



Joint Statement: Urgent Appeal to Stop Ethiopia's Renewed Drone Attacks on Civilians in Tigray

On August 20, 2026, drones operated by the Ethiopian federal government [struck two locations](#) inside Mekelle, the capital of Tigray. The first hit a residential area near St. Mary Church, from which Ayder Comprehensive Specialized Hospital received at least thirteen casualties, women and children among them; a second struck the Quiha area of the city. We, the undersigned Tigrayan civil society organizations, strongly condemn these attacks and the wider campaign of drone strikes of which they are a part, and we call on the international community, including the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, and all concerned governments, to act without further delay to bring that campaign to an immediate end.

The wounded were taken to a hospital that years of siege have left without the most basic surgical and medical supplies. That Tigray's principal referral hospital cannot adequately treat the victims of an aerial attack is itself a measure of the conditions to which the Ethiopian federal government continues to subject the region.

Yesterday's strikes are the gravest point in a three-week escalation. On August 1, federal forces attacked in Western Tigray near the Sudanese border, [driving](#) hundreds of civilians into Sudan; drones then struck [Merewa](#) in the south, hitting a secondary school, and on August 18 struck [near Mekelle](#), killing one person. Earlier strikes in [January 2026](#) killed a civilian in central Tigray. In each case, the federal government has neither acknowledged the attacks nor accounted for the civilians it has harmed. These are not isolated incidents, but a pattern of escalating military aggression against a civilian population.

The Ethiopian federal government is bombing Tigray from the air, and it continues to permit the occupation of Western Tigray while blocking the return of the hundreds of thousands of Tigrayans driven from their homes there. The renewed use of armed drones against a civilian population is a grave breach of international humanitarian law, and the deliberate or reckless targeting of civilians and civilian objects amounts to a war crime. The failure to hold anyone accountable for the atrocities of the 2020 to 2022 genocidal war has left the people of Tigray exposed to this renewed violence, and signaled that the federal government can act with impunity.

In light of the foregoing, we are calling for:

- **the Ethiopian federal government** to immediately and permanently cease all drone strikes and military operations in and around Tigray and all attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, to lift all restrictions on humanitarian and medical access, and to withdraw the forces occupying Western Tigray so that the displaced may return home;



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- **the African Union, the United Nations, the European Union, and IGAD** to move beyond expressions of concern to concrete measures that compel an immediate de-escalation, protect Tigrayan civilians from aerial attack, and restore the humanitarian and medical funding on which the region depends;
- **the leadership of the Tigray People's Liberation Front and the National Regional Government of Tigray** to place the safety and interests of the Tigrayan people above all other considerations, and to advance Tigray's legitimate demands through peaceful and political means wherever a credible path to do so exists;
- **a comprehensive and lasting political settlement**, backed by international guarantees, that ends the conflict, secures the withdrawal of all forces occupying Western Tigray, guarantees the safe return of the displaced, and delivers credible, independent accountability for the crimes committed against the people of Tigray, so that no further conflict occurs.

The international community must act with a sense of urgency to prevent further massacre of civilians in Tigray.

Signed,

Omna Tigray

Harambee Collective

Ethiopian Canadians for Peace

Security and Justice for Tigrayans (SJT)

Tigrayan Advocacy & Development Association (TADA)

Tegaru Professionals Network

Union of Tigrayans in North America (UTNA)

Tigray Academic Diaspora in Europe

Mekete Tigray UK

Irob Anina Civil Society

Maeger Tigray Women's Association in North America

DMV Tigray Taskforce

Natna Children's Foundation

Tigray Canadian Immigration Association

Alganesh International Veteran Tegaru Women Association

Tigray Global Council (TGC)

Tigray Women's Association in London

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