



ALLIANCE OF
CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANIZATIONS OF TIGRAY
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Date: 04/07/2023

A statement of the Alliance of Civil Society Organizations in Tigray (ACSOT) regarding the implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement.

July 4, 2023 Mekelle /Tigray /Ethiopia

ACSOT, a multi-sector consortium of 72 national and regional civil society organization operating in Tigray, has been closely monitoring the Pretoria agreement signed on the 2nd of November 2022 and the Nairobi Declaration of senior commanders on the modalities of implementation of the agreement signed on the 12th of December 2022. Taking the significance of peaceful resolution of the conflict and because it was in line to its advocacy campaigns, ACSOT was among the first organizations that welcomed the agreement and expressed their readiness to support its implementation and consolidation. ACSOT's commitment to embrace the agreement were emanated from the commitments of the parties to end the conflict peacefully in general and the core commitments to address the wide-range of sufferings the people of Tigray have been through in particular.

The commitments to end the conflict, restore constitutional order in the region, implement comprehensive DDR program, protect civilians, allow unfettered humanitarian access, implement dignified and ordered IDP return, resumption of ordered commercial activities, etc have been among the core peace dividends ACSOT has been waiting for to foster peace and stability in the region and beyond. ACSOT believes that the achievements gained so far in terms of silencing the guns, improving the relationship among Tigray administration and the federal government and the regional states, resumption of essential services and ever-increasing trade flow are commendable.

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Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia





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However, it is disheartening to see that the Pretoria agreement has not been compressively implemented and has instead been selectively applied. On May 23, 2023, hundreds of thousands of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) staged massive demonstrations in major cities of Tigray such as Mekelle, Shire, Adigrat, Maichew, Axum, Adwa and Abi.Adi.

In these series of demonstrations, the demonstrators demanded for comprehensive and effective implementation of the peace agreement. Specifically, the IDPs called for, among other things, addressing their critically needed humanitarian needs, immediate and effective withdrawal of foreign and non-ENDF forces from occupied areas of Tigray, return of IDPs to their places of origin, etc. To that end, they called up on the parties to the agreement in general and the Federal Government of Ethiopia in particular to ensure the withdrawal of the foreign and non-ENDF forces, implement immediate, organized and dignified return program and address the dire humanitarian conditions where they are in. Against the backdrop of the terms of the Pretoria agreement, ACSOT believes that the demands of the demonstrators are lawful and just. However, the response of the Tigray Interim Regional Administration, the FDRE government and the international community have so far been largely insignificant and/or inconsequential.

Instead, ACSOT has recently been witnessing some unwelcoming developments that may undermine the implementation of the peace agreement. The recent report from the federal Ministry of Education implying recognition to incorporate schools in the southern and western Tigray into the Amhara regional state is one among many other indicators that can saw potential instability in the region and beyond. In addition to its implication to undermine the restoration of the constitutional order and its practical obstacle to realize return of the IDPs to their places of origin, ACSOT believes that such irresponsible and needless measures can gravely threaten the fragile peace process. Aligned to this is the recent unexpected official visit of the US embassy's staff to

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