

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H. RES. 445
OFFERED BY MS. BASS OF CALIFORNIA

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas the United States and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia share an important relationship, more than a century of diplomatic relations, and a strong connection through diaspora engagement;

Whereas Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa and plays a key role in advancing security and stability across sub-Saharan Africa;

Whereas tensions between Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity Party and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which was part of the ruling coalition in Ethiopia until late 2019, escalated when the TPLF held elections in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia on September 9, 2020, despite the Government of Ethiopia postponing the 2020 general elections due to the COVID-19 pandemic;

Whereas the TPLF rejected the postponement of general elections and considered the extension of the term of the Government of Ethiopia to be unconstitutional, and the Government subsequently deemed the Tigray regional elections illegitimate;

Whereas, on November 4, 2020, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed ordered a military offensive in response to an attack by the TPLF-led forces on the Northern Command of the

Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), which evolved into an armed conflict between the ENDF, supported by Eritrean Defense Forces and the Amhara regional and irregular forces against TPLF-led forces;

Whereas the Government of Ethiopia refused multiple attempts by the international community including the African Union, Kenya, Sudan, the European Union, and the United States to help broker a negotiated ceasefire and peaceful settlement that includes all parties of the conflict TPLF;

Whereas the Government of Ethiopia declared a unilateral ceasefire on June 28, 2021, while the TPLF continued hostilities and expanded the violence beyond Tigray into the Afar and Amhara regions in mid-July 2021;

Whereas the TPLF forces and Oromo Liberation Army (OLA-“Shene”) have announced a military alliance, with a stated goal of working together against the Government of Ethiopia;

Whereas the Government of Ethiopia designated the TPLF and OLA-“Shene” as terrorist organizations, and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced a general call to arms against the TPLF, further enflaming historical grievances and conflicts rooted in the TPLF’s decades -long political dominance and abuses of power, and complicating a comprehensive political solution to the crises;

Whereas the Government of Ethiopia launched a new offensive against Tigrayan forces in Amhara in October 2021 and fighting continues in other parts of Northern Ethiopia;

Whereas the conflict in the Tigray Region has forced more than 60,000 Ethiopians to seek refuge in Sudan, has dis-

placed more than 2,200,000 people internally in Tigray, and there are an estimated 7,000,000 people in Northern Ethiopia who require emergency food aid and immediate humanitarian assistance, including almost 100,000 Eritrean refugees, and almost 24,000,000 people across Ethiopia need humanitarian assistance;

Whereas in addition to the shutdown of telephone and internet services, which has severely limited the flow of information on the conflict and the humanitarian situation, journalists are restricted from accessing much of the Tigray Region, and several journalists have been arrested and harassed in connection to their coverage of the conflict, including the killing of a journalist working for the Tigray Mass Media Agency;

Whereas the Government of Ethiopia has imposed restrictions and bureaucratic impediments that have severely hampered humanitarian response efforts, including the blockage of some commodities such as fuel, medicine, and medical supplies into Tigray, as well as other access restrictions for aid workers seeking to facilitate and expand humanitarian response efforts;

Whereas the ENDF, Eritrean Defense Forces, Amhara regional and irregular forces, and the TPLF-led forces have been accused of impeding humanitarian operations in Northern Ethiopia, including through damage to infrastructure and health facilities, harassment of aid workers, blockage of transport routes, and looting of aid materials and vehicles;

Whereas the TPLF's expansion of military operations into Amhara and Afar has impeded humanitarian operations in those areas and created additional displacement and

need, and TPLF-led forces have been implicated in looting food stocks and aid supplies in Amhara;

Whereas the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Amnesty International, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC), and other credible human rights organizations report that multiple actors have committed human rights violations, including incidents of ethnic cleansing, sexual and gender-based violence and other atrocities during the Tigray conflict, and violence, human rights violations, and incidents of ethnic and intercommunal violence are on the rise throughout Ethiopia, including in the Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Somali, Afar, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region states;

Whereas in response to the allegations of atrocities and human rights violations, the OHCHR and EHRC began a joint investigation in March 2021 and announced their findings are scheduled to be published in November;

Whereas at least 23 aid workers, including one employee of the International Rescue Committee, three employees of the Danish Refugee Council, three employees of Medicines Sans Frontiers, and one staff member employed by a USAID partner, were killed while conducting humanitarian operations in Tigray;

Whereas, in September 2021, the Government of Ethiopia expelled seven senior United Nations officials representing the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), OHCHR, and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), further hindering already strained humanitarian efforts and continuing a pattern of

harassment and intimidation of humanitarian aid workers;

Whereas, since March 2021, the United States Government has had several high-level engagements with Ethiopian officials to encourage a ceasefire, a political solution to the conflict, and autonomous access for humanitarian workers, including visits by Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa Ambassador Jeffery Feltman, Senator Christopher Coons as a Presidential emissary, USAID Administrator Samantha Powers, and Representative Karen Bass; and

Whereas the continuance and escalation of the conflict, with no apparent political solution in sight, has led the United States Government to restrict certain types of non-humanitarian foreign assistance, impose visa restrictions on those responsible for, or complicit in, undermining a peaceful solution to the crisis, and establish a regime for targeted sanctions against those in the Ethiopian government, the Eritrean Government, the TPLF, and the Amhara regional government who are responsible for the ongoing crisis: Now, therefore, be it

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

- 1 That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) calls for the end of violence in the Federal
- 3 Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and for all combat-
- 4 ants in the conflict in Northern Ethiopia, the ENDF
- 5 and their allied forces, including the Eritrean De-
- 6 fense Forces and Amhara regional and irregular

1 forces, and TPLF-led forces to immediately cease
2 hostilities;

3 (2) condemns in the strongest terms all human
4 rights violations, atrocities, war crimes, acts of eth-
5 nic cleansing, murder, torture, looting, rape, sexual
6 and gender-based violence, and other crimes com-
7 mitted by the ENDF, the Eritrean Defense Forces,
8 the Amhara regional and irregular forces, the
9 TPLF, the OLA, or any other forces in the Tigray
10 Region or elsewhere in Ethiopia;

11 (3) denounces the harassment and intimidation
12 of journalists and aid workers, and the expulsion of
13 senior United Nations officials responsible for sup-
14 porting humanitarian response efforts;

15 (4) calls for immediate, full, and unfettered ac-
16 cess for humanitarian operations, and for journalists
17 and diplomats seeking access to affected areas
18 throughout the conflict area and elsewhere in Ethi-
19 opia;

20 (5) supports the joint investigation of human
21 rights violations in the Tigray region by the Office
22 of the United Nations High Commissioner for
23 Human Rights and the Ethiopian Human Rights
24 Commission and urges full and unfettered access for

1 such investigations, and the expedient release of its
2 findings upon completion of the report;

3 (6) appreciates the willingness of Sudan to wel-
4 come refugees fleeing the conflict in the Tigray Re-
5 gion;

6 (7) urges the Government of Ethiopia to—

7 (A) take tangible steps toward improving
8 humanitarian access and immediately grant ap-
9 propriate approvals to scale up humanitarian
10 assistance in Tigray and other conflict-affected
11 areas;

12 (B) fully investigate and pursue account-
13 ability for all human rights abuses and atroc-
14 ities; and

15 (C) make progress on pursuing a political
16 solution to the crisis, to include releasing un-
17 lawfully detained opposition leaders and sup-
18 porters, activists, and journalists, and con-
19 vening a credible, national dialogue inclusive of
20 all nonviolent political parties, ethnic commu-
21 nities, religious groups, and civil society organi-
22 zations interested in charting a democratic and
23 peaceful path forward and unifying the country;

24 (8) urges all parties to the conflict to—

1 (A) cease all hostilities, commit to a peace-
2 ful political solution for resolving existing dif-
3 ferences, fully comply with international hu-
4 manitarian law of armed conflict, and refrain
5 from actions that could continue, spread, or es-
6 calate the conflict, particularly attacks on civil-
7 ians;

8 (B) immediately grant full and unfettered
9 humanitarian access for personnel and supplies,
10 including necessary commodities like fuel and
11 medicine, to areas affected by the conflict, and
12 take all possible steps to protect the safety of
13 civilians, including refugees, internally displaced
14 persons, and humanitarian aid workers; and

15 (C) cooperate with independent and trans-
16 parent investigations of all alleged human
17 rights abuses and atrocities committed in the
18 course of the conflict in Northern Ethiopia and
19 other conflicts across Ethiopia, and hold all per-
20 petrators to account in a credible process; and

21 (9) urges the Secretary of State, the Secretary
22 of the Treasury, and the Administrator of the
23 United States Agency for International Develop-
24 ment, in coordination with the heads of other rel-

1 evant United States Federal departments and agen-
2 cies, to—

3 (A) engage at the highest levels with the
4 Government of Ethiopia, the Government of
5 Eritrea, the TPLF, and other parties to the
6 conflict to encourage the immediate and full
7 cessation of hostilities, the full withdrawal of all
8 Eritrean forces, mitigation of the humanitarian
9 crisis in the region, and support for an inclusive
10 process of national dialogue and reconciliation
11 in Ethiopia;

12 (B) maintain close coordination with inter-
13 national allies and multilateral organizations re-
14 garding efforts to address the conflict in the
15 Tigray Region and other regions of Ethiopia,
16 and bring attention to the conflict in inter-
17 national and regional fora, including the United
18 Nations Security Council and the African
19 Union respectively;

20 (C) as appropriate, use all diplomatic, de-
21 velopmental, and legal tools to prevent further
22 ethnic-based violence and mass atrocities, in-
23 cluding by nonstate armed groups, and promote
24 competitive multiparty democracy in Ethiopia;

1 (D) continue to take actions that, accord-
2 ing to Secretary of State Blinken on February
3 27, 2021, ensure a “full, independent, inter-
4 national investigation into all reports of human
5 rights violations, abuses, and atrocities” com-
6 mitted during the conflict; and

7 (E) urgently determine whether atrocities
8 committed in Tigray and elsewhere by various
9 parties to the conflict amount to war crimes,
10 crimes against humanity, or genocide, and
11 based on the investigations, impose targeted
12 sanctions and accountability measures on those
13 found responsible for committing gross viola-
14 tions of internationally-recognized human rights
15 atrocities.

Amend the title so as to read: “A resolution Con-
demning all violence and human rights abuses in Ethi-
opia, and calling for all combatants in the conflict in
Northern Ethiopia to cease all hostilities, respect human
rights, allow unfettered humanitarian access, and cooper-
ate with independent investigations of credible atrocity al-
legations.”.

