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Tigray External Affairs Office

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For immediate Release

Press Statement on the latest atrocities against Tigrayans at Abala, Afar

Recently more than 250 have been brutally murdered in Abala town of the Afar, Ethiopia. The victims were selected solely on account of their Tigrayan identity. Over 900 families were also forcibly evicted from their homes and sent to Enderta District, Tigray. These demobilized ones, mainly elderly, women and children, are now without food, shelter, clothing and medicine. In addition, an unknown number of people of Tigrayan identity were arrested and sent to Semera, where they are most likely being kept under cruel, inhumane and degrading conditions.

These killings, evictions and illegal detention are not random occurrences. Rather, they came about at the behest of officials within the Afar Regional Government, who, in turn, operate strictly as an appendage of the genocidal Abiy regime. As such, the latest atrocities against people of Tigrayan identity are intelligible in the context of the Abiy regime's ongoing genocidal campaign against the people of Tigray since November 2020. We are also informed that there were Eritrean forces in this recent brutal act.

The people of Afar and Tigray have long-standing ties, with thriving intercommunal relationships, reflected in extensive cross-border commerce and intermarriage. At present, reactionary elements within the upper echelons of the Afar Regional Government are doing their best to erode this longstanding relationship and undermine the harmonious coexistence between our two brotherly peoples.

By deliberately targeting Tigrayans solely on account of their identity, the principal aim of these dastardly attacks appears to be the incitement of a never-ending cycle of violence between members of our two communities. By inciting unprovoked and reprehensible attacks on innocent Tigrayans across the border, the aim is to engineer reciprocal violence in retribution for such attacks. The resulting spiral of attacks and counterattacks would then lead to the unraveling of the strong bond that exists between the people of Afar and Tigray.

Since we do not believe that these morally repugnant acts of identity-based violence against Tigrayans are committed by ordinary Afars but by elements within the Afar Regional Government, the people and Government of Tigray will not engage in a vengeful campaign targeting Afars. Responsibility for this vicious mass murder must be laid at the feet of the Awol Arba administration and affiliates.

The Government of Tigray demands in the strongest terms possible that the Afar Regional Government desist from mass murder, release those that have been illegally detained and bring the perpetrators of this mass murder to justice. The Afar regional government will bear sole responsibility for the consequences of the legitimate defensive actions that we may be forced to undertake in response to its failure to, at a minimum, meet these conditions.

