



## **Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Release on the Expulsion of UN Officials**

As a founding member of the United Nations, Ethiopia has through the years amply demonstrated its commitment to the UN Charter. UN agencies, in particular, those in the humanitarian area also had a long presence in Ethiopia providing lifesaving humanitarian assistance to millions. It goes without saying that Ethiopia appreciates all the support that these UN agencies have been extending to our people in need of assistance.

It should be recalled that the Government of Ethiopia has signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Enhanced Coordination Mechanism for Humanitarian Access in the Tigray Regional State with UN agencies on November 29, 2020. This MoU entrusts these agencies with the task of providing lifesaving humanitarian assistance to the affected population.

In connection to the current situation in the Northern part of Ethiopia, we had sadly observed that some UN staff have failed to fulfill their mission independently and impartially in accordance with the abovementioned MoU and the relevant principles of the UN. These serious violations have been brought to the attention of the relevant UN high officials and other international partners on multiple occasions, but to no avail. Despite these communications of concern, the grave violations persisted. As such, as a measure of last resort, the Government of Ethiopia had to ask some officials of UN agencies to leave the country.

Therefore, in order to avoid confusion regarding the measure taken by the Government, we wish to highlight some of the following breaches: which these individuals have committed in violation of their professional code of conduct:

1. Diversion of humanitarian assistance to the TPLF;
2. Violating agreed-upon security arrangements;
3. Transferring communication equipment to be used by the TPLF;
4. Continued reticence in demanding the return of more than 400 trucks commandeered by the TPLF for military mobilization and for the transportation of its forces since July 2021; and
5. Dissemination of misinformation and politicization of humanitarian assistance.

Ethiopia is deeply disappointed by the fact that some countries are urging the United Nations Security Council to consider this matter. This is a blatant violation of Ethiopia's

sovereign prerogative on matters of national security. We are confident the Security Council will reject this undue politicization of humanitarian assistance.

We are confident that the provision of humanitarian assistance will not be affected due to this measure. In fact, TPLF's continued attacks against civilians, forced displacement of people, the killing of cattle, destruction of economic assets, and commandeering of more than 400 trucks happen to be major factors that are exacerbating the humanitarian situation. Unfortunately, some within the international community seem to be intent on downplaying such behavior on the part of the TPLF and problematize the legitimate exercise of a sovereign prerogative by the Government of Ethiopia.

The Government of Ethiopia reiterates its firm commitment to the principles of multilateralism and values enshrined in the UN Charter, while at the same time calling upon the United Nations to continue to uphold the principles of impartiality and neutrality. We will continue to cooperate with the UN and its agencies whose objectives correspond to the task of alleviating the suffering of our people during these difficult times. The Government of Ethiopia would like to make it abundantly clear that cooperation with multilateral agencies, including those of the UN will continue, provided that their activities do not undermine the sovereignty of Ethiopia and pose a threat to its national security interests. We urge the UN to expeditiously replace these personnel to allow the continuation of our cooperation in providing humanitarian assistance. We will work with the UN Secretary-General, the Humanitarian Coordinator, and the Resident Coordinator to facilitate the early deployment of the new personnel.

—ENDS—

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs