

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons and the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

Ref.: AL ETH 3/2021
(Please use this reference in your reply)

14 February 2022

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons and Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 43/36, 45/3, 41/15 and 43/20.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning **allegations of racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance against members of the Tigrayan ethnic group, as well as other serious human rights violations committed against them, since the outbreak of the conflict between the Ethiopian federal Government and its armed forces and the Tigray People's Liberation Front in November 2020.**

On 3 November 2020, the Tigray Special Forces (TSF) and allied militia attacked the Northern Command of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) and took control of the bases and the weaponry. On 4 November 2020, the federal Government announced a military operation against the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and its forces. The ENDF, the Amhara Special Forces (ASF) and allied militia, and the Eritrean Defence Forces (EDF) accordingly started a military offensive against the TSF and allied militia in Tigray. The violent conflict has resulted in serious violations of international human rights law, humanitarian law, and refugee law, committed by the ENDF, EDF, TSF and allied militia, ASF and allied militia, as well as others affiliated with various parties to the conflict.¹

A Joint Investigation Team (JIT) of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, has investigated incidents of arbitrary detentions, abductions and enforced disappearances allegedly committed by all parties to the conflict. It received reports that parties were detaining individuals on the basis of their perceived support for and affiliation with the opposing forces, which was often based on the ethnicity of the individual.

While recognizing that the conflict has resulted in serious violations of international human rights law, humanitarian law, and refugee law, committed by all parties to the conflict, the present communication focuses on the alleged racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance that the conflict has perpetuated

¹ Report of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC)/Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Joint Investigation into Alleged Violations of International Human Rights, Humanitarian and Refugee Law Committed by all Parties to the Conflict in the Tigray Region of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

against the members of the Tigrayan ethnic group. They have been reportedly subjected to racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as well as other human rights violations, including targeted violence, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, seizure of property, and ethnicity-based restrictions on the right to work and freedom of movement of members of the Tigrayan ethnic group in Ethiopia. We would like to remind your Excellency's Government that Special Procedures mandate holders have raised similar concerns several times in the recent past. In April 2021, we expressed our alarm about the allegations of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed in the context of the conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, including deliberate attacks against civilians and summary executions, indiscriminate attacks, sexual violence, arbitrary detention, destruction and looting of civilian property, and arbitrary displacement of ethnic Tigrayans ([ETH 1/2021](#)). Likewise, in November 2021 we expressed our concerns regarding allegations of widespread rape and other forms of gender based violence against women and girls by members of the Ethiopian National Defense Force, the Eritrean Defense Force, Tigrayan Forces, Tigrayan militias, the Amhara Regional/Special Force, and Fano militia an informal Amhara militia group in the context of the armed conflict in the Tigray region since November 2020, and later in neighboring Ahmara and Afar regions ([ETH 2/2021](#)).

According to the information received:

In particular, since the outbreak of the conflict in early November 2020, members of the Tigrayan ethnic group have allegedly been subjected to arrests, by the federal authorities, under suspicion of involvement with the TPLF. They have reportedly suffered from harassment, arbitrary arrests; house searches without warrants; suspensions from their jobs; and discriminatory destruction and seizure of property. These violations have seemingly been compounded by alarming rhetoric demonizing the Tigrayan ethnic group, common among senior government officials, prominent personalities in Ethiopia and various State-run media outlets and other political actors.

Since November 2020, a rise in ethnic profiling of Tigrayans has allegedly taken place throughout Ethiopia. It has been reported that civil servants and public service employees of Tigrayan origin have been dismissed from their positions due to their ethnicity. In addition, according to the reports received, Tigrayan business owners have had their properties unlawfully seized. Members of the Tigrayan ethnic group have been routinely profiled during systematic identity checks. They have been barred from international travel and their homes are routinely searched without warrants.

Moreover, public authorities have allegedly incited hatred against the Tigrayan ethnic group. It is reported that the Prime Minister has used language like "daytime hyenas" to describe his opponents, a phrase which is widely interpreted as an ethnic "dog whistle". In July 2021, the President of the Amhara regional state proclaimed that Tigrayans "are an enemy to all Ethiopians". These comments have allegedly incited violence and discrimination against persons belonging to the Tigrayan ethnic group. According to some reports, some Tigrayan peacekeepers in United Nations and African Union missions, as well as members of the ENDF, have been detained in internment camps and have been prevented from contacting their families and lawyers. According to one report, a detainee recounted how

overseers at the camp “call[ed] us cancers and [told] us they will destroy us”. This detainee also alleged that among those detained are children under 3 years of age.

In October 2021, it was reported that thousands of Tigrayans were detained in detention facilities monitored and controlled by Ethiopian soldiers who were guarding, torturing and executing imprisoned Tigrayan civilians. These mass detention centres are allegedly spread throughout Western Tigray, Addis Ababa and the Afar region. Based on the reports received, in Humera, Amhara soldiers went door to door checking identity cards and bringing Tigrayans to detention centres in the city.

There are allegations that armed guards at these detention centres do not provide detainees with food, water or access to bathroom facilities. Detainees who escaped from these detention centres reported that they lived in constant fear for their future. They recall watching other detainees being taken away by soldiers without ever returning, constantly wondering if they would be next. Many remain in the detention facilities under this threat. Furthermore, the fate and whereabouts of some of those reportedly last seen in life-threatening circumstances remain unknown.

In Addis Ababa, there are reports that members of the Tigrayan ethnic group have been forcibly disappeared. Allegedly, the Addis Ababa police are arresting Tigrayans on the streets and in cafes, workplaces and other public spaces, claiming that those arrested are connected to the TPLF. On 17 July 2021, Addis Ababa’s police commissioner confirmed the mass arrest of 300 Tigrayans. These arrests are often conducted without warrants, with police searching public places popular among members of the Tigrayan ethnic group. After their ethnic identity is confirmed through identity documents, Tigrayans are then taken to detention centres. Tigrayan journalists, activists and translators have reportedly endured various attacks, abuses, abductions and killings, with no updates provided to their families and loved ones on their well-being or whereabouts. In particular, several journalists have been detained without charges. Detainees are often denied access to lawyers and must rely on their family members to access food and clothes. The continuous moving and relocating of detainees between detention facilities throughout the country has also been reported.

In addition to mass arrests of individuals, Tigrayan businesses are allegedly facing mass closures. Several Tigrayan-owned businesses have been shut down for arbitrary reasons, like playing “inciting music”. There have also been reports that Tigrayan business owners are being coerced to sell their businesses below the market price. Bank accounts opened in Tigray have been blocked by the government, and members of the Tigrayan ethnic group in Addis Ababa and elsewhere are unable to access or withdraw their funds. According to the information received, the targeting of Tigrayan civilians is part of a campaign of ethnically motivated attacks against Tigrayans living across Ethiopia.

The Amhara regional forces, allies of the ENDF, have also been involved in active discrimination against Tigrayans. Using the cover of war, Amhara forces have reportedly killed and imprisoned thousands of Tigrayans, looted

and destroyed the homes and farms of Tigrayans, and forcefully displaced tens of thousands of Tigrayans who are now internally displaced persons (IDPs). Tigrayans have had their identification cards destroyed and have been issued Amhara ID cards, have been barred from speaking Tigrinya, and women have faced sexual and gender-based violence with the explicit intent of “Amharanizing” them. There are also reports that Tigrayans were restricted from travelling abroad by security personnel at Bole Addis Ababa International Airport and had their travel documents confiscated. In addition, Tigrayans who have been internally displaced do not have personal identification documents, preventing them from moving freely and gaining access to work.

Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF) have also been involved in the conflict, launching an offensive against Tigray forces. According to a Tigrayan survivor who recounted her experience to the Joint Investigation Team of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, EDF soldiers said that “you [Tigrayans] ill-treated the Eritreans for 20 years, now for 50 years you will starve, then we will kill your men and rape your women. We were sent to clean out Tigrayans, they will be replaced by real Ethiopians; we are cleansing this country of people like you”.²

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of these allegations, we express our serious concerns over the allegations of serious human rights violations against Tigrayans that have taken place since the outbreak of the armed conflict in November 2020.

In particular, we are concerned at the reports of arbitrary arrests and detention of the members of Tigrayan ethnic group, as well as restrictions on movement and travel. We note with concern that ethnic Tigrayans, including Tigrayan children, have reportedly been deprived of their liberty and detained in military camps, without having access to food, water and other essential goods. In some cases, detainees have not had access to a lawyer or contact with their families. We are deeply concerned that some Tigrayans, particularly journalists, might have been subject to arbitrary detention, torture and enforced disappearance.

We are also concerned at the differentiated treatment of ethnic Tigrayans in the respect and protection of human rights. According to the reports received, many Tigrayans have been victims of ethnic profiling. We note with concern the allegations regarding the seizure and destruction of civilian property, including identity and travel documents. In addition, we are alarmed by the allegations of incitement to hatred, violence, and discrimination, including by public authorities, which might have contributed to heightened ethnic tensions. We note that Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) prohibits the promotion or incitement of racial discrimination, and Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) contains similar prohibitions on propaganda for war and the advocacy of national, racial and religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence.

² Report of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the United Nations Human Rights Commission for Human Rights, page 43, page 43, paragraph 162.

We remind your Excellency's Government that international human rights law binds States at all times, during peace and conflict, including both international and non-international armed conflicts.³ In any event, we recall that international humanitarian law also prohibits racial or ethnic discrimination and requires humane treatment of all persons taking no active part in the hostilities. Likewise, customary international human rights law prohibits torture, arbitrary deprivation of liberty and enforced disappearance. We observe that several of the rights allegedly violated are non-derogable rights under Article 4 of the ICCPR, and even otherwise-lawful derogations or limitations of human rights may not involve discrimination solely on the ground of ethnic or racial origin, as the policies and practices alleged above do.

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, please refer to the **Annex on Reference to international human rights law and customary humanitarian law** attached to this letter which cites international human rights instruments and standards relevant to these allegations.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please list the concrete steps taken to prevent human rights violations and ensure full respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law and put an end to ethnically motivated violence against the Tigrayans.
3. Please provide information on the legal grounds for the arrests of ethnic Tigrayans and the legal proceedings that have been carried out following such arrests, and explain how fundamental legal safeguards have been respected in line with international norms and standards.
4. Please provide information on the measures adopted to search for disappeared persons and to effectively investigate reports of enforced disappearance and inform their relatives or their representatives of their fate and whereabouts.
5. Please explain the legal justification for imposing restrictions on the movement and travel of Tigrayans, and explain how such restrictions conform with the international human rights standards which protect the rights to freedom of religion or belief, freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.
6. Please provide information on investigations that have been carried out on allegations related to the human rights violations mentioned above and the steps taken to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice and that victims have access to legal remedies, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition.

³ ICJ, *Nuclear Weapons* case, Advisory Opinion, § 25.

7. Please indicate the measures that the Ethiopian authorities have taken to stop and prohibit the incitement of hatred and violence against the members of Tigrayan ethnic group.
8. Please provide information on the measures taken to ensure non-discriminatory treatment of all ethnic groups and to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and tolerance.

This communication and any response received from your Excellency's Government will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) within 60 days. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary measures be taken to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and in the event that the investigations support or suggest the allegations to be correct, to ensure the accountability of any person(s) responsible for the alleged violations.

We may publicly express our concerns in the near future as, in our view, the information upon which the press release will be based is sufficiently reliable to indicate a matter warranting immediate attention. We also believe that the wider public should be alerted to the potential implications of the above-mentioned allegations. The press release will indicate that we have been in contact with your Excellency's Government to clarify the issues in question.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

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Annex

Reference to international human rights law and customary humanitarian law

In connection with above alleged facts and concerns, we would like to refer your Excellency's Government to articles 4, 6(1), 7; 9, 10, 12; 14, 16, 17, 26 and 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), acceded to by Ethiopia on 11 June 1993, which states that: certain rights are non-derogable and cannot be suspended even in a state of emergency; all people possess an inherent right to life and that no one should be arbitrarily denied this right; no one should be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; everyone has the rights to liberty and security of person, to liberty of movement, to a fair trial within a reasonable time, and to challenge the legality of the detention before the courts; all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person; everyone shall be granted these rights free of discrimination. As a State party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), acceded to on 23 June 1976, Ethiopia must also prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin, and take effective measures to amend or eliminate racially discriminatory policies and provide effective protection and remedies.

We would like to draw the attention of your Excellency's Government to Human Rights Committee's General Comment No. 36 on the right to life (CCPR/C/GC/36), which specifies that the duty to protect the right to life requires States parties to take special measures of protection towards persons in vulnerable situation whose lives have been placed at particular risk because of specific threats or pre-existing patterns of violence. It also requires that States take measures to address the general conditions in society that may give rise to direct threats to life or prevent individuals from enjoying their right to life with dignity.

In connection with the alleged arbitrary arrest and detention of Tigrayans, we would like to refer to the prohibition against arbitrary deprivation of liberty and the right to fair proceedings before an independent and impartial tribunal, as set forth in articles 9 and 14 of the ICCPR. We wish to highlight that deprivation of liberty which results from the exercise of the rights or freedoms guaranteed by the ICCPR is *per se* arbitrary. In particular, article 9 establishes that no one shall be deprived of his or her liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law, and that anyone who is arrested shall be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons behind such arrest and be brought promptly before a judge for the purpose of legal assessment of detention. We would also like to remind your Excellency's Government that article 37(b) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (acceded to on 14 May 1991) provides that no child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and for the shortest appropriate period of time, and detention of children should be a measure of last resort and avoided as far as possible.

With regard to the right to security of person enshrined by article 9(1) of the ICCPR, this right concerns freedom from injury to the body and the mind, or bodily and mental integrity, regardless of whether the victim is detained or non-detained (CCPR/C/GC/35, paras. 3 and 9). As interpreted by the Human Rights Committee,

“the right to personal security also obliges States parties to take appropriate measures (...) to protect individuals from foreseeable threats to life or bodily integrity proceeding from any governmental or private actors. States parties must take both measures to prevent future injury and retrospective measures, such as enforcement of criminal laws, in response to past injury”. Furthermore, we would like to recall that “States have a duty to prevent and redress unjustifiable use of force in law enforcement” (CCPR/C/GC/35, para. 9). In addition, article 14(b) of the ICCPR provides for safeguards on the right to fair trial and legal assistance from counsel of own choosing.

We would like to recall that there is “a duty on States to investigate alleged violations of the right to life ‘promptly, thoroughly and effectively through independent and impartial bodies’” (Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 31, “Nature of the legal obligation on States Parties to the Covenant” (2004), (CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13), para. 15.) This duty arises out of the general obligation of States to ensure the right to life of each individual, a right that is non-derogable regardless of circumstance (ICCPR, art. 4(2)); therefore, neither armed conflict nor occupation discharges the State’s duty to investigate and prosecute alleged human rights abuses by both State and private actors.

Article 26 of the ICCPR also stresses that all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground.

According to article 4 of the ICCPR, no derogation from articles 6, 7 and 16, among others, are permitted. Article 4 also requires that any derogations from the rights enshrined in the other articles of the ICCPR must be consistent with other international law and must not discriminate solely “on the ground of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin.” In regards to limitations and derogations of obligations under the ICCPR, we recall the Siracusa Principles on the Limitation and Derogation Provisions in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which provide guidance to states on derogating from the Covenant in times of public emergency and stipulate that the “severity, duration, and geographic scope of any derogation measure shall be such only as are strictly necessary to deal with the threat to the life of the nation and are proportionate to its nature and extent.”

As recalled above, the principles of non-discrimination and equality before the law are core State obligations affirmed in the ICERD, which Ethiopia acceded to on 23 June 1976. We strongly urge your Excellency’s Government to comply with its treaty obligations to ensure equality before the law and equal protection of the law. This commitment to non-discrimination and equality is clearly evident from article 1 of ICERD, which broadly defines racial discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.” Article 2(1) articulates the prohibition against “any act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions” and requires States parties “to ensure that all public authorities and public, national and local institutions act in accordance with this obligation.” Article 4 prohibits the incitement to racial discrimination by public actors and requires prohibition of such incitement by private actors. Article 5 obliges

States to prohibit and eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of every person to equality before the law, regardless of race, colour and national or ethnic origin. In particular, article 5 protects every person's right to personal security and guarantees protection by the State against any act of violence or attack on personal integrity committed by public officials.

In this regard, we would like to refer to General Recommendation No. 31 on the Prevention of Racial Discrimination in the Administration and Functioning of Criminal Justice, adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. In that General Recommendation, the Committee determines that States have an obligation to prevent and severely punish violence, acts of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and all human rights violations against individuals belonging to racial or ethnic groups committed by State agents, in particular police officers, armed forces personnel or customs officials, airports, prison institutions or social services, doctors and psychiatric services.

We are further drawing your Excellency's Government's attention to the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, which establishes that no State shall practice, permit or tolerate enforced disappearances. The Declaration also proclaims that each State shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent and terminate acts of enforced disappearance in any territory under its jurisdiction. In particular, we recall that the Declaration sets out the necessary protection by the State, in particular articles 9, 10, 11 and 12, which relate to the rights to a prompt and effective judicial remedy to determine the whereabouts of persons deprived of their liberty; to access of competent national authorities to all places of detention; to be held in an officially recognized place of detention, and to be brought before a judicial authority promptly after detention; to accurate information on the detention of persons and their place of detention being made available to their family, counsel or other persons with a legitimate interest; and to the maintenance in every place of detention of official up-to-date registers of all detained persons. Article 13 of the Declaration also states that any person who alleges that a person has been subjected to enforced disappearance has the right to complain to a competent and independent State authority and to have that complaint promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigated by that authority.

We also wish to refer to article 2 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), acceded to by Ethiopia on 14 March 1994. Article 2 states that: "Each State Party shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent acts of torture in any territory under its jurisdiction. No exceptional circumstances whatsoever (...) may be invoked as a justification of torture (...)". Article 7 of the CAT also states that: "The State Party (...) shall (...) submit the case [of torture] to its competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution (...)". Article 12 of the CAT further provides that: "Each State Party shall ensure that its competent authorities proceed to a prompt and impartial investigation, wherever there is reasonable ground to believe that an act of torture has been committed in any territory under its jurisdiction". Article 14 of the CAT states that: "Each State Party shall ensure (...) that the victim of an act of torture obtains redress and has an enforceable right to fair and adequate compensation, including the means for as full rehabilitation as possible. (...)".

We wish to draw your Government's attention to international humanitarian law. According to customary international humanitarian law applicable in non-international armed conflict, attacks must not be directed against civilians (see ICRC Study on Customary International Humanitarian Law, Rule 1). Indiscriminate attacks are prohibited (Rule 11). In the conduct of military operations, constant care must be taken to spare the civilian population, civilians and civilian objects. All feasible precautions must be taken to avoid, and in any event minimize incidental loss of civilian life, injury of civilians and damage to civilian objects (Rule 15). Torture (Rule 90), enforced disappearance (Rule 98) and arbitrary deprivation of liberty (Rule 99) are also prohibited. Most relevantly, Rule 88 states that: "Adverse distinction in the application of international humanitarian law based on race, colour, sex, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, wealth, birth or other status, or on any other similar criteria is prohibited." For example, Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions requires that "Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed '*hors de combat*' by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria." Under international humanitarian law, ordering the displacement of the civilian population, in whole or in part, for reasons related to the conflict is prohibited, unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand; and the parties to the conflict must prevent displacement caused from their own acts, such as terrorizing the civilian population or carrying out indiscriminate attacks (Rule 129 and article 17 of Additional Protocol II, acceded by Ethiopia on 8 April 1994). In case of displacement, all possible measures must be taken in order that the civilians concerned are received under satisfactory conditions of shelter, hygiene, health, safety and nutrition and that members of the same family are not separated (Rule 31 and Additional Protocol II, article 17). Displaced persons have a right to return and their property rights must be respected (Rules 132 and 133). Women and children are entitled to special protection (Rules 134 and 135). Each party to the conflict must respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law by its armed forces (Rule 139), and States must investigate war crimes allegedly committed by their nationals or armed forces and prosecute suspects (Rule 158).

We would also like to refer your Excellency's Government to the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which reflect international human rights and humanitarian law. Principle 5 states that all authorities shall respect their obligations under international law, including human rights and humanitarian law, to prevent and avoid conditions that might lead to displacement. Principle 6 states that every human being shall have the right to protected against being arbitrarily displaced from his or her home or place of habitual residence. Authorities also have the obligation to protect internally displaced persons, including their protection from human rights violations (Principles 10 to 23), to provide humanitarian assistance during their displacement (Principles 24 to 30), and to support durable solutions to their displacement (Principles 28 to 30). Principle 20 states that every human being has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law and that authorities shall issue to internally displaced persons all documents necessary for the enjoyment and exercise of their legal rights, such as passports, personal identification documents, birth certificates and marriage certificates. Authorities shall facilitate the issuance of new documents or the replacement of documents lost in the course of displacement, without imposing unreasonable conditions, such as requiring the return to one's area of habitual residence in order to obtain these or other required documents. Women

and men shall have equal rights to obtain such necessary documents and shall have the right to have such documentation issued in their own names.

We would also like to refer to your Excellency's Government completion, in February 2020, of its domestic procedure to ratify the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons (Kampala Convention), while the treaty ratification is still to be formalized by the deposit of its instruments with the Chairperson of the African Union. The Kampala Convention provides for the obligation of States parties to prevent arbitrary displacement, provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons and seek lasting solutions to displacement. We encourage the Government of Ethiopia to implement the Kampala Convention in line with its expression of intent and to deposit its instrument of ratification with the Chairperson of the African Union as soon as possible.