



NEWSLETTER

August 2023

Dear Friends,

I write to you this month in light of the news regarding the Government of Ethiopia's (GoE) drone and heavy weaponry attacks in cities across Gojjam, Gondor, Wollo, and Showa. These attacks have resulted in several deaths of innocent civilians. Ethiopia's historical sites, religious institutions, and its borders are now threatened as the GoE continues its unrestrained assault across the Amhara Region.

According to the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC), "it has received credible reports of strikes and shelling, including incidents in Debre Birhan, Finote Selam, and Burie. These attacks have led to numerous civilian casualties and damage to residential areas and public spaces. In Bahir Dar, civilians were killed on the streets or outside their homes, while some young people were specifically targeted for searches and subjected to beatings and killings. In Addis Ababa, there have been widespread arrests of civilians of Amhara ethnicity, as well as extensive detention of irregular migrants from Eritrea, some of whom may be seeking asylum status in Ethiopia."

Several other reports indicate that Ethiopians living in Gambella, Afar, Guarage, Wollega, and Wolaita are exposed to various forms of violence. Though it feels like an unending nightmare, it is the duty of Ethiopian Americans to work diligently to contribute their part to stopping the ongoing crisis. This crisis includes civilian killings, property destruction, religious interference, harassment of civilians (especially those of Amhara ethnicity), and rampant corruption. We should advocate for peace and support the Ethiopian people's struggle to live in harmony while defending the country's territorial integrity.

Over the past few months, AEPAC's activities have focused on raising awareness of the Ethiopian crisis among Members of the US Congress. We continue to engage with members and staffers of:

The US Congressional Ethiopian Caucus
The US Senate Foreign Relations Committee
The US House Foreign Affairs Committee

AEPAC has also briefed Commissioners of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) in preparation for a full hearing on religious interference, destruction of churches and mosques, ethnicization of religion, and religious persecution in Ethiopia.

In the State Department, the Horn of Africa special envoy holds a strategic position for recommending policies concerning the region. This role is also influenced by USAID, the NGO community, and, of course, Congress. A significant challenge arises from the diverse opinions within the diaspora, leading to contradictory viewpoints presented across various US Government agencies. Historically, when opposing constituencies emerge, minimal action is taken. To wield effective influence over policy, particularly when substantial changes are necessary, the diaspora must project a united voice, create messages that resonate with those less familiar with the issue, and maintain persistent engagement with all stakeholders—especially congressional offices. We must supply concise and understandable documents to policymakers. Although elaborate policy papers featuring exceptional historical arguments hold value, they often remain unacted upon due to their length, complexity, and obscurity, ultimately rendering them unproductive.

In the coming days and weeks, AEPAC will be in discussions with US Congressional representatives, administration officials, and the State Department to encourage the United States to play a positive role in supporting the Ethiopian people's pursuit of peace and justice. The multiple conflicts that have hindered the country's urgent socio-economic development must cease without delay.

These needless conflicts should not ravage the nation. All parties involved must collaborate to halt this unnecessary bloodshed that should never have commenced. The ethnic-based constitution, dividing citizens and pitting groups against one another, was designed to foment such conflicts. No nation willingly subjects itself to such a detrimental system except Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Government must cease the war and fulfill its sworn duties of protecting all civilians, regardless of ethnicity, while safeguarding Ethiopia's territorial integrity.

AEPAC will soon reach out to launch a campaign to inform and educate your local and national congressional elected officials about the situation in Ethiopia. It is our collective responsibility to get engaged actively by contacting our representatives.

We are aware that anti-American sentiment has escalated significantly in Ethiopia and the broader Horn of Africa due to perceived US support for groups that counter the national interests of many countries. The time has come for decision-makers in Washington, DC, to rectify such misguided policies.

Regards,

Mesfin Tegenu
Chairman



Amesha

TASTE OF ETHIOPIA

The Taste of Ethiopia celebration in Denver was a display of Ethiopia's luscious food and original 3,000 years of culture, all in one place. The joyful event which attracted over 30,000 people was a testimony of the long and non breakable bond among all Ethiopians as demonstrated by the performance of American born young entertainers who showed different cultural, music and dance reminding us of the strong bond that exists among Ethiopia's children. Congratulations to the organizers for a flawless performance and also attracting the Governor of Colorado, Gov Jared Polis and the Mayor of Denver, Mayor Mike Johnston amongst others in the event.





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Want to help push the voice of American-Ethiopians to the audiences who matter? Then please share these Tweets so that AEPAC's message is seen by more people across social media: [AEPAC Mission Video](#)

Contact

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