



STATE OF EMERGENCY **FACT Sheet**

23 January 2021

Letter to the Economist Newspaper Misrepresentation of the Government of Ethiopia

The Government of Ethiopia condemns in the strongest of terms the accusation that it is “using hunger as a weapon”. After citing “accounts”, quoting “frettings” of a certain “Western diplomat” and hesitating that it is “impossible to know”, the article then proceeds to make such an unconscionable and serious claim. In the past month, the Government of Ethiopia has mobilized and delivered more than 31,000 metric tons of food, non-food items and medical supplies to the region of Tigray. In addition, the Government of Ethiopia is putting in place necessary security protocols to protect civilians, stabilize the region and capture remaining suspects of treasonous crimes.

This article trivializes the constitutional obligation of the federal government of Ethiopia and resorts to a wholesale insult that “the government is too incompetent”. The Ethiopian National Defense Forces and other security institutions have demonstrated exceptional courage and skill in this law enforcement operation. There is a delicate and cautious balance that is to be observed in guaranteeing basic necessities while maintaining security in the Tigray region. Federal agencies, utility companies and other service providers are working at full speed to restore services in Tigray. They are doing so in the wake of the TPLF’s and its militia’s well-documented acts of vandalism against public and private infrastructure and assets including telecom, transport, energy and banking. Reconstruction will take time and this air of disconnect and mystery is fueling misinformation as the one in this article.

The article neglects to consider the TPLF’s history of systematic human rights violations. Like the rest of humanity, the people of Ethiopia seek peace and the rule of law. TPLF has been the grand sponsor of destabilization, terror and massacres for the past three decades and it has not eased its thirst for absolute power even after it was unseated through widespread protests and the electoral rules of the coalition which TPLF itself had engineered. Thanks to our millennia old tradition of statehood, Ethiopians are fierce believers in justice. And in this land of justice, actions have consequences.

In this complicated and high stakes operation, humanitarian, diplomatic and media agencies will have to endure the inconvenience of heeding to the direction of the government. The success of this operation necessitates that as Tigray transitions to rebuilding and recovery.

The gravest error this article makes is its shortsightedness. Ethiopians have a dream for peace and prosperity. The past two years have been profoundly painful for all Ethiopians but the Government of Ethiopia believes we are headed in the right direction. Magnifying troubles and echoing accusations of past regimes within the article as a comparison to this administration is a mere distraction. Ethiopians will not watch helplessly and idly as history repeats itself. This is exactly why the Government of Ethiopia has been determined in preventing spoilers such as TPLF from hijacking our new chapter.

The Government is implementing historic reforms across economic, political and social sectors. Ethiopia is poised to enter a new era and the Law Enforcement Operation in Tigray is a costly but necessary step in the right direction.

It is regrettable that the Economist assumes that leaders in Africa are either evil or incompetent.

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