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National Council
of Eritrean Americans

Press Release

The National Council of Eritrean Americans (NCEA) is dismayed by the unwarranted and counterproductive measures against Eritrea, taken by the US state department and the Senate Foreign relations committee to impose visa restriction measures against, “any current or former Eritrean government officials, members of the security forces, or other individuals, responsible, complicit in, undermining resolution of the crisis in Tigray Region of Ethiopia”. The envisaged measures cannot conceivably serve US avowed policy of promoting peace and stability in the Horn of African region.

As a matter of fact, the TPLF started the war in Tigray by insidiously attacking the Northern Command of the Ethiopian Federal Army stationed in the region and slaughtered the Ethiopian soldiers. The TPLF’s premeditated, treasonous and wide scale attacks against the Northern Command was driven by two intertwined military agendas of regional destabilization: i) march to Addis Abeba and seize power through violence once the Northern Command was defeated and neutralized; ii) attack Eritrea to advance further its objectives of territorial aggrandizement and overall policy of destabilizing the country. And in the early days of the attack, TPLF killed over one thousand Ethiopian troops, committed the hideous massacre in Mai Kadra and bombed Eritrea with long range missiles.

In the event, the NCEA is disappointed by the failure of the US Government to condemn the TPLF’s act of war and stand with the parties that are striving to stabilize Ethiopia and uphold peace and security in the Horn of Africa. Indeed, while US concerns to address humanitarian consequences of the war are critical, putting the belligerent party on par with those who had no option but to react in self-defense cannot be morally tenable by any standards.

As acts of the past 30 years alone may speak themselves, the TPLF and its remnants have been and still remain a menace to the region. In 1998, TPLF waged a full-scale war and aggression against Eritrea in the name of 'border claim'. After three years of devastating war, Eritrea and Ethiopia signed a peace agreement in the year 2000, calling for the permanent termination of military hostilities and the peaceful settlement of the boundary issues through the establishment of a neutral Boundary Commission to delimit and demarcate their common border. In 2002, the Commission announced its ruling. Eritrea accepted the ruling unconditionally. TPLF led Ethiopia declared, in 2003, that it will not be abided by the final and binding verdict. It continued occupying territories awarded to Eritrea and carried out unrelenting hostilities along the border with military skirmishes to destabilize Eritrea.

Encouraged by its allies, TPLF group exploited all regional and international platforms to, politically and economically isolate Eritrea. This group held the border conflict as a long evil strategy to weaken Eritrea with the belief that Eritrea will eventually succumb and implode.

The TPLF, for years, played the international community saying it wants to negotiate with Eritrea on a final and binding verdict that did not need any negotiations; just so, it can weaken and isolate Eritrea and make it look as if it was Eritrea refusing to cooperate. Even after the new rapprochement, when PM Abiy Ahmed came to power in 2018, this renegade group defied the Federal Government and refused to relinquish Eritrean territories.

The TPLF, a movement that was established in the 70's and which had primarily fought for secession of Tigray from Ethiopia, came to power when the Derg regime was overthrown in 1991. It seemed by then it had abandoned its primary objective of being limited to the independence of Tigray and aspired to rule Ethiopia in its entirety. In fact this sudden change in strategy did not take place because of the awakening of TPLF's national conscience that Ethiopia should remain united. Its secessionist and irredentist agenda was not embraced by the EPLF, but more importantly, the TPLF had opted to pursue a dualist policy: i) remain part of Ethiopia so long as it was the dominant power; or ii) opt for secession by forcibly incorporating adjacent territories in Ethiopia and parts of Eritrea. Indeed, the TPLF and three other organizations merged to establish the EPRDF coalition, it had remained the most powerful by controlling the entire senior political and

security positions. Flawed, hastened and shortsighted policies of the EPRDF, under the clutches of the TPLF, had soon begun to negatively impact the Ethiopian people as well as other nations within the region.

In the event, the NCEA appeals to the US State Department and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to reconsider their adversarial stance against Eritrea and Ethiopia and to positively interact with the key stakeholders to advance the interests of peace, stability as well as the welfare of the peoples of the region.

National Council of Eritrean Americans (NCEA)

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