



SOLIDARITY OF TIGRAYANS FOR INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY (STIL)

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Public Statement to the 68th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68)

Concerns:

We address the 68th Commission on the Status of Women with grave concerns regarding the ongoing genocide's devastating impact on Tigrayan women.

- Conflict-related sexual violence has been used as a weapon against women in Tigray as documented by various human right organizations, independent media, and ICHREE
- These atrocity crimes are still going on by the Eritrean and Amhara forces in the illegally and forcefully occupied areas in Tigray (about 40% of Tigray's territory) and include:
 - Mutilation of women's genitals and other body parts;
 - Insertion of foreign objects into women's genitals;
 - Gang-rape of individual women, usually by 3 to 10 armed combatants;
 - Forcing of family members to witness or participate in the act;
 - Exposure of survivors to multiple incidents of rape, including sexual slavery, with survivors typically held for two to 35 days;
 - Intentionally infecting women with HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases through rape to reduce the number of the Tigrayan (Tigrian) population.

These are acts that inflict severe physical, psychological, social, and economic consequences on survivors and their communities.

Demands:

While CSW68 focuses on institutional strengthening and economic empowerment, we urge the Commission, in line with Julia Duncan-Cassell, Former Liberian Minister of Gender and President of the Brussels-based European External Programme with Africa (EPA) and respected co signatories, to include this issue on the agenda for the 68th CSW to ensure sustained global attention

We specifically call on the 68th CSW to do this by:

- Calling for Urgent Actions: specifically address the situation of women in Tigray who have suffered and continue to suffer weaponized Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) and call for immediate measures to end the horrific situations
- Demanding actions to protect women from the ongoing and future atrocity crimes

- Emphasizing and advocating the need for programs that:
 - Ensure psychological support for victims of CRSV in Tigray.
 - Address issues of stigmatization and economic exclusion that the survivors are facing.
 - Promote gender-sensitive economic opportunities.
 - Call for the accountability of perpetrators, including military and political leaders to fight impunity.
 - Advocating for the inclusion of Tigrayan women's voices and perspectives in all peacebuilding efforts. Their participation is crucial for achieving lasting peace and ensuring the safety and well-being of Tigrayan women.

Tigrayan women, specifically victims of atrocity crimes, require your attention for an immediate and decisive action. We urge the CSW68 to prioritize addressing their specific needs and ensure their voices are heard in the pursuit of a sustainable solution.

Cosignatories

Dekna Foundation

Ethiopian Canadians for Peace

Gorzo

Irob Anina Civil Society

Rise and Shine Women Empowerment Center

Security and Justice for Tigrayans

Solidarity of Tigrayans for Independence and Liberty

Tigray Human Rights Forum

Union of Tigrayans in Europe (UTE)