



PRESS RELEASE

The Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change (ENCDC)-Executive Office on the Armed Clashes between the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the Regional Administration of Tigray

We are deeply saddened to learn that armed clashes have broken between the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the Regional Administration of Tigray this morning, November 4, 2020, as declared in the official statements released by both parties. The conflict happened to occur at a challenging time for the Ethiopian people who are vehemently fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the devastations of the locust infestation that is overwhelming the region of Tigray.

We have been closely following the complex and precarious political developments in Ethiopia. We are deeply concerned about the detrimental effects that any armed regional conflict will have on our country and our people. It appears that our warnings about the PFDJ regime's interventionist tendencies in the region, were justified; this overreach and meddling in the internal affairs of our neighbour, and agreements that undermine our sovereignty and independence as a nation is condemned by our people and their political forces.

Recently, the world has been watching the developments leading up to the conflict in Ethiopia. The consequential restructuring of alliances of the forces affected by these realities may lead to a dangerous, and even deeper crisis in Ethiopia, and the region. The Eritrean people are very saddened by the war now underway in Ethiopia that may eventually hinder the economic development of the country. Regardless of how long this civil conflict continues, the impact on the lives of Ethiopia's citizens, the destruction of property, and the damage to infrastructure will be enormous. This armed conflict between the Ethiopian federal forces and the Regional Administration of Tigray is affecting all Ethiopians, and the highest price will be paid by the most vulnerable parts of the population.

The war has the potential to spread into more parts of Tigray, the Amhara region, and/or affecting all regions in some form or fashion. Therefore, both sides ought to take extreme caution, commit to a ceasefire, and de-escalate before the conflict destroys tens of thousands of innocent lives. We urge both parties to peacefully resolve their conflicts through dialogue. We also call on the African Union, and the Security Council of the United Nations to intervene through concerted efforts and take swift action to settle the conflict that has led to the current state of turmoil. ENCDC and all justice seeking Eritreans have a stake in the peace and stability of both countries, and we are ready anytime to contribute whatever is required of us to secure the bilateral interests of both nations.

We believe that this conflict will directly affect our country, Eritrea, for there are clear indications that the PFDJ regime is the mastermind of the internal conflict in Ethiopia. There is also no doubt, in our minds, that Eritrea could be utilized as the command center for the war within Ethiopia. Due to previous instances of PFDJ's engagement in wars with neighbouring countries, we believe the regime may involve our people in the internal conflicts of Ethiopia, which could prove to be devastating for them.

In conclusion, we, the Eritrean National Council, call on our people and the defence forces of Eritrea to stand against the destructive actions of the PFDJ regime. We believe our refugees are, for the most part, safe in Ethiopia, but we call on all concerned international organizations, countries, the federal government of Ethiopia, and the regional government of Tigray, to protect them from suffering the deleterious effects of this current conflict.

The Office of the Executive Committee

Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change

November 4, 2020