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Tigray External Affairs Office

Ref: TEAO- 060/2021

Date: 25 January 2022

Press Statement on Current Developments

It is a matter of public record that, over the past few weeks, we had withdrawn our forces from Amhara and Afar regions so as to give peace a chance. Be that as it may, despite repeated claims by the federal government that the Ethiopian military has been ordered to halt its advances into Tigray, our forces have been on the receiving end of numerous provocative acts.

While countering various provocative acts on our various positions and, when necessary, taking corrective actions, we have shown great forbearance under provocation as we sought to address the all-encompassing siege imposed on the people of Tigray as well as facilitate the international community's operations to resolve our people's acute lack of humanitarian aid. Related to these developments, we have been fending off repeated provocative acts instigated, under the tutelage of the Eritrean government, by the leadership of the Afar region as well as Amhara expansionists. Aside from our commitment to peace, we have taken various measures that we thought would ease the impact of the man-made famine imposed on our people.

In this regard, we have made repeated attempts to prevail upon the likes of Awol Arba (leader of the Afar Region), who are committed to the project of unraveling the historical ties between the peoples of Afar and Tigray, to stop their repeated incursions into Tigrayan territories and put an end to the systematic obstruction of humanitarian aid delivery to the people of Tigray, including by sending eminent elders from the region. Nevertheless, having somehow believed the repeated lies incessantly broadcast on their own media outlets regarding the weakening of Tigray's Army, and capitalizing on the direct support provided the Eritrean government, these forces have been crossing over into Tigrayan territories and launching repeated attacks inside Tigray. Especially since last week, in order to obstruct humanitarian operations and plunge Tigray's capital, Mekelle, into a severe security crisis, the attacks started by Awol Arba's special forces have intensified with the participation of a heavily armed entity organized under the guise of the Red Sea Afar Force with the direct leadership of the Eritrean government.

Intensifying their attacks, especially since the morning of January 23, 2022, these forces have launched attacks on our positions to the east of Mekelle through Raya principally in order to undermine humanitarian operations that the authorities in Arat Killo claim to have agreed with the United Nations as well as create a nightmarish security situation in Mekelle.

