SECURITY AND JUSTICE FOR TIGRAYANS (SJT)
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SJT Press Release:
SJT condemns any deliberate attacks of civilians or civilian infrastructure

August 27, 2021

The Security and Justice for Tigrayans (SJT) is a 501(c(3)) non-profit organization that advocates for the security and justice of Tigrayans wherever they live around the world. This press release is in response to the recent Telegraph investigative report titled "They are out for revenge': Evidence of war crimes as rebels roar out of Ethiopia's Tigray region" by Zacharias Zelalem (Aug 17, 2021).

The Telegraph has made very serious allegations against the Tigray Defense Forces (TDF) accusing them of committing war crimes. The title of the report even goes beyond the evidence and alleges intent of revenge which can't be corroborated with the type of data presented in the report. While we unequivocally condemn any attacks of civilians or civilian infrastructure under any circumstances, it is not clear that the weight of the evidence presented in the article sufficiently establishes the questions of who committed the crime and whether it was a deliberate attack or not. We are aware that the journalist, in his previous reports, has used similar methods of satellite image and witness data to corroborate allegations of war crime in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, thus we would like to give his report the benefit of the doubt. We don't want to prejudge the Telegraph's report and hence we demand an independent investigation of the alleged incidents.

The war on Tigray has been going on since Nov 4, 2020 despite the official declaration of 'the war is over' by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali of Ethiopia, in late November 2020. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has been misleading the world about the nature and undertakings of the war on Tigray. For example, in a widely televised speech, he informed the Parliament of Ethiopia that 'no civilians were killed' in the war. Today, the world is talking about Tigray genocide and mass atrocities that occurred during the war with undisputable evidence. He also informed the UN Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Gutierrez, that there were no Eritrean troops inside Tigray fighting along the Ethiopian Defense Force in the war. Today, he officially admitted to Ethiopian Parliament that the Eritrean army is involved in the war and that they won't be removed from Tigray despite the international call for the immediate withdrawal of Eritrea. In fact, the US, European Union and several UN agencies did confirm the Eritrean Government involvement as well as the massacres, pillaging and rapes they are committing on a day-to-day basis. As we write this letter, the war is ongoing despite the repetitive calls by the US, UN and EU for immediate cessation of hostilities. As reported by Joseph Borrell and Antonio Guterres, PM Abiy Ahmed is still defying international calls to allow international agencies to provide humanitarian support to civilians. Thus, anything that Mr. Abiy and his diplomats say cannot be trusted.

We call upon the international community to independently investigate any allegations of human rights abuse and ethnic based attacks anywhere in Ethiopia. We stand ready to be of assistance to such an effort, if needed, with additional information, explanations, or clarifications.

As Martin Luther King said, '**Injustice anywhere is Injustice Everywhere**.'

Respectfully,

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