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The Government of the National Regional State of Tigray

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Office of External Affairs

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### **Press statement on Humanitarian aid trucks to Tigray**

On September 16, 2021, *UN Ethiopia*, on its official twitter account, expressed concern that aid trucks that had come to Tigray have not returned yet. This statement was issued on the heels of an official statement from, among others, the Ministry of Peace with an identical message, hinting at an apparent coordination. Predictably, various media outlets affiliated with the Abiy Ahmed regime were busy amplifying *UN Ethiopia's* statement with the dangerous insinuation that either the trucks were being commandeered for a different purpose or that the trucks were prevented from departing for some other nefarious political purpose. The brevity and ambiguity of the statement left considerable room for interpretation.

Before presenting the facts of the case, it is vital that *UN Ethiopia's* brief, but loaded statement be unpacked for it fits perfectly with a pattern of irresponsible statements on the part of various UN agencies based in Addis Ababa with regards to developments in the course of the genocidal war on Tigray. While *UN Ethiopia* finds the failure of aid trucks to return

“concerning”, there is absolutely zero evidence that it had made any attempts at finding out why the trucks actually failed to return.

*UN Ethiopia* does have local representatives here in Tigray and it seems only logical that those representatives on the ground could and should have been the first line of contact so as to find out the facts surrounding the trucks. Furthermore, a more direct route would have been to contact the drivers themselves. Of course, that would have been a tall feat, given the total communications blackout imposed on the entire Tigray region by the Abiy Ahmed government. In short, before making a loaded statement on twitter, *UN Ethiopia* could and should have made attempts at discovering the facts of the case. Sadly. *UN Ethiopia's* statement is indicative of a reflexive propensity to downplay the humanitarian tragedy unfolding here in Tigray by focusing on marginal issues. It has become apparent that placating the Abiy government at the expense of the people of Tigray is the preferred *modus operandi* of UN officials in Addis Ababa. It is to be recalled that a high-level UN representative in Addis was recorded back in March downplaying the prevalence of sexual violence and the weaponization of rape in Tigray, thereby wittingly or unwittingly amplifying the Abiy government's propaganda as it sought to whitewash its criminal acts.

A careful examination of the issue surrounding the trucks would have forced UN officials in Addis to focus single-mindedly on the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in Tigray. The complete blockade of Tigray effected by the Abiy Ahmed government continues to choke the people of Tigray. Aside from the normal movement of goods and services, including fuel, the blockade has prevented much-needed humanitarian aid from reaching people so desperate for aid that many have begun to perish due to hunger. It, therefore, defies logic and commonsense that there would be intentional attempts on the part of the Government of Tigray at preventing trucks that actually