



Open Letter: International Holocaust Remembrance Day

Women Human Rights Defenders Call for Genocide Prevention and Accountability for Tigray

On this International Holocaust Remembrance Day, we—women human rights defenders and women-led civil society organizations—honor the memory of the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and all victims of genocide. We reaffirm the global commitment of “Never Again” and stress that remembrance must be matched by early warning, prevention, and timely action.

The Holocaust taught the world that genocide does not occur without warning. In Tigray, warning signs were evident. Yet international responses were delayed and inadequate. The consequences have been devastating: mass killings of civilians, widespread conflict-related sexual violence, the deliberate use of hunger as a weapon of war, the destruction of healthcare and education systems, and large-scale forced displacement. Women and girls have been disproportionately targeted, their bodies and lives turned into battlefields.

As women human rights defenders, we emphasize that genocide prevention is inseparable from gender justice. Sexual violence, attacks on mothers, the exclusion of girls from education, and the silencing of women’s voices are not incidental harms of war—they are early indicators and tools of genocidal violence. Failure to center these realities undermines early warning systems and costs lives.

On this day of remembrance, we call on the international community to:

- Act decisively on early warning signs of mass atrocities, including those documented by women-led organizations.
- Recognize gender-based violence as a critical indicator of genocide risk.
- Ensure independent, international investigations and accountability for crimes committed in Tigray.
- Protect and resource women human rights defenders as essential actors in prevention, documentation, and peacebuilding.

Remembrance without prevention is empty. “Never Again” cannot remain a moral aspiration applied selectively or retrospectively. It must be a living commitment—one that protects communities facing exterminatory violence today.

On International Holocaust Remembrance Day, we affirm that honoring the past requires acting in the present.

Never Again must mean never again—for anyone, anywhere, including Tigray.

Signed,

Individuals:

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Batseba Seifu

Donek Zemo

Genet Kidane Gebretsadik

Kokob Gebru

Mahlet Tadesse

Makda D. Akelom

Meaza Gebremedhin

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Selam Gebremedhin Kidanu

Senait Melaku

Tsidena Abadi

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Weyni Abraha Asgedom

Organizations:

Down Syndrome Ethiopia

Empowered Sisterhood Mekelle

GEM Tigray (Gender Empowerment Movement Tigray)

Nolawi Women and Children Recovery and Development Organization/NOLAWI

Umbrella For The Needy

Sheba Podcast

Women with Disabilities Development Association of Tigray

Yikhono: A Movement To End Gender-Based Violence