



**ETHIOPIA: SUMMARY KILLINGS,  
RAPE AND LOOTING BY  
TIGRAYAN FORCES IN AMHARA**

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*Cover photo: New graves in the St. George's Church graveyard in Kobo, Ethiopia, where witnesses and survivors told Amnesty International that they buried those summarily killed by Tigrayan forces on 9 September 2021 © Private*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tigrayan fighters affiliated with the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) deliberately killed civilians, gang raped and sexually assaulted women and girls, and looted private and public property in two localities in Ethiopia's northern Amhara region, Amnesty International has found after interviewing dozens of victims and witnesses. Most of the atrocities were perpetrated in late August and early September 2021, a couple of months after parts of the Amhara region came under the control of Tigrayan forces. The crimes occurred at a moment when Tigrayan forces were facing growing resistance from local militias and residents who took up arms against them in a bid to regain control of their towns and villages.

In Kobo, a town in the northeast of the Amhara region, Tigrayan fighters deliberately killed unarmed civilians, seemingly in revenge for losses among their ranks at the hands of Amhara militias and armed farmers.<sup>1</sup> Ten residents of Kobo told Amnesty International that on the afternoon of 9 September 2021, after briefly losing control of the town to armed farmers, Tigrayan fighters summarily killed the farmers' relatives and neighbours outside their homes. Twelve other residents said that they found the bodies of local residents and labourers who had been killed execution-style — shot in the head, chest or back. Such deliberate killings of civilians (or of captured, surrendered, or wounded fighters, if any were such) are serious violations of international humanitarian law (the laws of war), constituting war crimes and possible crimes against humanity.<sup>2</sup>

In and around Chenna, a village north of the Amhara regional capital Bahir Dar, Tigrayan forces raped and sexually assaulted at least 30 women and girls as young as 14, often in their own homes after having forced them to provide food and cook for them.<sup>3</sup> Fourteen of the 30 survivors interviewed by Amnesty International said that they were gang raped by multiple Tigrayan fighters, who often threatened them and used racial slurs. Such acts are serious violations of international humanitarian law and constitute war crimes and potentially crimes against humanity. These are not the first or only cases of rape and sexual assaults against Amhara women and girls by Tigrayan forces. Amnesty International previously documented similar atrocities by Tigrayan fighters in Nifas Mewcha and has received credible reports from other areas of the Amhara region.<sup>4</sup>

In both Kobo and the Chenna area residents told Amnesty International that Tigrayan fighters stole possessions from their homes and shops, and looted and vandalised public properties, including medical clinics and schools. The looting and damage to medical facilities made it impossible for rape survivors and other residents in need of medical care to obtain treatment locally. All the survivors interviewed by Amnesty International said that when Tigrayan forces withdrew from their towns and villages there were no functioning medical facilities left and that they had to wait until they could reach hospitals in Debark, Gondar and Bahir Dar, weeks after they had been raped and thus too late to receive the crucial post-rape care that needs to be administered within 72 hours. Medical professionals and social workers in the area confirmed to Amnesty International that medical facilities in and around Chenna were no longer functioning because they had been looted and damaged and personnel had been forced to flee.<sup>5</sup> Pillage, destroying or confiscating the property of an adversary without military necessity and attacking hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are cared for are prohibited by the laws of war and can constitute war crimes.

These and other alleged violations must be investigated. It is imperative that the international commission of human rights experts on Ethiopia established by the UN Human Rights Council on 17 December 2021 be

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<sup>1</sup> Farmers in Ethiopia are often armed with assault or hunting rifles to protect their cattle.

<sup>2</sup> Summary killings of civilians by Tigrayan forces have also been reported in other locations, notably in Chenna. See: Stench of death: villagers flee site of Ethiopia mass killings, AFP in France24, 15 September 2021 <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210915-stench-of-death-villagers-flee-site-of-ethiopia-mass-killings>; and At scene of Ethiopia's new killings, some fight, some flee, AP, 10 September 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/africa-only-on-ap-ethiopia-e3383c654382a901bd746f32b671396a>; and Ethiopia: Tigray Forces Summarily Execute Civilians, Human Rights Watch, 9 December 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/12/10/ethiopia-tigray-forces-summarily-execute-civilians>

<sup>3</sup> Some of the 30 rape survivors interviewed by Amnesty International, as well as doctors and social workers who assisted survivors, said that they were aware of at least 10 other women and girls who were raped by Tigrayan fighters during the same period.

<sup>4</sup> Widespread sexual violence by Tigrayan forces has also been reported in the town of Woldiya, 500 km south-east of Chenna. See: Ethiopia's Tigray crisis: Survivors share stories of sexual violence carried out by fighters, Channel4, 27 January 2022, <https://www.channel4.com/news/ethiopia-tigray-crisis-survivors-share-stories-of-sexual-violence-carried-out-by-fighters>, and in the town of Hayk, 100 km south of Woldiya.

<sup>5</sup> Amnesty International interviews, 15, 20, 21, 22, and 27 November 2021.

granted access to the country as soon as possible.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, the Ethiopian government should cooperate with the Commission of Inquiry established by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. As a matter of urgency, Tigrayan forces must commit to putting an immediate end to the human rights abuses, violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes and possible crimes against humanity detailed in this briefing, and to investigate and remove from its forces anyone suspected of involvement in such crimes.

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<sup>6</sup> The commission was established by the UN Human Rights Council in December 2021. Its role is to investigate allegations of violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law, to establish the facts and circumstances surrounding the alleged violations and abuses, to collect and preserve evidence, and to identify those responsible. See United Nations Information Service, Human Rights Council decides to establish an International Commission of Human Rights Experts to investigate allegations of violations in Ethiopia, 17 December 2021.

# METHODOLOGY

Amnesty International researchers interviewed 30 survivors - women and girls - of rape and sexual and other assaults in Chenna, Boza, Abriham, Jerosan, Finure, Zarima, Dia, Adimenai, Tintane, Tabla, and Did-Bahr; three doctors and two social workers who organized and provided treatment for these and other women and girl survivors; a local administration official, and 27 witnesses and survivors of the killings in Kobo, including people who participated in collecting and burying the bodies. The interviews were conducted remotely between 25 October and 20 December 2021, via secure video calls, because the organization does not have access to conflict-affected areas of Ethiopia.

Oral consent was obtained from each interviewee. Names and other identifying details have been withheld to protect interviewees' security, with all interviewees being assigned pseudonyms.

Amnesty International's Crisis Evidence Lab analysed satellite imagery showing disturbed areas consistent with new burial sites at the St George's and St Michael's church compounds, where residents told Amnesty International that they had buried those killed on 9 September. Other imagery corroborates reports of looting and damage at Kobo's hospital and St Joseph's school and Ewket Chora school during the period when Tigrayan forces controlled the town.

The organization also reviewed material published by other sources, including local and international media and social media.<sup>7</sup>

Amnesty International wrote to Getachew Reda, a senior TPLF official and the head of the Tigray Government's External Affairs Office, on 24 January requesting information about any measures taken by the TPLF or Tigrayan forces to investigate the allegations contained in this briefing, and to ensure that such atrocities are prevented and that those responsible are removed from the force. The organization had not received a response at the time of writing.

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, "Then the killing started: Witnesses accuse Tigray fighters," Associated Press, 25 September 2021, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/killing-started-witnesses-accuse-tigray-fighters-80226703>; "Hundreds dead as TPLF forces go on killing spree," Ethiopia Observer, 21 September 2021, <https://www.ethiopiaobserver.com/2021/09/21/civilians-flee-after-deadly-tpif-attack-in-kobo-town/>

# 1. BACKGROUND

An armed conflict has raged in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia since November 2020. In July 2021, it spread to the neighbouring Afar and Amhara regions following the withdrawal of government forces from parts of Tigray.<sup>8</sup> The conflict pits fighters affiliated with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) against the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF), the Amhara Regional Police Special Forces (ASF), and the Fano, an informal Amhara militia group. In addition, the Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF) have also been involved in the conflict in support of Ethiopian government forces and associated militias.

All sides involved in the conflict have committed grave human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, including war crimes and possible crimes against humanity. The majority of violations documented to date have been committed by Ethiopian and Eritrean government forces and associated militias against Tigrayan civilians, mostly in the Tigray region.<sup>9</sup> The Ethiopian government has also been responsible for serious human rights violations against ethnic Tigrayans in other parts of the country, including the capital.<sup>10</sup>

Amnesty International has documented several massacres of Tigrayan civilians, as well as widespread rape and sexual abuse of Tigrayan women and girls at the hands of Ethiopian government forces and allied militias and Eritrean forces.<sup>11</sup> Since TPLF fighters started to operate outside the Tigray region in July 2021, they have also committed serious violations against civilians in areas of the neighbouring Amhara region, including rape and other forms of sexual violence against Amhara women and girls, and killings of unarmed civilians.<sup>12</sup>

All parties involved in the conflict have also been responsible for widespread looting, damage and destruction of residents' homes and businesses and public properties — including health facilities — thereby depriving victims and the rest of the local population of desperately needed medical care. Moreover, a combination of restrictions imposed by the Ethiopian government and insecurity resulting from the conflict have significantly

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<sup>8</sup> Ethiopian government forces and allied militias remain in control of western Tigray, where they continue to carry out serious abuses. See Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, Ethiopia: New wave of atrocities in Western Tigray, 16 December 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/12/ethiopia-new-wave-of-atrocities-in-western-tigray/>

<sup>9</sup> As documented by Amnesty International: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/ethiopia/>, Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/africa/ethiopia>, UN Secretary General: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/node/259934>, and humanitarian organisations such as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)/Doctors Without Borders: <https://www.msf.org/ethiopia-tigray-conflict> and the Norwegian Refugee Council: <https://www.nrc.no/news/2021/february/buildings-belonging-to-nrc-destroyed-in-ethiopia-tigray/>. However, large number of Amhara civilians were killed by Tigrayans in Mai-Kadra (May Cadera) on 9 November 2020. See Amnesty International, Ethiopia: Investigation reveals evidence that scores of civilians were killed in massacre in Tigray state, 12 November 2020.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Amnesty International, Ethiopia: End arbitrary detentions of Tigrayans, activists and journalists in Addis Ababa and reveal whereabouts of unaccounted detainees, 16 July 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/07/ethiopia-end-arbitrary-detentions-of-tigrayans-activists-and-journalists-in-addis-ababa-and-reveal-whereabouts-of-unaccounted-detainees/>; Amnesty International, Ethiopia: Tigrayans targeted in fresh wave of ethnically motivated detentions in Addis Ababa, 12 November 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/ethiopia-tigrayans-targeted-in-fresh-wave-of-ethnically-motivated-detentions-in-addis-ababa/>; Human Rights Watch, Ethiopia: Tigray Forces Summarily Execute Civilians, 9 December 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/12/10/ethiopia-tigray-forces-summarily-execute-civilians>

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Amnesty International, Ethiopia: The massacre in Axum, 26 February 2021 <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR2537302021ENGLISH.PDF>; Amnesty International, Ethiopia: Three killed, 19 injured in Tigray as Eritrean troops open fire on civilians, 14 April 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/04/ethiopia-three-killed-19-injured-in-tigray-as-eritrean-troops-open-fire-on-civilians-2/>; Martyna Marciniak and Sam Dubberley, How to Crack Complex Geolocation Challenges: A Case Study of the Mahibere Dego Massacre, 9 April 2021, <https://citizenevidence.org/2021/04/09/geolocation-mahibere-dego/>; Amnesty International, Ethiopia: "I don't know if they realized I was a person": Rape and sexual violence in the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia, 11 August 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/af25/4569/2021/en/>

<sup>12</sup> Amnesty International, Ethiopia: Survivors of TPLF attack in Amhara describe gang rape, looting and physical assaults, 9 November 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/ethiopia-survivors-of-tplf-attack-in-amhara-describe-gang-rape-looting-and-physical-assaults/>; Human Rights Watch, Ethiopia: Tigray Forces Summarily Execute Civilians, 9 December 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/12/10/ethiopia-tigray-forces-summarily-execute-civilians#:~:text=In%20the%20town%20of%20Kobo,four%20separate%20incidents%2C%20witnesses%20said.&text=%E2%80%9CTigrayan%20forces%20showed%20brutal%20disregard,director%20at%20Human%20Rights%20Watch>; Amnesty International has so far not been able to verify allegations of large-scale killings of civilians by Tigrayan forces in the Afar region's town of Galikoma in August 2021.

impeded the delivery of humanitarian assistance and medical supplies to the Tigray region, where humanitarian agencies have long decried increasing rates of acute malnutrition, needless deaths from curable diseases, and a worsening man-made humanitarian crisis.<sup>13</sup> Among those most affected by the humanitarian crisis are the millions of civilians displaced by the conflict, most of them in the Tigray region and in recent months also in the Amhara and Afar regions.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See, for example, “Tigray: Aid operations ‘about to grind to a halt’, warns WFP,” UN News, 14 January 2022, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/01/1109802>; “Ethiopia: Humanitarian aid needed as situation deteriorates in Tigray,” UN News, 24 November 2021, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/11/1106522>; “Catastrophe ‘unfolding before our eyes’ in Ethiopia’s Tigray region – UN chief,” UN News, 26 August 2021, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/08/1098582>

<sup>14</sup> For updates on displacement, see the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/ethiopia>

# 2. DELIBERATE KILLINGS OF CIVILIANS/SUMMARY KILLINGS

The summary killings by Tigrayan forces of at least 24 Amhara civilians in and around Kobo on 9 September 2021 took place after intense fighting with Amhara militias and farmers earlier that day. Tensions between the two sides had been mounting since Tigrayan forces had taken control of the town and surrounding areas in mid-July 2021.<sup>15</sup>

Kobo residents told Amnesty International that Tigrayan forces had initially reassured the local population that they would not be harmed. However, they soon started to harass and intimidate residents. A significant percentage of the town's population fled — some to nearby forests and others to Dessie and other locations that had remained under government control.<sup>16</sup> Residents who remained in Kobo told Amnesty International that they kept a low profile, hiding in their homes to avoid interacting with the Tigrayan forces.<sup>17</sup>

As resistance to Tigrayan forces' control of the area grew, they increased their intimidation of residents. Ostensibly focussing on suspected supporters of Amhara forces/militias and others who were organizing the armed resistance, they routinely harassed residents, demanding and forcibly taking food, money, and other property and/or arbitrarily accusing them of being related to/supporting government forces/local Amhara militias.

A Kobo resident told Amnesty International his experience, which was typical of others we heard:

**After a few days in town some Tigrayan fighters asked me for money. I gave whatever little I had, but they were not satisfied and cursed me and threatened to kill me if they found out that I am a militia member, which I am not. After that I managed to keep out of sight for weeks by hiding indoors and never going out when they were around town.<sup>18</sup>**

Another resident recalled:

**They said that they were only looking for militias and those who attacked them, but in reality they harassed many people. Some people who had fled to nearby villages and who came back to Kobo after some days/weeks to get food from their homes were treated with suspicion, as potential insurgents, just because they had been away. When some farmers started to fight against them, they treated all farmers,**

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<sup>15</sup> Between the outbreak of the conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia in November 2020 and June 2021, Tigrayan forces were confined to the Tigray region. After they managed to oust the ENDF and Amhara special forces and militias from parts of the Tigray region, they went on to take control of parts of the Amhara and Afar regions, eventually reaching Kobo in mid-July 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Dessie city council announces curfew as displaced persons arrive, 10 August 2021, <https://newsbeezer.com/ethiopia/dessie-city-council-announces-curfew-as-displaced-persons-arrive/>. See also Ethiopia - Tigray region humanitarian update, OCHA Situation Report, 19 August 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Situation%20Report%20-%20Ethiopia%20-%20Tigray%20Region%20Humanitarian%20Update%20-%202019%20Aug%202021.pdf>. The latter report states that according to regional authorities, "Dessie and Kombolcha in North and South Wello Zone [in the Amhara region] host an estimated 150,000 IDPs."

<sup>17</sup> Amnesty International interviews, 26 and 28 October 2021, 16 and 25 November, and 20 December.

<sup>18</sup> Amnesty International interview, 25 November 2021.

or anyone who dressed like a farmer, as enemies. They killed people for nothing.<sup>19</sup>

A resident said:

**They asked me if my husband is with the militias and I said no, because he really wasn't, but one of them called me a liar and pushed me and pointed his rifle at me.<sup>20</sup>**

On 9 September, according to most residents interviewed by Amnesty International, heavy clashes took place between Tigrayan forces and Amhara militias and farmers east of Kobo, by the Zobel mountains and around Gedemyu.<sup>21</sup> Takele, a resident of Kobo, described what occurred:

**Fighting was intense in the morning and the TPLF were defeated and we heard that many of their fighters were killed and by the middle of the day some Amhara militias were back in control of Kobo and for the first time (since mid-July) [there] were no Tigrayan forces in Kobo. But later in the afternoon the Tigrayan forces received reinforcements – men and weapons – and they came back. That is when they started to kill ordinary people in Kobo. A kind of revenge. But unfortunately it was ordinary people who lost their lives. The militias disappeared and the farmers who had weapons and who had fought the Tigrayan fighters were outside town anyway. We were defenceless.**

**Those who had weapons saved themselves and defenceless people were killed. There was nobody to protect the civilians.<sup>22</sup>**

Benyamin, a resident of Kobo's Kebele 02, told Amnesty International:

**In the late afternoon a large group of TPLF fighters came by near my home, maybe 100 of them in smaller groups. Some of them shot dead two of my neighbours, a man aged about 60-65 and a woman aged about 45 who lived next door. They shot them outside their homes. And then they shot three labourers in their 20s a little further up the road. I saw this from inside my home. They did not come to my house but they shot at my door. Later in the evening after the Tigrayan fighters had gone I went to bury the bodies. My neighbours had been shot in the chest (the woman) and in the abdomen (the man), and the three labourers had been shot in the head. I buried them in St Michael's Church nearby.<sup>23</sup>**

The same man told Amnesty International that he heard a series of single shots being fired in an area at the back of his house:

**We heard fighting between the two sides before so I know what it sounds like. This was not fighting. It was single shots, the same way as they killed my neighbours. Later I saw 15 bodies in a field between my house and the TPLF camp, which was in the Ewket Chora primary school.<sup>24</sup>**

Another resident recounted seeing the bodies of unarmed men in civilian clothes at the same location. Amnesty International could not verify the identity of the men nor establish if they were civilians or fighters. However, even if they were fighters, they were not engaged in hostilities when they were summarily killed. Summary killings of both civilians and captured fighters are war crimes and possibly crimes against humanity.

Melakie, another resident of Kebele 02, told Amnesty International about the killing of his cousin and several neighbours:

**They killed my cousin after they took him from his home in front of me. My cousin was a farmer and the father of four children. He was not involved in fighting at any time. I was in my home and he was in his home, opposite my home, and there were many Tigrayan fighters around and a group of them took him out of his home, tied his hands behind his back and one of them hit him with his rifle butt. I hid myself so I could see but could not be seen. They took him away.**

**The following day I found his body in the compound of the Ewket Chora school. He had been shot in the head — the bullet had gone through from one side to the other. His hands were still tied behind his back**

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<sup>19</sup> Amnesty International interview, 12 November 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Amnesty International interview, 16 November 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Most residents interviewed by Amnesty International (during remote interviews carried out between 25 September and 20 December 2021) gave similar accounts of the events that unfolded on 9 September. They described heavy fighting outside the town, followed by the brief return of Amhara forces/militias to Kobo in the afternoon, followed by the arrival of Tigrayan forces' reinforcements to the area and their return to Kobo in the late afternoon, when they went on a rampage and killed dozens of civilians.

<sup>22</sup> Amnesty International interview, 17 November 2021.

<sup>23</sup> Amnesty International interview, 25 November 2021.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

with a piece of cloth.

**There were many other dead bodies nearby. Among them there were also five neighbours and some 20 labourers. Mamo had been shot in the back, Zinabu in the head, Ermias in the chest and Berihun in abdomen. Zinabu's hands were also tied behind his back.<sup>25</sup>**

Another resident told Amnesty International what he saw the following day in and around Kebele 02:

**The first dead bodies we saw were by the school fence. There were 20 bodies lying in their underwear and facing the fence and three more bodies in the school compound. Most were shot at the back of their heads and some in the back. Those who were shot at the back of their heads could not be recognized because their faces were partially blown off.<sup>26</sup>**

A farmer who lives in Kebele 03 told Amnesty International about the killing of his brothers and brother-in-law:

**I went to my farmland and got back home at 4 pm. My two brothers and my brother-in-law were at home. Then five Tigrayan fighters came to our home and took us outside and asked us to take off our shoes and show our IDs. They told us to hold hands and walk, while they walked behind us. We walked a few hundred meters and then they handed us over to another group, a larger group and they turned back. The new group shot at us. First they shot my brother Taddese. They shot him in the head, near his left ear. He died on the spot. My other brother and my brother-in-law tried to move away and were both shot in the back and killed. At the same time I kneeled down next to my brother Taddese and they shot me in my left shoulder. The bullet went in and out. I stayed down pretending to be dead and waited without moving until the fighters left and then I ran to the forest.**

**The following morning I went back to collect the bodies of my relatives and on the road back to Kobo I saw many bodies. I buried my relatives in St George's Church, a few minutes' walk from where they were killed, and a few minutes' walk from our home. Among the bodies I saw on the road were the bodies of two merchants I know. One is an old man aged about 60.**

**At first when we wanted to bury the bodies on Friday morning (10 September) the Tigrayan fighters did not allow us. My mother was crying and she told them, "then kill me like you killed my sons," and a fighter kicked her, but then another fighter came by in a 4x4 vehicle and told the others to let us bury the dead.<sup>27</sup>**



*New graves in the St. George's Church graveyard in Kobo, Ethiopia, where witnesses and survivors told Amnesty International that they buried those summarily killed by Tigrayan forces on 9 September 2021.*

Ten residents of Kobo told Amnesty International that they had seen and/or heard Tigrayan forces kill unarmed civilians at close range. Twelve others said that they saw the bodies of men who had been shot dead execution-

<sup>25</sup> Amnesty International interview, 20 December 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Amnesty International interview, 17 November 2021.

<sup>27</sup> Amnesty International interview, 18 December 2021.

style — in the head, back or chest - some of whom had their hands tied behind their back. Six of those interviewed said that they had helped to collect and/or bury some of the bodies.

In all, the people Amnesty International interviewed described the killings of over two dozen men and one woman — some of whom were residents of the town and some of whom were itinerant agricultural workers. They identified 16 people whose names also appear on a list of 63 dead received by Amnesty International and spoke of the others as residents and labourers whom they knew by sight but not by name.<sup>28</sup>

Amnesty International has not been able to establish whether some of those summarily killed on 9 September had been involved in fighting against Tigrayan forces earlier that day. But even if that were the case, under international humanitarian law, the summary killing of captives and anyone who is otherwise *hors de combat* constitutes the war crime of murder.

Satellite imagery analysis by Amnesty International’s Crisis Evidence Lab shows evidence consistent with new burial sites at the St George’s and St Michael’s churches compounds, where residents told Amnesty International that they had buried those killed on 9 September.



Satellite imagery from 9 June, 29 July and 19 October 2021, shows the St. George’s Church graveyard area in Kobo, Ethiopia. On 19 October 2021, many new graves are visible that were not apparent in the previous imagery in the exact location where witnesses told Amnesty International they had buried some of the civilians summarily killed on 9 September.



A time series of satellite imagery shows the increase in graves at St. Michael’s church graveyard, where witnesses told Amnesty International some of those summarily killed on 9 September were buried. On 9 June 2021, new graves are not visible. On 29 July 2021, imagery shows a small area of possible disturbed earth but it is not clear if they are graves. On 19 October 2021, imagery clearly shows an increase in graves.

<sup>28</sup> Amnesty International interviews, multiple dates from 26 October 2021 to 20 December.

In interviews with the media, Tigrayan officials have denied targeting civilians in Kobo, dismissing witnesses' accounts as "just a figment of someone's imagination", blaming local militia and "irregular units," and saying that "people who were hiding their guns" joined them.<sup>29</sup> Kobo residents who gave testimonies to Amnesty International for the most part confirmed that Amhara militias and local farmers fought Tigrayan fighters in an attempt to push them out of the area. Several lamented that the ENDF had retreated earlier on, leaving a poorly-equipped local militia to face the advancing Tigrayan force. However, the cases documented in this this briefing are not those of Amhara militia members and farmers killed in armed clashes with Tigrayan forces — but rather those of unarmed civilians not taking part in hostilities who were deliberately killed, seemingly in retaliation for the losses sustained by the Tigrayan forces earlier in the day.

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<sup>29</sup> "Then the killing started': Witnesses accuse Tigray fighters," Associated Press, 25 September 2021, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/killing-started-witnesses-accuse-tigray-fighters-80226703>

# 3. RAPE, GANG RAPE, AND SEXUAL ASSAULT OF AMHARA WOMEN AND GIRLS

In the period beginning in July 2021 in which they exercised control over parts of the Amhara region, Tigrayan fighters have committed widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence against ethnic Amhara women and girls in several villages around Chenna. The 30 cases investigated by Amnesty International are not isolated; rather, they seem to be part of a pattern of similar violations repeatedly perpetrated by large numbers of Tigrayan fighters in different locations, as documented below. Moreover, such abuses are likely under-reported due to stigma within the survivors' communities, challenges in accessing the locations, and communication blackouts that restrict and delay the flow of information. The cases of rape and sexual violence documented are serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, and constitute war crimes, and — given the nature, scale, and gravity of the violations committed — may amount to crimes against humanity.

Survivors interviewed by Amnesty International have suffered physical and mental trauma resulting in depression, insomnia, anxiety, and other forms of emotional distress, often made worse by the reaction of their husbands and families. Several women said that their husbands had left them and others said that they feel unable to tell their husbands and/or their families about having been raped. Some said they could no longer live in their villages because of the stigma.

The sexual violence documented by Amnesty International has been accompanied by shocking levels of brutality, including beatings, death threats, and ethnic slurs. Fourteen of the 30 women and girls interviewed by Amnesty International in and around Chenna were raped by multiple perpetrators, two in front of their children. Seven are below 18 — two as young as 14. Doctors who provided medical care to rape survivors told Amnesty International that two survivors had to be treated for lacerations caused by foreign objects inserted into their genitals, seemingly rifle bayonets.

Lucy, a 14-year-old seventh grade student, and her mother were both raped by Tigrayan fighters in their home in Did-Bahr. She told Amnesty International:

**I was at home with my mother and my grandmother when two young men with rifles came to our home in the morning at about 11. One of them wore military clothes and the other wore civilian clothes. They spoke a mix of Tigrinya and some Amharic. They said: “Our families were raped and now it is our turn to rape you.” One of them raped me in the courtyard and the other raped my mother inside the house. My mother is very sick now; she is very depressed and desperate. We don't speak about what happened; it is impossible.<sup>30</sup>**

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<sup>30</sup> Amnesty International interview, 17 November 2021.

Kaya, 15, told Amnesty International that armed fighters stormed her home in Chenna at 8am on 30 August demanding to know where militia members lived:

**They told me to go with them to show them the houses of militia members. I told them I don't know, and my mum was shouting and holding on to me, but they pointed their rifles at her threatening to kill her and separated me from her by force, and one of them took me to the forest. He had a Kalashnikov. In the forest he raped me and then he left me there and I walked for four hours to Wukan to my aunt, because I was too scared to go back to Chenna.<sup>31</sup>**

Medical doctors and social workers who provided medical care to these rape survivors told Amnesty International that several survivors suffered severe and long-term physical and psychological damage,<sup>32</sup> including 10 who remained hospitalised three months after they were raped, two who had developed recto-vaginal and other fistulas, at least six who had contracted sexually transmitted diseases, and two who got pregnant from the rape and had to have abortions because they had not been able to access medical facilities within the necessary timeframe to get emergency contraception.<sup>33</sup>

Most of the women and girls were raped in their homes and some in nearby fields by Tigrayan fighters who had forced them to provide food and cook for them. The sexual violence was accompanied by ethnic slurs, degrading remarks and threats, or comments such as “your people raped our women”; “We have a right to take revenge for what your people did to our women”; “Thank god that I am not going to kill you.” Several survivors told Amnesty International that they were assaulted as Tigrayan forces had lost territory and men in battles with local Amhara forces and militias.

Genet, a 27-year-old mother of two from Jerosan, a village near Chenna, told Amnesty International:

**About 10 TPLF fighters came in the morning and asked for food and after I fed them they went away. Then they came back, three of them, and asked for money and I gave them 200 birr [approximately equivalent to 5 USD], which is all I had. They had rifles and one had a grenade and said he will kill us because we are Amhara and deserve to die. It was 4 September and they had been defeated in Chenna and were angry.**

**One of them raped me. He said: “what do you prefer that I slaughter you like a goat or you have sex with me?” He raped me in front of my children and they were crying while he raped me.**

**After he raped me, I fled to the caves in the forest with my children and stayed there for three days, and when we went back home we found that everything had been stolen from our home.<sup>34</sup>**

Salam, a 29-year-old mother of three from Chenna told Amnesty International that several groups of Tigrayan fighters went to her home to ask for food every day from when they first took control of the village until 2 September, when four of them locked her elderly parents in a separate room and raped her.

**Whenever they came, I had to cook for them and once some of them even slept in our compound. I live with my parents and my children but my children had left with my brother. My husband was a soldier but was killed a month earlier in the war in Tigray. On 2 September (Nahassie 27) four came; one was called colonel by the other three. He raped me first, while the others were outside. After he left the other three raped me one by one. The ordeal lasted from midday to 3 am. After they left I went to free my parents who had been locked up in a separate room in our compound by the Tigrayan fighters. My father told me that when he asked them to leave me alone they had kicked him.<sup>35</sup>**

Some of the perpetrators made additional efforts to inflict as much physical and psychological pain and fear as possible on the women and girls they abused. Medical doctors who treated the survivors told Amnesty International that several women were pregnant when they were raped and that at least two women had foreign metallic objects inserted into their vagina, which had caused lacerations.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Amnesty International interview, 18 November 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Amnesty International interviews, 21, 22 and 27 November 2021.

<sup>33</sup> Experts have concluded that “[e]mergency contraception (EC) can prevent up to over 95% of pregnancies when taken within 5 days after intercourse.” Emergency contraception, World Health Organization (WHO), 9 November 2021, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/emergency-contraception>

<sup>34</sup> Amnesty International interview, 18 November 2021.

<sup>35</sup> Amnesty International interview, 16 November 2021.

<sup>36</sup> Amnesty International interviews, 22 and 27 November 2021.

Mabat, a 57-year-old widow and mother of seven, told Amnesty International that she was raped by multiple fighters at her home in a village in the Boza area on 18 August, the first day that the Tigrayan forces were in control of her village:

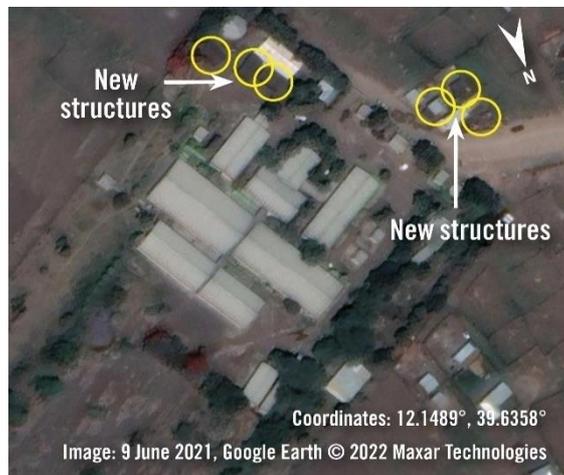
**I went to church in the morning and when I got back home I found seven fighters in my house eating my food. They raped me. All of them raped me, vaginally and anally, in front of two of my children. They told me “You are lucky there isn’t 15 of us. You Amhara are very bad people. They spoke a language I did not understand but one spoke Amharic. I begged them, I told them ‘I am like your mum, please don’t do this to me but he didn’t care. They said we Amhara are bad people and deserve the worst. Since that happened to me I now have a fistula and hepatitis B.”<sup>37</sup>**

Elsa, a 21-year-old university student and mother of an eight-month-old baby girl from Boza, told Amnesty International that she was raped by two Tigrayan fighters at her home where she lived with her mother-in-law:

**Two fighters came to my house and demanded food but I told them I had nothing; they went away and came back with potatoes and told me to boil them and they ate. Then they told me to boil some water and after I did they said “what do you prefer – that we put your baby in boiling water or we rape you?” I was terrified that they would hurt my baby. I still have nightmares about it. After they raped me they destroyed my notebooks and my study material. They also threatened to shoot me and my mother-in-law.”<sup>38</sup>**

Rape survivors told Amnesty International that they were only able to receive medical care after the Tigrayan forces left their area and they could reach hospitals in government-controlled areas.<sup>39</sup> They said that the very basic medical facilities which existed in and around their villages were mostly not functioning after Tigrayan forces took control of the area, partly because the fighters had looted them and partly because the staff had fled. Residents of Zarima and Boza specifically said that the clinics in their villages had been looted and vandalized. Rape survivors had therefore no access to medical facilities within necessary time frame to receive crucial post-rape care, including emergency contraception and HIV post-exposure prophylaxis, which should be administered within 72 hours.<sup>40</sup>

All the rape survivors interviewed by Amnesty International said that they only managed to receive medical care after Tigrayan forces withdrew from the area and they could reach government-controlled areas, where there are functioning hospitals, weeks after they were raped. They said that after the Tigrayan forces left the area, social workers from the regional health authorities visited their villages to seek out rape survivors and arranged their transfer to hospitals in Debarek, Bahir Dar and Gonder, where they underwent tests and received medical care.



Satellite imagery from 9 June and 29 July 2021 shows the Kobo hospital. On 29 July, debris is visible in the area consistent with reports that the hospital buildings had been ransacked.

<sup>37</sup> Amnesty International interview, 19 November 2021.

<sup>38</sup> Amnesty International interview, 16 November 2021.

<sup>39</sup> Amnesty International interviews, 16, 17, 18 and 19 November 2021.

<sup>40</sup> Providing comprehensive post-rape care including HIV postexposure prophylaxis (PEP), WHO, <https://apps.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/violence/16ideas/files/11.pdf>

# 4. LOOTING

Although when Tigrayan forces initially took control of Kobo, Chenna and surrounding areas, they reassured local residents that they would not harm them, they very quickly started to demand food from residents — many of whom could ill-afford to share their meagre food supplies with the invading fighters — and to loot residents' shops and public property, such as medical clinics/facilities. The latter, in particular, further worsened the already dire plight of the sick and injured, including victims of attacks by Tigrayan fighters. Several told Amnesty International that their homes were looted in front of them and others while they were hiding in nearby forests.

Eyerusalem, a resident of Chenna, told Amnesty International:

**They came to ask for food again and again and that day I told them that I had no more food for them, that my own children were starving, but they said that I must go dig out potatoes from the field and killed some of the neighbour's chickens and told me to cook them for them.<sup>41</sup>**

Eleven women residents of Chenna and surrounding villages told Amnesty International that Tigrayan fighters had stolen their and their neighbours' goats and chicken. In some cases they forced the women to slaughter and cook the animals for them to eat and in other cases they took the animals away with them. Half of those interviewed by Amnesty International said that Tigrayan fighters had looted their homes and/or their neighbours' homes.

A resident of Kobo told Amnesty International:

**When the Tigrayan fighters came into town (on 23 July) they said they would not bother people but some of them stole mobile phones and some money from some residents. On 24 July they broke into my stationery shop and stole some material. I went to the shop on 25 July and asked the fighters outside if I could go in to retrieve something and they asked me for money. I gave them 800 birr, as that is all I had. I never went back to my shop after that because I was too scared. They were going house to house to ask for food.<sup>42</sup>**

A resident of Kobo who was shot and injured by Tigrayan fighters on 9 September, told Amnesty International that he had no choice but risk getting caught by the fighters as he fled the area under their control and walk for hours to find a functioning medical facility in government-controlled areas. He explained:

**I was weak and in pain but I had to walk for a long time to try to reach another area far from us because the fighters had ransacked the hospital and clinics and there was nothing left for medical care.<sup>43</sup>**

Several residents of Kobo, Chenna and surrounding villages told Amnesty International that Tigrayan forces also looted and vandalized public property, including medical facilities and schools. The latter were also used as makeshift military bases by Tigrayan forces — and before and after them by Ethiopian government forces and Amhara militias.<sup>44</sup> Satellite images analyzed by Amnesty International's Crisis Evidence Lab show evidence corroborating reports of looting and damage at Kobo's hospital and St Joseph and Ewket Chora schools during the period when Tigrayan forces controlled the town. Video footage posted on the Facebook page of the Kobo St. Joseph School on 14 December 2021 shows the school looted and vandalized.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Amnesty International interview, 17 November 2021.

<sup>42</sup> Amnesty International interview, 25 November 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Amnesty International interview, 18 December 2021.

<sup>44</sup> According to six residents' testimonies and satellite image analysis by Amnesty International.

<sup>45</sup> Facebook post from Kobo St. Joseph School, 14 December 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/KOBO-StJOSEPH-school-1573566916269411/>. See also <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=598507934537401>

The military use of schools by armed forces and armed groups, and attacks on schools contravene international law, negatively impact children’s rights to education and endanger children’s and teachers’ safety.<sup>46</sup>



Satellite imagery from 9 June and 19 October 2021 shows St. Joseph’s School. On 19 October 2021, small areas of debris are visible consistent with a video showing areas of the school ransacked and with residents’ testimonies. The debris may have been present on 29 July, but the resolution of the image is not high enough to see the subtle debris. Video source: Uploaded 14 December 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=598507934537401>, accessed 4 February 2022. (The 9 June image shows the presence of many lorries, buses and military trucks, indicating the presence of government forces and/or allied militias around the school prior to the arrival of Tigrayan forces in Kobo. Government forces were also using the school in early February 2022 according to witnesses).

<sup>46</sup> Schools and universities, including those that have been abandoned or evacuated because of the dangers presented by armed conflict, should not be used by the fighting forces of parties to armed conflict for any purpose in support of their military effort, except in extenuating circumstances when they are presented with no viable alternative, and only for as long as no choice is possible between such use of the school or university and another feasible method for obtaining a similar military advantage, according to the Safe Schools Declaration [Guidelines 1 and 2]; [https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/documents\\_guidelines\\_en.pdf](https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/documents_guidelines_en.pdf)



# 5. INTERNATIONAL LAW APPLICABLE TO THE CONFLICT

The abuses perpetrated by Tigrayan forces documented in this briefing — deliberate killings of civilians, rape and sexual assaults against women and girls, looting, destruction of private and public property and attacks on medical facilities — are serious human rights abuses and violate international human rights and humanitarian law; and some constitute war crimes and possibly crimes against humanity.

International humanitarian law sets out legal rules that bind all parties to armed conflict, whether state armed forces or non-state armed groups. These rules, the most relevant of which to these cases are set out below, aim to minimise human suffering in war, and offer particular protection to civilians and those who are not directly participating in hostilities. The hostilities between Tigrayan forces and Ethiopian government forces and allied militias which have been ongoing since November 2020 constitute a non-international armed conflict.<sup>47</sup>

Ethiopia is a party to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and to their Additional Protocols I and II. Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 establishes minimum standards for all parties to a non-international armed conflict. In any event, most of the rules on the conduct of hostilities and on fundamental guarantees, including all those cited in this briefing, apply to non-international armed conflict and are binding on all parties — both state and non-state forces.<sup>48</sup>

Under the laws of war, warring parties may target only combatants and military objectives. Deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian objects are prohibited. Military forces can only attack civilians who are at the time directly participating in hostilities, such as by firing weapons at opposing forces. Common Article 3 to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 stipulates that civilians that are captured, surrendered, and wounded fighters must “in all circumstances be treated humanely.” They are protected against “violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture.”

The summary killings and acts of rape set out in this briefing violate the prohibition of murder, rape and other sexual violence,<sup>49</sup> and constitute war crimes, as they occurred in the context of an armed conflict which the perpetrators would have been aware of.<sup>50</sup>

Evidence collected by Amnesty International also suggests that these acts may have been committed as part of a systematic attack against the Amhara civilian population. These acts were repeatedly committed by Tigrayan forces over time and in several locations, sometimes in the presence of commanding officers.

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<sup>47</sup> Eritrean forces have been participating in the fighting alongside the ENDF and with the clear consent or acquiescence of the Ethiopian government, and thus their involvement does not transform the conflict into an international armed conflict.

<sup>48</sup> For an authoritative list of these rules, see International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Customary International Humanitarian Law: Volume 1: Rules, J-M Henckaerts and L Doswald-Beck, eds., 2005 (hereinafter ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law).

<sup>49</sup> Additional Protocol II, Article 4; ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law, Rule 93.

<sup>50</sup> Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 8 (2) (e) (vi)-1; ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law, Rule 156.

Summary killings and/or acts of rape carried out as part of a widespread or systematic attack on the civilian population, where the perpetrator was aware of the wider context, would amount to a crime against humanity.<sup>51</sup>

Acts that constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity incur individual criminal responsibility under international law. Serious violations of international humanitarian law associated with an armed conflict, where the perpetrator had knowledge of the armed conflict, are war crimes.<sup>52</sup> Where rape and other forms of sexual violence are committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population in furtherance of a state or organizational policy, and where the perpetrator had knowledge of the attack, they also constitute a crime against humanity.<sup>53</sup>

Pillage, forcible appropriation of private property for personal use; destruction or seizure of property of an adversary not justified by military necessity;<sup>54</sup> and attacking hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are cared for are prohibited and constitute war crimes.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7 (1) (g)-1. Rape is also a crime against humanity under customary international humanitarian law. See, for example, <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F72%2F10&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop>

<sup>52</sup> ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law, Rule 156.

<sup>53</sup> Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Elements of Crimes, Article 7 (1) (g)-1.

<sup>54</sup> ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law, Rule 50; Rome Statute of the ICC, Article 8 (2) (e) (xii).

<sup>55</sup> Additional Protocol II, Article 11(1); Rome Statute of the ICC, Article 8 (2) (e) (iv).

# 6. TPLF RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF CRIMES COMMITTED BY ITS FORCES

A request for information about measures taken by the TPLF or Tigrayan forces to investigate the allegations contained in this briefing sent by Amnesty International to Reda Getachew, a senior TPLF official and the head of the Tigray Government's External Affairs Office, on 24 January has remained unanswered.

TPLF leaders have responded to reports of killings, rape and other war crimes and possible crimes against humanity perpetrated by TPLF-affiliated forces by denials and attempts to discredit the accusations. They have not seriously committed to investigate the allegations and so far they are not known to have taken any measures to ensure non-repetition of the crimes and removal of those responsible from their forces.

For example, on 10 November the "External Affairs Office of the Government of Tigray" stated that Amnesty International's press release detailing the gang rape of Amhara women and girls by Tigrayan fighters in the Amhara region, was based on "disturbingly flawed methodology... and self-serving testimonies".<sup>56</sup> At the end of December 2021, after information collected by journalists who travelled to Nefas Mewcha corroborated Amnesty International's findings, the TPLF promised to investigate the alleged rapes and "bring perpetrators to justice".<sup>57</sup> However, to date Tigrayan officials have provided no information about any such investigations.

On 10 December the TPLF likewise denied and dismissed UN accusations that TPLF fighters had looted food warehouses and held humanitarian workers at gun point. On 13 August 2021, Getachew Reda dismissed questions about the killings of hundreds of civilians by Tigrayan militias in Mai Cadra in November 2020, and claimed allegations were being investigated. However, 15 months since the Mai Cadra massacre, Tigrayan officials have provided no information to substantiate their promise to investigate.

TPLF officials have likewise denied targeting civilians in Kobo. On 25 September 2021 Getachew Reda dismissed witnesses' accounts as "just a figment of someone's imagination", and blamed local militia, "irregular units," and said that "people who were hiding their guns" joined them.<sup>58</sup> Such statements are misleading, seemingly seeking to deflect from allegations of deliberate killings of civilians not involved in armed clashes by mentioning different events, namely the armed clashes between Tigrayan and Amhara fighters. The fact that such clashes occurred does not in any way justify summary killings of unarmed civilians and/or captured fighters by either side.

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<sup>56</sup> The Ethiopian government likewise dismissed Amnesty International's report about the rape of Tigrayan women and girls in the Tigray region by Ethiopian government forces and allied militias and Eritrean forces.

<sup>57</sup> "In Ethiopia war, new abuse charges turn spotlight on Tigrayan former rulers," Reuters, 28 December 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/ethiopia-conflict-tplf/>

<sup>58</sup> "Then the killing started': Witnesses accuse Tigray fighters," Associated Press, 25 September 2021, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/killing-started-witnesses-accuse-tigray-fighters-80226703>

# 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

## TO THE TPLF AND THE LEADERSHIP OF THE TIGRAYAN FORCES

Amnesty International reiterates its calls to the TPLF and the leadership of the Tigrayan forces to:

- Take concrete measures to ensure that Tigrayan forces put an immediate end to all human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, including killings of unarmed civilians and captured fighters, and rape and other forms of sexual violence.
- Make clear that such crimes will not be tolerated and remove suspected perpetrators from their ranks
- Put in place concrete mechanisms to monitor the conduct of Tigrayan forces so as to deter and prevent the commission of such crimes as described in this briefing, and to ensure that if/when abuses of international law are committed the perpetrators are promptly identified and removed from their ranks.
- Collaborate with any investigation being carried out by local, regional or international bodies in order to facilitate fact-finding processes/efforts and the development of pathways to hold accountable perpetrators of serious human rights abuses, including violations of international humanitarian law, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

## TO THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT

The organization urges the Ethiopian government to:

- Step up efforts to provide the necessary support to survivors of sexual violence, including comprehensive post rape care, and to other victims and families of victims, ensuring that survivors are involved in shaping decision-making policy that affects them.
- Urgently facilitate immediate and unhindered access to humanitarian and human rights workers to all areas of northern Ethiopia impacted by the conflict, so as to ensure that much needed humanitarian supplies can be delivered to those in need, and that allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other human rights abuses can be investigated in a timely manner. Notably to recognize the mandate of/cooperate with/grant access to the international commission of human rights experts on Ethiopia, mandated by the UN Human Rights Council's [resolution S/33/1](#) of 17 December 2021; and the [Commission of Inquiry](#) into the Situation in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia, established by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on 12 May 2021.
- Take concrete measures to ensure that allegations of sexual violence and unlawful killings are promptly, effectively, independently and impartially investigated – regardless of the ethnicity of the perpetrators or the victims.
- Bring those suspected of criminal responsibility to justice in open, accessible civilian courts in full compliance with international standards for fair trial without recourse to the death penalty and ensure victims receive full reparation.
- Consider endorsing the Safe Schools Declaration.

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ALSO CALLS ON

- The **Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC)** to deploy his Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security to carry out a visit to northern Ethiopia, to speak to survivors and report back, including on survivors' priorities for assistance and justice.

- The **African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC)** to schedule a session in the next month to receive an update from the AUC chairperson on the situation in Ethiopia as envisaged in the Communiqué of its 1045<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 8 November 2021.
- The **Commission of Inquiry on the Situation in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia**, established by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) on 12 May 2021, to expedite its investigations with a view to publishing its findings on or before the expiry of its mandate this February, or failing that, publish a comprehensive update on the status of its investigations, including challenges faced and a clear roadmap for completing its work.
- The **ACHPR Working Group on Death Penalty, Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Killings and Enforced Disappearances** in Africa to request to visit northern Ethiopia to investigate widespread summary killings by all parties to the conflict.
- The **UN Secretary-General**:
  - To send his Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict to northern Ethiopia as provided for by Security Council resolution 1888, which calls upon the Secretary-General to “take the appropriate measures to deploy rapidly a team of experts to situations of particular concern with respect to sexual violence in armed conflict”; and deploy his Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict to carry out a visit to northern Ethiopia, to speak to survivors and report back, including on survivors' priorities for assistance and justice.
  - To ensure that an effective monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangement (MARA) is established in Ethiopia, in line with UN Security Council resolution 1960, to ensure the systematic collection of information on sexual violence that has been, and is being, committed.
- The **UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions** to request to visit northern Ethiopia to investigate widespread summary killings by all parties to the conflict.
- The **UN Human Rights Council** to ensure that the international commission of human rights experts on Ethiopia, mandated by the Council's resolution of 17 December 2021, is promptly set up and provided with the necessary resources to accomplish its task – notably:
  - To conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into allegations of violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law and international refugee law in Ethiopia committed since 3 November 2020 by all parties to the conflict, including the possible gender dimensions of such violations and abuses, by building upon the report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission;
  - To establish the facts and circumstances surrounding the alleged violations and abuses, to collect and preserve evidence, to identify those responsible, where possible, and to make such information accessible and usable in support of ongoing and future accountability efforts.

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL  
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FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.  
WHEN INJUSTICE HAPPENS  
TO ONE PERSON, IT  
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# **ETHIOPIA: SUMMARY KILLINGS, RAPE AND LOOTING BY TIGRAYAN FORCES IN AMHARA REGION**

Tigrayan fighters affiliated with the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) deliberately killed civilians, raped and sexually assaulted women and girls, and looted homes, shops, schools and medical clinics in two localities they controlled for a period of several weeks last year in Ethiopia's northern Amhara region.

In Kobo, residents told Amnesty International that they witnessed Tigrayan fighters summarily kill their relatives and neighbours outside their homes and that they found the bodies of other local residents and labourers who had been killed execution-style. In and around Chenna, 30 women and girls as young as 14 told Amnesty International that they were raped, gang raped, including in front of their children, by Tigrayan fighters who often threatened them and used racial slurs. Such violations amount to war crimes and may amount to crimes against humanity.

Amnesty International is calling on Tigrayan forces to put an immediate end to such violations, and to investigate and remove from its forces anyone suspected of involvement in such crimes. It is also urging the African Union to step up its engagement in the crisis, and the relevant United Nations bodies to send experts to the region to investigate the violations.