



Official Correspondence GSTS-O.C-2023-005
The Global Society of Tigray Scholars
and Professionals (GSTS)¹

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GSTS's Position Statement on the Ongoing Process of Forming an Interim Administration in Tigray

A Call for Transparency, Inclusiveness, Tolerance, and Responsibility

1. Recalling the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) signed between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) on November 2, 2022, in Pretoria, South Africa, which stipulates among other things, the establishment of an "Interim Regional Administration" in Tigray as a transitional governance body;
2. Cognizant that the transition presents an opportunity for the transformation of Tigray, not only from the genocidal war to peace but also from all forms of adversities that have undermined the people of Tigray for decades, making them vulnerable to the current destruction, including the lack of genuine democratic systems and strong institutions;
3. Underscoring the need for a negotiated political transition process;
4. Aware of the ongoing discussions on the formation of the Interim Regional Administration and the level of excitement this has generated;
5. Appreciative of the readiness for political dialogue at a moment when Tigray is facing the colossal challenge of peace building and reconstruction in a continually changing security environment;

The GSTS

- a. stresses the importance that the ongoing political discussions in Tigray should be carried out in a transparent, inclusive, broad-based, and participatory manner with regular and formal public updates;
- b. expresses its deep concern that without transparent, and inclusive consultations, the process will lack public confidence, which will determine the success of the Interim Administration;

¹GSTS is a 501(C) and 33/2011 legally registered non-partisan, not-for-profit network knowledge network operating all over the world. With over 5,000 members, (approximately 1/5 of whom are PhD holders), GSTS is the largest and most active academic and professional association in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Since the onset of the war on Tigray on 4th November 2020, GSTS has been engaged in research-based fact finding; data collection and documentation, legal analysis and interpretation, and humanitarian advocacy surrounding human rights violations, amounting to war of aggression, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide perpetrated against the Tigrayan people.

- c. demands that the process be transparent, inclusive, and participatory with public engagement, regular updates on developments, and clear procedures and timelines;
 - d. asserts that to build trust and ensure transparency, all relevant stakeholders should participate in the consultations from inception, and the public should be informed of the developments officially and regularly. The support of all relevant stakeholders will bestow legitimacy on the Interim Administration;
 - e. urges this should be done expeditiously in a manner that shortens the period of confusion and uncertainty, so that Tigray can focus on more pressing issues of safety and security, establishing effective administration, peace building and reconstruction and other areas of concern;
 - f. emphasizes the subsequent need for the formation of an agreed charter with clear strategic objectives, roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, procedures, and a timeline for the transition period.
6. Conscious of the essential role the Interim Administration could play in turning the current crisis into opportunities and laying the ground for democracy, good governance, peace, development, and the renaissance of Tigray:
- a. The GSTS believes that the strategic objective of the Tigrayan political community, including that of the interim administration and those who will participate in it, should be to ensure the non-repetition of genocidal war against the people of Tigray by building the state structure afresh with available public services and establishing effective administration across Tigray, is the most urgent of all tasks at hand;
 - b. The GSTS states its position that the interim administration to be established in Tigray should have the required execution capability and determination to promote the vital interests of Tigray, including but not limited to territorial integrity, security and safety of Tigrayans, justice and accountability for atrocity crimes, reparation and remedies to victims, and reconstruction and development of Tigray.
7. Thus, GSTS calls for an interim administration that is inclusive, empowered and capacitated to usher in a democratic dispensation that enables the people of Tigray to install through free, fair, participatory, and competitive election a government of their choice.
8. Finally, the GSTS, as an independent and non-partisan association of scholars and professionals, is committed to contributing its share in serving the people of Tigray and the achievement of the above-mentioned strategic objectives. The GSTS also calls on all Tigrayan stakeholders to cooperate and work towards these shared objectives.

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