



PROGRESSIVE TIGRIAN SOLIDARITY

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Open Letter to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of State

January 24, 2025

HE Mr. Marco Rubio, Secretary of State
United States Department of State

RE: Immediate Intervention is Required to Prevent the Coup Against the Tigray Interim Regional Administration (TIRA).

Your Excellencies,

We, the Progressive Tigrayan Solidarity (PTS), are writing this to appeal, with a heightened sense of urgency, for your decisive intervention to stop the threat of a new war in Ethiopia's Tigray region that has the potential to engulf the entire Horn of Africa in deadly conflicts with serious implications to peace and security in the region and beyond. Just two years into the Pretoria Peace Agreement, which ended one of the deadliest wars in modern history—claiming about a million lives and displacing millions in Tigray—we now face the prospect of another devastating and senseless war. This impending conflict is being orchestrated by the authoritarian regime in Eritrea, in collaboration with certain Tigrayan generals, notably Lt. General Tadesse Werede, and a small faction of communist apparatchiks within the illegal TPLF.

The people of Tigray have endured unimaginable humanitarian catastrophes including mass executions, forced displacement, sexual violence, and forced starvation perpetrated on them by the Ethiopian government in concert with Eritrean and Amhara forces. Although the international community supports implementing the Pretoria agreement, progress has been woefully inadequate in ending the suffering in Tigray and the region at large. The people of Tigray are yet to see justice. The Ethiopian government is reneging on its promises of returning IDPs to their homes and restoring Tigray's pre-war borders. Tigrayan youth are fleeing their homes in masse trying to reach Europe, risking torture, extortion, or even death at the hands of human traffickers in the Libyan desert. But most importantly, the Eritrean government continues to occupy large parts of Tigray, undermining the peace agreement and provoking a wider war directly or indirectly through its allies and/or agents within the TPLF. Its actions have not only exacerbated regional turmoil but also placed the peace and security of millions of innocent civilians in grave danger.

Earlier yesterday, January 24, 2025, a group of renegade generals within the Tigray Security Forces, led by Lt. General Tadesse Werede, alongside a faction of the TPLF headed by Dr. Debretsion Gebremichael, declared war on the Tigray Interim Regional Administration (TIRA) and the Pretoria Peace Agreement that established it. In a move that defies universally accepted





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military traditions, Lt. General Tadesse Werede convened low-ranking military commanders and incited them to revolt against more than 12 senior generals—many of whom command the very units led by these junior officers. This unlawful action has not only undermined TIRA but also disrupted the chain of command and jeopardized the integrity of the Tigray Security Forces, posing a grave risk of inciting civil war within Tigray. What has climaxed yesterday is a two-year-old campaign by TPLF oligarchs and their allies within the Tigray Security Forces to defame, obstruct and depose the interim administration in hopes of reclaiming power and evading accountability for all their crimes including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests & detentions, grand theft and the illegal and genocidal extraction of Tigray's mineral riches using harmful chemicals. Desperate for violence as their only ticket to power, the oligarchs are vowing to crush anyone seeking democratic reform and full implementation of the peace deal.

Excellencies:

The illegal TPLF faction & renegade military Generals blatant hostility to peace and full implementation of the cessation of hostilities agreement is a direct consequence of its alliance with Eritrea's dictatorial regime. Under the 30-year authoritarian rule of Isaias Afwerki, Eritrea has emerged as the main source of destabilization, financing, and intensifying conflicts in the Horn of Africa. The continued presence of Eritrean troops in Northern, Northwestern, and Eastern Tigray is a testament to Eritrea's plan to subvert the fragile peace in the region by sabotaging the implementation of the Pretoria peace agreement.

Internally, Eritrea remains one of the most brutal and repressive regimes in the world. The total absence of independent media and the systematic imprisonment and torture of dissenting voices underscore its status as one of the most oppressive states on the planet. Eritrean religious minorities, particularly evangelical Christians, endure relentless persecution, often subjected to inhumane imprisonment in shipping containers and other degrading conditions.

The unholy alliance between TPLF oligarchs led by Dr. Debretsion and the Eritrean government has grown stronger due to involvement both in the illegal mining and smuggling of minerals from Tigray. Left unaddressed, their ability to wreak havoc in this region of critical importance is a certainty. And, the TPLF oligarchy's recent military posturing with backing from Eritrea underscores one critical truth - lasting peace cannot be achieved without directly addressing Eritrea's central role in manufacturing and fueling conflicts in the Horn of Africa.

This alarming development highlights the urgent need for a more comprehensive and forceful international response to address the deeper systemic issues fueling the conflict. The international community must urgently reassess its approach to the crisis in this region. While Western powers,





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especially the United States, champion democracy and human rights, some regional powers in the Middle East, Russia & China have become increasingly more blatant in bolstering autocratic regimes, including that in Eritrea, with critical military, intelligence, and financial assistance. This destabilizing alliance has transformed Eritrea into a brutal dictatorship to its citizens and a menace to regional stability in the Horn of Africa. If the Eritrean dictator and his proxies as well as the regional powers that support it are not countered, the region could spiral out of control and become the breeding ground for next-generation terrorists. The time for decisive action is now. Isaias Afwerki and his foot soldiers in Tigray must be held fully accountable for their role in perpetrating violence and instability in the region.

Without addressing Eritrea's destabilizing actions, the cycle of violence, suffering, and displacement will persist, undermining any hope for lasting peace in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region. We urge the international community to act against the evil alliance between warlords in Tigray and the Eritrean Dictator. We call upon the international community to stand in solidarity with the people of Tigray and of the region who are facing a renewed risk of yet another devastating war. We urge strong action in support of the protection of human rights and the full implementation of the Pretoria peace agreement. We implore your Excellencies, to rise to the occasion by helping extinguish the fire at its source. The future of the Horn of Africa and the lives of millions of innocent civilians depend on it.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this urgent matter.

Respectfully,

Progressive Tigrayan Solidarity (PTS)



CC:

HE Dr. Abiy Ahmed Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia

HE Getachew Reda, President of the Tigray Interim Regional Administration

HE Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria, AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa

HE Uhuru Kenyatta, Former President of Kenya, Kenyan Envoy for the Horn of Africa & the Great Lakes Region

HE Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka Former Deputy President of South Africa



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HE Dr. Annette Weber, EU Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa

HE Hanna Serwaa Tetteh, UN Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa

HE Joseph Borrel, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice President of the European Commission

