



Proposal on the Formation of an Interim Council of Tigray

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**Global Society of Tigray Scholars and
Professionals (GSTS)**

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A. Rationale and Background

1. Cognizant of the sacrifice endured by the people of Tigray during the over two years-long genocidal war and its aftermath, and taking into account their aspirations and will for creating a prosperous Tigray with a democratic political landscape through a peaceful, inclusive, representative and transparent political transition that guarantees sustainable peace, safety, human security; and lays the very basic foundation for building democracy, good governance, rule of law, justice system, and reform-driven reconstruction and development;
2. Recognizing the current multi-faceted and complex challenges facing the people of Tigray, and the urgent need for a broad-based inclusive and representative Interim Council that represents the diverse political, social, demographic, religious, geographical and economic strata of Tigray;
3. Underscoring that good governance requires an executive body to be under some form of oversight and control by a public body, whether constituted through formal elections or other mechanisms of informal representation – the case of interim or transitional arrangements;
4. Recalling that the elected National Council of Tigray was dissolved as part of the Pretoria Cession of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) and implementing modality signed in Nairobi in November 2022 that demanded the establishment of an interim arrangement in Tigray;
5. Recalling the comprehensive negotiation strategy for Tigray developed by GSTS (Third edition, 10th July 2022), position statements dated 31st January 2023 and 6th of September 2023; and proposal dated 19th February 2023, calling for the formation of an inclusive and representative Tigray Interim Council with legal and political powers as well as moral and social authority;
6. Cognizant of the urgent need for the establishment of an Interim Council as the highest body with representation from all major stakeholders in Tigray with the responsibility to ensure the will and aspirations of Tigray and its people are exercised at the highest levels of authority and realize effective political inclusion and active participation by all key stakeholders who can meaningfully contribute to the cause;
7. Underscoring the urgent priority and need to realize the utmost unity of purpose and coherence among all political actors in Tigray and the people of Tigray, with a common vision to safeguard the vital interests of Tigray ([Refer to Annex 1](#));
8. Further underscoring the absence of Tigray's effective representation in the key architecture of Ethiopia's Federal institutions such as in the House of Federation and House of Peoples' Representatives, and at all levels of the executive arms and other constitutional institutions; and the implication this has with regard to safeguarding the vital interests of Tigray and its people.

The GSTS hereby presents a proposal for the formation of the ***Tigray Interim Council*** for consideration by all Tigrayan stakeholders. The prime purpose of this document is to present a deliberated and consensual proposal for consideration by all stakeholders that will shape the establishment of a functional Interim council with broad base support and legitimacy. The proposal draws upon experiences in the process undertaken to establish the Tigray Interim Administration (TIA) and its aftermath - including the challenges it faced. Additionally, without necessarily drawing direct parallels, as the particular context in Tigray is different in scope and nature, relevant experiences of various countries have been consulted to build upon their successes and challenges through critical consideration of the realities in Tigray.

B. Establishing Principles

The establishment and function of the Tigray Interim Council shall be founded on a set of clear principles and core values, including:

1. **Representation:** Fair representation of a diversity of viewpoints and opinions, ensuring equal opportunity for all political actors, civil society organizations, and different segments of the public at large;
2. **Independence:** Effectiveness, Transparency and Accountability all largely hinge on the independence and integrity of the Interim Council, as well as its ability to address issues promptly with a high level of responsibility;
3. **Civil Discourse:** To foster civil discourse of dissent and competing views anchored on a unity of purpose for collective security, healing, reconciliation and recovery;
4. **Consensus:** Deliberations and decisions of the Council are made based on agreement (i.e.; through consensus building) across party lines and/or consensus that denies opportunities for one party to have a majority to veto decisions;
5. **Pluralism:** To inculcate and foster a culture of democratic pluralism, and deliberative democracy;
6. **Rule of Law:** To ensure fair, and unbiased dispensation of the rule of law, and the will of the people of Tigray;
7. **Accountability:** To ensure the ultimate power and authority resides with the people of Tigray and foster a high level of openness to public scrutiny and regular communication;
8. **Diversity:** Inclusiveness, tolerance, diversity and fairness that takes ethnic, gender, geographic, political and other backgrounds into account by all stakeholders when they select their representatives; and
9. **Prioritization:** Effective prioritization and organization that serves as a compass for resource allocation and guiding focused intervention and decision-making on Tigray's survival and strategic agenda and safeguarding of the vital interests of Tigray that demand a high level of urgency.

C. Mandate of the Interim Council

The Interim Council shall have the mandate to serve as the highest authority of the Tigray Interim Administration (TIA) and is accountable to the people of Tigray through the

constituents. Overall, the Interim Council shall oversee and monitor the Interim Administration's operations and where necessary take corrective measures, while at the same time empowering, supporting and strengthening the Administration to effectively actualize its mandates and responsibilities.

The Interim Council shall be established with various mandates, including the following:

1. Overall Oversight Function:

The Interim Council shall have:

- 1.1. The responsibility of overseeing the administration's performance, particularly ensuring that decisions align with legal and ethical standards; and ensuring that it is accountable to the people;
- 1.2. The mandate to oversee and monitor the TIA's actions, including supervising implementations of policies, programs, and initiatives to guarantee they serve the public interest, ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, preventing misuse of power or corruption etc.;
- 1.3. The mandate to serve as an organ to hold the TIA accountable including the power to summon government officials to answer questions and investigate allegations of wrongdoing; and holding government officials responsible for their actions and decisions, particularly by ensuring decisions are made public through suitable mechanisms, failures and violations are explained, and proportionate measures are taken against individuals who violate laws or fail to fulfil their public duties; and
- 1.4. The Power to monitor and ensure that human rights are respected in the region and violations, when they occur, are fairly investigated and remedied in line with international and national norms and laws.

2. Legislative Function:

- 2.1. The Council shall oversee the implementation of the Tigray Regional Constitution, and other applicable laws and policies until such a time an election is conducted, and power is assumed by a duly elected state council; and
- 2.2. The Council shall have the power to review and enact regional and local laws and regulations and oversee the effective implementation of these laws that are necessary, relevant and with effect to the transitional period only.

3. Resources and Budgetary Function:

The Interim Council shall have:

- 3.1. The mandate to scrutinize, review and approve the administration's budget including endorsing the Administration's spending plans and revenue-

raising measures and may present also a 'Vote on Account' - to secure funds for essential expenditures until a comprehensive budget is formulated;

- 3.2. The power to oversee the budgetary performance of the executive body of the Interim Administration of Tigray according to relevant laws and regulations of Tigray and/or the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) as it may be applicable; and
- 3.3. The mandate to appropriate and serve as a sole custodian of state and public resources including authorization to collect taxes, mobilize funds, raise revenue, and solicit grants and loans.

4. Public Engagement and Deliberations:

The Interim Council shall:

- 4.1. Provide a forum for public policy deliberations, including issues pertinent to necessary reforms that enhance democratization, diversity, and pluralism during the interim period;
- 4.2. Establish open communication channels to gather and organize public hearings on issues of public concern such as grievances, needs, capacities and aspirations, deliberations on important issues that affect peace, security, public safety, justice and accountability, human rights, self-determination etc., and/or safeguarding the vital and strategic interests of Tigray; and
- 4.3. Promote grassroots level participation by stakeholders, encouraging large-scale public engagement at all levels of the community in the reconstruction of Tigray; and strengthening of good governance and institution building.

5. Relations with Federal Legislative Institutions:

- 5.1. The Interim Council shall serve as a conduit to the FDRE legislative branches during the interim period and represent or send delegates to represent Tigray in all relevant discourses as may be appropriate.

6. Facilitate Election:

- 6.1. The Interim Council shall have the mandate to supervise, coordinate, facilitate, and oversee the preparation and conduct of free, fair, competitive and transparent elections in coordination with relevant institutions of the FRDE for regional and federal representatives; and
- 6.2. The Interim Council will have the responsibility to ensure the smooth transition of the office and its mandate to the elected Regional Council.

7. Supporting Local Councils:

- 7.1. The Interim Council shall support, empower, streamline, oversee, and closely work with respective Councils at Woreda and Tabiya (Kebele) levels, when necessary, along with enabling instruments that foster institutional memory and continuity; and
- 7.2. The Interim Council shall ensure the separation of power of the branches of government (i.e., checks and balances among legislative, executive, and judicial bodies) as well as the separation of party and government at all tiers of the Administration in Tigray, and the devolution of power to local structures; and install instruments to reconstitute, transform, and strengthen the rule of law, justice, and the security sector including regulatory, police, and other law enforcement functions at all levels including at, Zones, Wereda, Tabiya/kebele etc.

8. Oversight over Judiciary and other Human Rights Institutions

- 8.1. The Interim Council shall have the mandate to ensure transitional justice, uphold the rule of law, oversee the implementation of reforms, and monitor progress in the judicial and legal system;
- 8.2. Upon nomination by the president of TIA, the Council shall have the mandate to appoint a president and vice presidents, of the Supreme and High Courts of Tigray, and respective judges to all three levels of the Judiciary system;
- 8.3. The Council shall have the mandate to appoint the Heads of the offices of the Regional Audit Commission, Ombudsman and Human Rights as may be required, to ensure that past weaknesses in these organs do not persist, and advocate for fairness and impartiality in their processes; and
- 8.4. The Council shall oversee the work of the Judiciary, Audit Commission and Offices of the Ombudsman and Human Rights.

9. Oversight Over the Pretoria Agreement and the Nairobi Declaration:

- 9.1. The Council shall oversee, and monitor the implementation of the Pretoria CoHA and the Nairobi Declaration by establishing a dedicated Panel of Experts – constituted of members with relevant and diverse expertise, proven technical, mediation, and negotiation skills and experiences, in-depth knowledge of the vital interests of Tigray, ability to remain objective and exercise sound judgment withstanding external pressure etc.;
- 9.2. The Council shall empower the TIA and articulate Tigray's vital interests and high-level priorities including the voluntary and dignified return of Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees to their habitual residence, home, property and land; swift and unconditional withdrawal of Amhara and Eritrean forces from all constitutional territories of Tigray and restoration of

Tigray's administrative and territories status quo ante to Pre-November 3, 2020 line etc.; and

- 9.3. The Council shall have a flexible and nimble communication and feedback loop process to efficiently inform key stakeholders and the general public about key milestones and the status of the implementation of the CoHA – through various mechanisms such as press releases, media outlets, consultative discussion platforms etc.

10. Oversight Over EFFORT Enterprises

The Interim Council shall:

- 10.1. Oversee the activities of the Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray (EFFORT); and initiate strategies and reforms on the best options in line with the best public interest including reforms towards public ownership (through public listing and partial privatization methods), and full accountability and public and regular disclosure of external audits; and
- 10.2. Monitor EFFORT and its subsidiaries to ensure that they are profitable, socially responsible, adhere to relevant laws, are led by competent management/leaders and entrepreneurs (through an open, fair, and competitive process), and are free from any type of partisan influence in the management, hiring of staff, resource allocation or profit distribution.

D. Functions and Goals of the Interim Council

In line with its mandates, the key functions of the Interim Council shall include:

1. Ensure a smooth, effective, transparent, and accountable transition during the interim period by assuming some of the mandate of an elected council of representatives until an elected Regional Council is reconstituted through universal suffrage elections;
2. Promote and safeguard the vital interests of Tigray including territorial integrity, the right to self-determination, security and safety of the people of Tigray, return and rehabilitation of displaced persons and refugees etc.;
3. Reinforce political, social and economic reforms that support good governance and effective public administration by depoliticizing civil service institutions through promoting various reform packages that foster transparency, accountability (checks and balances), and effective mobilisation and equitable and efficient utilisation of resources;
4. Create a conducive environment to support free media, ensure transparency of public services to all media, and facilitate regular updates on the performance of the Council as well as on evolving and emerging matters of public interest to the populace;
5. Lay a foundation and make all the necessary preparations for free, fair, competitive, democratic and peaceful elections and pluralism;

6. Ensure public participation in policy deliberations and in exercising the rights of the people; and
7. Ensure the protection of individual and group rights and that of the people of Tigray in general, as well as ensuring special attention to minority communities and direct victims of the genocidal war – including survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), Internally Displaced Persons, and Refugees etc.

E. Structure and Organ of the Interim Council

The Interim Council shall have interim main organs and committees:

1. Interim Main Organs

- 1.1 Interim Council Speaker
- 1.2 Two Deputy Interim Council Speakers (with at least one of them being a woman)
- 1.3 Interim Council Secretariat that runs day-to-day operational and communication affairs
- 1.4 Chairs of Interim Council standing committees

2. Interim Standing Committees

There will be a committee that reviews the works of each thematic area or cluster of the TIA, adjusting to structures and changes as needed. Committees should be chaired by individuals who have expertise and experience in the respective sectors/clusters he/she oversees. Under the current structure, the complementary committees are as follows:

- 2.1. **Post-War Rehabilitation and Reconstruction:** This standing committee focuses on reconstruction and development, overseeing post-conflict reconstruction efforts and assessing infrastructure needs, economic development plans, and the allocation of resources to promote stability and growth.
- 2.2. **Resources and Audit:** This standing committee focuses on overseeing resource mobilisation, management, utilisation, budgetary matters, financial transparency, and auditing.
- 2.3. **Economic Cluster:** The economic cluster shall oversee the Agriculture and Food systems, Natural resources; Industry, manufacturing, and commerce including Trade; Investment, Finance and Markets, Enterprise Sector etc.
- 2.4. **Infrastructure Cluster:** This cluster shall be responsible for overseeing Power, Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), Settlement (urban and rural planning), Transport and infrastructure, Water Resources, Municipal Services etc.
- 2.5. **Social Cluster:** This cluster shall oversee sectors such as health, education, housing, social protection, employment, livelihoods, cultural heritage etc.

- 2.6. **Peace, Security, and Safety:** This standing committee oversees all issues pertaining to safeguarding the peace, security, and safety of Tigray and the people of Tigray.
- 2.7. **Governance, Democratization and Public Communication:** This standing committee will ensure all aspects pertaining to good governance, fostering a multi-party and plural political landscape, transparency of government institutions, state/institution building and ensuring the conduct of fair and free elections.
- 2.8. **Constitutional, Legal, Human Rights and Justice Committee:** This standing committee will oversee the implementation of all relevant, regional, national, and international laws and the process to reform the justice system and foster respect of human rights.
- 2.9. **Truth and Reconciliation Committee:** The work of this standing committee shall entail initiating and monitoring:
 - 2.9.1. Uncovering historical truths about past grievances, atrocities, and human rights abuses; identifying culprits, analysing the extent of abuses etc.;
 - 2.9.2. Offering a space for victims and survivors to share their stories, seeking acknowledgement and validation for their suffering; fostering new methods of healing and reconciliation, rather than retributive justice;
 - 2.9.3. Providing recommendations for institutional reforms to prevent future conflicts and address underlying issues within society etc.;
 - 2.9.4. Building stronger cohesion and mutual trust among Tigrayans – the social fabric and social norms of the Tigrayan community have been severely affected by the war and internal legacies of maladministration. It is, therefore, essential to exert effort to renew a unity of purpose and shared purpose; and
 - 2.9.5. Building relations and mutual trust with neighbouring peoples: The war has destroyed relations with neighbouring peoples and severely affected the social fabric that binds communities together, and this committee shall be mandated to establish facts and facilitate reconciliation strategies to heal the significant ruptures in the social fabric and fractured societies through active community participation.
- 2.10. **Women and Youth Affairs Committee:** This standing committee will play a crucial role in overseeing and addressing issues related to women, young people, and gender affairs – including empowerment, addressing challenges faced by youths, and ensuring support for families to balance work and family life.
- 2.11. **Veterans Affairs Committee:** Among other duties, this standing committee shall have the mandate to:
 - 2.11.1. Oversee the well-being and benefit programs for veterans, their families, and survivors, covering pensions and other essential benefits; and

- 2.11.2. Recommend legislation concerning veterans' benefits, including proposing new laws or refining existing ones, and advocate for the political and social concerns of Veterans.
- 2.12. **Diaspora and External Affairs Committee** – This committee shall be mandated with:
 - 2.12.1. Overseeing the diaspora movement through designing enabling strategies to understand, leverage, and mobilize the potential of the Tigrayan diaspora across diverse spheres to aid in reconstruction, development, and socio-political reform etc.;
 - 2.12.2. Establish open communication channels to foster regular discussion with the diaspora; and
 - 2.12.3. Fostering mechanisms to consolidate diplomatic, technical, and financial resources from the international community.

F. Process and Composition of the Interim Council

The Council is expected to be inclusive of all key Tigrayan stakeholders, sectors of society and legally recognized actors and representatives of the people of Tigray where the will and aspirations of the people are exercised at the top level of authority with its members coming from all socio-demographic and political spheres including minority communities, religion, culture, gender, age, political outlook, localities and/or other factors.

- A. The process of how the Interim Council is established will determine the level of its acceptance/legitimacy as well as its effectiveness in discharging its mandates.
- B. The Interim Council shall be a big tent with 151 seats and the composition and representation of the Interim Council should be as widely representative and inclusive as possible and shall include:
 - 1. **Members of the former Elected Council:** One former Council member to be selected as a direct representative of the people from each electoral constituency making up a total of 38 representatives out of the total 151 seats;
 - 2. **Political Parties:** All political parties operating in Tigray before or on November 4th, 2020, and that are organized and led by Tigrayans shall be represented in the Council. They should also engage in the process of the Council's formation, and their level of representation should be determined through negotiation among all parties on an equal footing. However, an agreement should be reached that political parties shall not use the council to promote their political agenda, at the expense of the vital interests of the Tigray people;
 - 3. **Tigray Defence Forces (TDF):** TDF is a true reflection of the people of Tigray, and is derived from diverse political, geographic, faith or social spectrums and all demographics of Tigray. With the overwhelming support and goodwill of the people of Tigray, TDF has a critical role in maintaining law and order and ensuring the safety and security of the people of Tigray. It is also a major stakeholder to ensure the successful implementation of the CoHA and the ongoing effort for a peaceful reform and transition. It is also

important that the representation of the Tegadelti of Tigray (TDF) takes into consideration its internal diversity including gender, age, religion, education, geographical aspects within Tigray and any other relevant aspects;

4. **Minority Communities:** In line with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the unique challenges they face, the Irob and Kunama communities shall have direct representation in the Interim Council;
 5. **Vulnerable Groups:** Communities or sections of community that have taken the brunt of war-induced suffering and continue to be at high risk including Border communities, Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Refugees and People with Disabilities shall have a seat in the Interim Council;
 6. **Scholars and Professionals:** The inclusion of scholars and professionals in the Interim Council is crucial for leveraging expertise, knowledge infrastructure, and experience thus ensuring a well-informed decision-making process. Hence, representatives of academic and professional groups with sizable membership and wide geographic coverage, and which have made meaningful contributions and have a notable sphere of influence shall be represented;
 7. **Tigrayans in the Diaspora:** Tigrayans in the diaspora are estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands and have contributed to the resistance struggle in many ways. Representatives of Tigrayans in the Diaspora should be directly selected by members of the community either through their associations or communities, thus avoiding handpicking individuals. Diaspora communities shall be represented according to five major regions (North America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia Pacific);
 8. **Tigrayans residing in the rest of Ethiopia:** Tigrayan communities, totalling no less than 1.5 million, across the rest of Ethiopia, particularly regions/cities with large Tigrayan populations, notably Addis Ababa, Oromia Region, Southern Ethiopia, and Afar Region, shall be represented in the Interim Council. Representatives of Tigrayans in the rest of Ethiopia should be directly selected by members of the community thus avoiding handpicking individuals; and
 9. **Civil Society Organizations:** Civil society organisations including civic associations (of specific interest groups such as women, farmers, teachers, the youth, and chamber of commerce and Alliances of community associations), Veterans and others that have, a sizable constituency, meaningful contribution and influence, and a stake in Tigray. In instances when CSOs or other associations have a union of associations or an alliance, either the union/alliance or the individual organizations (assuming they are eligible for representation) shall be represented in the Interim Council ensuring that a single organization is not represented multiple times.
- C. The constituents of the Interim Council shall ensure women are adequately represented in the body to achieve a 50% minimum goal while guaranteeing each at least 1/3 of each delegation is made up of women.

- D. Each constituency shall consider proven competence, capability, relevant skill, experience and integrity as core criteria while selecting representatives.
- E. Eminent personalities are considered in this proposal as cross-cutting and will be included by the constituency-based stakeholders listed above rather than as individuals in their own standing, to ensure representation and foster impartiality, accountability etc.
- F. Nominees from TDF, Vulnerable Groups, Scholars and Professionals, Tigrayans in the Diaspora and the rest of Ethiopia, Minority Groups, Civil Society Organizations, youth and women should not be members of political parties. Politically affiliated representatives will not be allowed to remain on the Council and the group or organisation which has nominated them shall risk losing its seat on the Council.

G. Term of Interim Council Period

- 1. The term of office of the Interim Council shall be as suggested in GSTS's previous recommendation for the Tigray Interim Administration (TIA), or 60 days after the termination of the term for TIA. Its mandate and function shall mutatis mutandis, as provided in the Tigray Constitution;
- 2. The term of office of the Interim Council shall be until the reconstitution of an elected council through a free and fair election according to the CoHA;
- 3. The Interim Council shall commence its function as soon as possible, not 30 days after an agreement among the representatives of the stakeholders in a constitutive assembly; and
- 4. The Interim Council should set all preparations to hold elections sixty (60 days) before the end of the term of the Tigray Interim Regional Administration.

H. Representation Formula in the Interim Council

- 1. **Basic guiding principles** for the formation and allocation of responsibilities of the interim council shall be the following:
 - 1.1. Ensure the establishment of an all-inclusive Interim Council reflective of the new realities on the ground and the Tigrayan political community created in response to the resistance to the genocidal war;
 - 1.2. Decisions ensuring the best possible outcome for the people of Tigray and fostering agreement and compromise across party lines - denying opportunities for veto power based on one party majority;
 - 1.3. Encouraging a culture of democratic pluralism and deliberative democracy by including new political and military actors and reducing unnecessary power politics; and
 - 1.4. Relative representation and power to influence their respective constituencies.
- 2. The composition of the Interim Council should be as widely representative as possible to serve as a "big Tent" for all Tigrayans.

3. The total number of members of the Council is suggested to be 151 in line with the proposal made by the TIA. GSTS proposes that about 61% of the total seats, which is 92, be filled by political parties and former Council members.
4. On the distribution of seats among political parties, GSTS proposes that all political parties will have an equal number of seats (less the 38 seats reserved for Wereda representatives from the former council members). This means all political parties will share 54 seats equally among the six political parties, each having 9 seats.
5. Other stakeholders including Tegadlti Tigray (TDF), Civil Society Organizations, Scholars and Professionals, Minor Communities, Vulnerable Groups, Tigrayans in the diaspora and the rest of Ethiopia shall share the remaining 39% (59 seats).
6. Members from the Tigray Interim Administration (TIA) and faith organizations (Orthodox, Muslim, Catholic and Evangelical) may have non-voting seats in the Interim Council.

Table 1: Proposed distribution of seats among all stakeholders. [See Annex 2 for detailed justifications.]

Stakeholders		Distribution		
		In %	In Number	
Former Council Members and Political Parties	Former Council Members (one from each electoral Constituency)	25%	38	
		Sub Total	25% 38	
	Political Parties	TPLF	6%	9
		Salsay Weyane	6%	9
		Arena	6%	9
		Baitona	6%	9
		TIP	6%	9
		Asimba	6%	9
	Sub Total	36% 54		
Other Stakeholders	Tegadlti Tigray (TDF)	4%	6	
	Civil Society Organizations	11%	17	
	Scholars and Professionals	7%	11	
	Minority Communities		3%	5
		Irob		3
		Kunama		2
	Vulnerable Groups		5%	8
		IDPs		4
		Refugees in Sudan		2
		Persons with Disabilities		2
	Tigrayans in Diaspora		4.5%	7
		North America		2
		Europe		2
Middle East			1	
Africa			1	

		Asia Pacific		1
	Tigrayans in the Rest of Ethiopia		3.5%	5
		Addis Ababa		2
		Oromia Region		1
		Southern Region		1
		Afar Region		1
		Sub Total	39%	59

Annex 1: Vital Interest of Tigray

The following, among others, constitute the survival and vital interest of Tigray as stipulated in the previous statements and Negotiation Strategy for Tigray developed by GSTS:

1. **Peace, Security and Safety:** security and safety remain existential issues for Tigray and Tigrayans and core to the survival and vital interests of Tigray;
2. **Self-determination and Self-Rule:** In a lingering armed struggle of decades, Tigray and its people have paid dearly for the right to self-determination and self-rule. The 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia clearly stipulates the right to self-determination reiterating Article 1 of the UN Charter, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. All stipulate that “All peoples have the right to self-determination.” Respect for the will of the people of Tigray constitutes another vital interest;
3. **Tigray’s territorial integrity, and Restoration of Tigray’s Territorial and Administrative Status Quo Ante to the Pre- November 3, 2020:** Tigray’s territorial integrity, as provided in the 1995 Constitution, remains the bedrock for peace and stability in Tigray, Ethiopia, and the Horn. Without respect for the internal boundary established by the Constitution and as stipulated in the Pretoria agreement and Nairobi declaration, it will be impossible to bring sustainable peace and stability. As proven in other similar cases, acquiescing to the annexation of territories would result in fragile peace and stability. Redrawing internal or external boundaries by force should never be rewarded, and it will only set a precedence that engulfs the entire Horn of Africa. For this purpose, the total withdrawal of all external forces, including Eritrean and Amhara forces from all parts of Tigray and their deployment lines to the areas before November 3rd, 2020, is a vital interest of Tigray;
4. **Voluntary, dignified and safe return of Tigrayan IDPs and Refugees:** The return of Internally Displaced People and Refugees in Sudan and other neighboring countries to their places of origin (pre-war places) and access and restitution to their habitual residence, homes, land, business, properties, and other entitlements, and their rights to physical, legal and psychological protection are a core vital interest of Tigray;

5. **Open and unfiltered access to and from international borders and other routes of transport:** ending blockage and free movement of people, goods and services, capital etc. are fundamental human rights essential to the survival and vital interest of Tigray;
6. **Accountability, justice, effective remedies, and reparations:** for the victims of atrocities including victims of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) and rape through victim-centered independent legal avenues and mechanisms should be prioritized and explored irrespective of political dividends and considerations; and
7. **Post-War Recovery, Reconstruction and Development:** Rehabilitation and reform-informed reconstruction are necessary to avoid the potential for relapsing into conflict and ensure sustainable peace, stability, security, and safety for the people of Tigray and all neighboring people.

Annex 2: Stakeholders Inclusivity Matrix, Justification for the Proposed Formula and Figures and Implementation Plan (to be developed if demanded)

The stakeholder mapping exercise and responsibility-sharing formula, for the development of this proposal, took an approach based on a thoughtful and deep understanding of the region's political context and the objectives of the transition. The ultimate goal of this exercise is to ensure non-repetition of the genocidal war and to transition towards a more democratic political system that encompasses all political views and capacities in the region. As with any formula for responsibility sharing, it is important to acknowledge that methodologically it may have limitations and is being proposed for consideration.

Stakeholder (s)	Justification/Rationale for Inclusion in the Interim Council
<p>Former Members of Elected Council</p>	<p>Former members of the elected council that was dissolved following the Pretoria Agreement and Nairobi Declaration shall be included in the Interim Council as the direct, and previously elected, representatives of the people (their constituency). Their inclusion offers the best option, until an election is held, to reflect the specific will, demands, needs, interests, and concerns of communities.</p>
<p>Tigray Defence Forces (TDF)</p>	<p>TDF is the closest approximation of an entity representing Tigrayans from all walks of life and a true reflection of the people of Tigray. Primarily, its purpose is to serve Tigray, not a specific political organization or entity. Individuals can have their political preferences, but as an organized force, it does not belong to a particular political organization and should remain apolitical. TDF is a popular resistance of hundreds of thousands of members that rapidly organized and deployed to defend the people of Tigray from genocide. With experienced leadership, its iron discipline and tight command, control and communication make it an effective security force in the region. Like similar developments in military politics, the TDF has evolved and also represents the young generation. TDF is also Tigray's resistance force without which there could not be security, which is the most overriding agenda for Tigray</p>

	<p>under the present circumstances. It is also a force for peace both due to its place in the implementation matrix, unavoidable interoperability with the ENDF and because of its peculiar location in the post-Pretoria Security Arrangements and the balance of forces underpinning the current contestation.</p> <p>In short, it is the custodian of Tigrayan security. Additionally, its leadership somehow manages the ‘Ethiopian file’ in all its forms. It can arbitrate differences and keep the balance between the political forces. Short of dictation, the TDF could potentially be the guardian of the transition as well. TDF also potentially represents a new phase in the consolidation of Tigray as a political community, created over the years by blood and soil, by signifying its latest reincarnation. Hence, its representation is important for both symbolic and historical roles, however, it should have a limited share to avoid a bad precedent against ‘civilian control of the military’.</p>
<p>The Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF)</p>	<p>TPLF is not only a major political force in Tigray, but also an epithet of the Tigrayan struggle for self-determination and a repository of Tigrayan gallantry and the quest for equality. Such a force cannot be easily ignored or sidelined. Tigray needs a relatively predictable change, given the enormous crisis over two years long genocidal war. Approaches to leadership should be in a manner that encourages a desire to support change and acceptance of a new role in the changing political dispensation and reform. Tigrayans would be equally mistaken to heed the siren calls in favor of legitimizing the failed status quo. The current status quo is untenable and undesirable. Likewise, seemingly rejectionist and confrontational agendas adopted by other political parties’ merit attention yet can be tested as part of a governing body and the responsibility that comes along with it. There is a powerful maxim that “resisting or opposing is not the same as governing.” But other political parties in Tigray propose a different version, and direction and deserve to be heard, supported, included in the Interim Council of Tigray, and thus given all the chance to prove themselves.</p>
<p>Alternative (Opposition) Political Parties</p>	<p>Representing diverse, young generation, and fresh ideological and policy options in Tigray, the Tigray opposition (alternative) parties have been a part of the over two years long popular resistance (struggle) and remain a key stakeholder in Tigray representing their constituency. Their inclusion in the Interim Council guarantees an injection of new blood and a broad spectrum of political views, promotes political inclusivity, and provides an opportunity for diverse and marginalized voices to contribute to the rebuilding of the region. The participation of the opposition parties in the Interim Council can also contribute to strengthening the democratic landscape and institution/state building.</p>
<p>Scholars and Professionals</p>	<p>As proven in various countries, organized scholars and professionals play a crucial role due to their unique expertise, experiences, and knowledge infrastructure that can make transitions successful and predictable. They play an irreplaceable role in providing evidence-based policy recommendations, initiation and implementation of institutional reforms, bridging gaps, and leading various task-specific standing committees and commissions by</p>

	bringing their collective knowledge and wisdom toward democratisation and fostering a meritocratic system.
Civil society organisations, associations	Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play a crucial role in fostering democratic governance, advocating for societal issues, and representing a wide array of voices and interests, thus ensuring a more comprehensive and inclusive decision-making process. Their inclusion in the Interim Council ensures that these groups have a voice in the rebuilding process and that their needs and concerns are taken into account. It is also the case that these sectors often have specific expertise and experience in areas such as human and civil rights, development and governance that are very useful in the region's transition to a more democratic system. In doing so, maximum care should be taken as there is a general assumption that most of the CSOs are also liable to manipulation by political parties/politicians.
Minority Communities	The Irob and Kunama minority communities in Tigray often face unique challenges that differ from the majority of the population due to their proximity to the Eritrean border. Their inclusion not only fosters a sense of belongingness and trust but also ensures that their voices are heard, and their perspectives, concerns and needs are represented and considered in the decision-making process.
Tigrayans in the Diaspora	The Tigrayan diaspora, representing a significant portion of the Tigrayan community, are critical stakeholders in the development of Tigray for a wide range of reasons. These include, among others, their invaluable skills, expertise, technical, and financial resources, establishing international connections, facilitating cultural bridges, bringing diverse perspectives etc., that can be beneficial during the transitional period. Thus, their inclusion in the Interim Council, as proven in the experience of various countries (Annex 3) is of great importance.
Vulnerable Groups	<p>Vulnerable communities, including those Tigrayans on the border, survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees, persons with disabilities etc. often have unique needs, and demands and face specific challenges. Thus, their representation in the Interim Council is of paramount importance to ensure their voices are heard and their concerns are not overlooked. Their inclusion also helps to promote equity and social justice by advocating policies that address the challenges these vulnerable groups face.</p> <p>Border communities: Tigrayans on the borders have and continue to be disproportionately affected by the brunt of war and their representation in the Interim Council of Tigray is vital for addressing their unique challenges and ensuring their perspective is taken into account in decision-making processes.</p> <p>Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV): Given the scale of atrocities and violence against women of Tigray and the use of CRSV as a weapon of war, a representative and an expert on SGBV shall be included up to and including the highest organ of the council.</p>

	<p>Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Refugees: Representation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Refugees (in Sudan) in the Interim Council via their direct representatives is essential to address their unique challenges, concerns, voices and ensure their perspective is taken into consideration in decision-making.</p> <p>Persons with disabilities: Persons with disabilities are best positioned to know and reflect their needs and demands, as they possess first-hand knowledge and lived experience of the challenges they face daily. Their inclusion in the Interim Council not only ensures that their unique challenges are addressed but also enriches the decision-making process by incorporating diverse perspectives for more holistic and effective governance. Moreover, considering their unique challenges aligns with regional, national, and international principles of human rights, promoting equality and non-discrimination as fundamental pillars of a just society.</p>
<p>Tigrayans Residing in the rest of Ethiopia</p>	<p>It is estimated that no less than 1.5 million Tigrayans live outside Tigray, across the rest of Ethiopia and have been suffering and continue to suffer and are directly impacted by policies related to Tigray. Hence, adequate representation of these Tigrayan communities is also crucial in light of their number, role and inclusivity.</p>

Annex 3: Sample Diaspora Parliamentary Representation in their Countries of Origin

Countries	Nature of Representation
Ivory Coast	The new Ivory Coast Constitution introduces several important rights for the diaspora. In Article 30, the state commits to ensuring the participation of Ivorians abroad in ‘the life of the nation’, while Article 87 introduces diaspora representation in the new Senate and Article 55 makes Ivorian citizens born to at least one Ivorian parent eligible for presidential candidacy (the previous Constitution’s criteria required both parents to be of Ivorian origin).
Ecuador	Ecuadorians living abroad are represented in the National Assembly by six parliamentarians. The main mission of these representatives is to be the voice of migrants and to guarantee their rights. Of the 137 seats in the legislature, two are for parliamentarians from the Europe, Asia, and Oceania constituency; two from the United States and Canada; and two from Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa.
Cabo Verde	There are six members of parliament to represent Cabo Verdean citizens abroad: two each from the Americas, the rest of Africa and Europe.
Lebanon	In an attempt to bolster an ever-absent representation of Lebanese immigrants in the country’s democratic life, the Lebanese electoral law of 2017 was adopted and governed the parliamentary elections of May 2018. The unprecedented law highlighted the right of Lebanese expatriates to register and vote. It additionally allocated six parliamentary seats (of 128 total) to the diaspora.
Moldova	Political engagement of the Moldovan diaspora has grown over the years and in 2019, the government created and elected individual representatives for 14 electoral constituencies for the diaspora for the national parliamentary election.
Senegal	Senegal has a proud record of enabling diaspora civic and political participation. In addition to diaspora overseas voting, the National Assembly dedicates 15 of its 165 parliamentary seats to Senegalese abroad. Senegal is one of the few countries to have established diaspora deputies in the National Assembly. In order for these new MPs to be elected, eight new constituencies have been created: two in Europe, one in the Americas, one in Asia and the Middle East, and four others in North, West, Central and Southern Africa.
Nigeria	There are five members of parliament to represent Nigerian citizens abroad: one per continent.
Tunisia	Organic Law N° 2014-16, Relating to Elections and Referenda was a result of demands from Tunisians abroad for greater political rights, i.e., the right to become representatives in the Assembly, and the right for dual nationals to become President. The number of diaspora representatives in the Tunisian parliament is proportional to the size of the diaspora, which makes Tunisia unique in this regard. During consultations on the 2019 budget for the Ministry of Social Affairs, representatives in the national assembly argued that there were insufficient resources allocated for programmes

	targeting the diaspora and called for a dedicated national strategy for the Tunisian community abroad in order to boost the country's economic development.
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