

ALERT



ETHIOPIA

THE CIVIL WAR IN ETHIOPIA BEGAN IN 2020 AFTER MONTHS OF TENSION

between Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government and the ethnic Tigrayan political party, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). The conflict turned violent in November 2020 when the TPLF attacked a government military base. In response, the government ordered a military operation into Tigray to allegedly prevent further instability in the region. To help fight the TPLF, Ahmed secretly invited Eritrean national forces into Ethiopia.

Up to 600,000 people are estimated to have been killed in the conflict or died as a result of the man-made famine in Tigray, and more than two million have been displaced. According to the United Nations, all parties to the conflict have committed "serious abuses and violations of human rights, humanitarian, and refugee law," many of which "may amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes." Ethiopian and Eritrean federal forces have reportedly killed the largest numbers of civilians in Tigray. These forces have committed massacres, sexual and gender-based violence, extrajudicial killings, indiscriminate shelling, and large-scale forced displacement. The Ethiopian government blocked access to food, basic supplies, and healthcare in the Tigray region, causing thousands of deaths. Tigrayan forces and other armed groups also have committed mass atrocities during the conflict.

A Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, mediated by the African Union, was signed on November 2, 2022, between the Government of Ethiopia and Tigray People's Liberation Front. The peace agreement delivers a roadmap to end the civil war and has led to a significant decrease in violence by the Ethiopian National Defense Forces and Tigrayan Defense Forces. However, civilians continue to suffer egregious human rights violations perpetrated by Eritrean and regional militia forces. The unraveling of past agreements and the worsening situation in Ethiopia's Oromia region mean civilians may still face a serious risk of mass atrocities.

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The Museum's Simon-Skjodt Center is deeply concerned about the risk of future mass atrocities, the continued targeting of minority ethnic groups, and the lack of accountability for past crimes.

Governments around the world should:

- Press parties to the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement to implement all provisions of the peace deal, including advancing accountability efforts for mass atrocities. They should remain vigilant to mass atrocity risks facing civilians despite the peace agreement.
- Ensure all armed groups, including Eritrean forces and regional militias, stop committing mass atrocities and bring to justice members of their forces who have committed violations.
- Publicize determinations as to whether war crimes, crimes against humanity, and/or genocide have been committed in Ethiopia.
- Maintain arms embargoes to prevent weapons from flowing to all sides in the conflict.
- Continue pressing for greater humanitarian access and aid to populations in need of assistance.

LEARN MORE AT ushmm.org/ethiopia

Signature image: A woman stands in line to receive food donations at a school turned into a temporary shelter for people displaced by conflict in the Tigray region, Ethiopia, March 15, 2021. *Baz Ratner/Reuters*



WHAT YOU DO MATTERS. We can all play a role in helping prevent genocide. Action takes many forms, and every action counts. You can:

Stay informed. Follow the news; visit our website to learn more about places at risk of genocide and other violence, ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries

Join the Museum community. Sign up to receive email updates and follow us on Twitter @CPG_USHMM and Facebook @CenterForThePreventionOfGenocide

Engage with your community. Spread the word about what you've learned with friends, family, and colleagues

Support education and relief efforts. Find out more about humanitarian organizations, what they are doing in response to mass atrocities, and how you can help

Contact the media. Tell television, radio, newspaper, and online journalists that you want better coverage of places at risk of genocide and other violence; visit their websites, tag them on social media, call them, and send emails that provide feedback on their coverage

Contact your elected representatives. Alert them to the need to provide humanitarian assistance, protect civilians, stop the violence, and promote solutions to crises

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