to lack of health services. In general, reports indicate that the Tigray health system deteriorated to its level it was about 20 years ago.[[2]](#footnote-2)

# The education system of Tigray is severely damaged. About 88.27% of schools are damaged, 575 schools are totally destructed, and several others were looted.[[3]](#footnote-3) Many of the teachers and support staffs are exposed to starvation and other forms of humanitarian crisis. As a result, at least 1.8 million students in Tigray are now obliged to stay out of school for almost two years.[[4]](#footnote-4)

* The shelling by artilleries and arial and drone strikes happened in various towns and villages of Tigray killed several civilians, caused various forms of disabilities and damaged civilian properties and public infrastructures.
* Scores of humanitarian workers were killed or sustained various injuries; working premises and properties of some CSOs and humanitarian organizations have been damaged and/or looted and their humanitarian operations have been disrupted.

# Due to these and other tragic man-made catastrophes, the people of Tigray have been exposed to compounded humanitarian, socio-economic and psychological crises.

# Although we are not be able to know the detailed account of its impact, we also duly note that the war is causing painful damages to all Ethiopians in general and the people of Amhara and Afar regions in particular.

# Cognizant of the catastrophic impact of war, our alliance has been repeatedly calling for peaceful resolution of the conflict. Once again, we call on the conflicting parties to stop the resumed war and resort to peaceful resolution mechanisms as soon as possible.

# In connection with this, we would like to commend the recent echoes for peaceful resolution of the conflict by organized and unorganized groups of Ethiopians in Ethiopia and abroad because we believe that that is the right way out of the ongoing predicament for all Ethiopians including the people of Tigray.

Thus, we call on interested civil society and humanitarian organizations and/or consortiums in Ethiopia in general and similar organizations in Amhara and Afrar in particular to collaboratively work with our consortium to press the conflicting parties to stop the war and engage in genuine negotiations, end the suffering of children, women and the people at large, ensure unfettered humanitarian access to all people in all regions, bringing about sustainable peace, etc.

Alliance of Civil Society Organizations of Tigray

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1. UN OCHA (2022) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Tigray Region Bureau of Health (2022) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Tigray Education Bureau (2022) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. UNICEF (2022) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)