



**URGENT APPEAL  
TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE TIGRAY REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IN ETHIOPIA  
TO STOP THE VIOLENCE IMMEDIATELY AND ENTER INTO PEACEFUL DIALOGUE**

Pax Christi International, a global faith based peace movement with members in the African continent, is following with great concern the unfolding of violence in Ethiopia, particularly in the Tigray region.

We are alarmed by the country's political crisis that has developed into a civil conflict between the Federal government and the Tigray regional government, which is causing immense violence, internally displacement of persons and thousands of refugees. Pax Christi International calls upon both parties to stop the violence immediately and to take steps towards pursuing the implementation of a well-defined and all-inclusive peace process to a united and stable Ethiopia.

We call upon the Federal government and the Tigray regional government of Ethiopia to work together with the international community, the United Nations, the African Union and fellow African countries and the European Union to initiate a peaceful dialogue which will lead to a ceasefire and a peace agreement. We strongly believe that military actions will not lead to a just resolution of the conflict and can only lead to further escalation of violence, aggravating the suffering of the population. We call upon all parties to commit decidedly and effectively to protect and assist civilians, especially the most vulnerable. We believe that a comprehensive inclusive and nonviolent political process is the only way to end this violent conflict.

De-escalation of the violence will be a significant step to mitigating the internally displacement of persons and the refugee crisis that is now unfolding. A ceasefire urgently needs to be declared. A major humanitarian crisis is imminent in the region if no decisive action is taken. Significant humanitarian assistance for victims of violence and displaced communities should be secured.

We support the recent statement made by the Catholic bishops in Ethiopia in which they "urge parties to resolve their differences amicably, in a spirit of respect, understanding and hope and pray for the people to live together in respect, consultation, and dialogue, and to work together for the prosperity of their common country".<sup>1</sup> In this spirit, a path of active nonviolence should be chosen which preserves human lives and fosters peaceful co-existence between different ethnic groups.

---

<sup>1</sup> Vatican news, Ethiopian Bishops appeal for dialogue amid threats of civil war (7 November 2020), available at: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2020-11/ethiopia-catholic-bishops-appeal-peace-threats-civil-war.html>.

Worryingly, this armed conflict exacerbates the pain and suffering, devastation and socio-economic inequalities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, experienced not only by the people of Ethiopia but across the globe. Allowing this armed conflict to continue means that resources that should be channeled towards responses to the pandemic are instead being used for arms and weapons causing human losses and leading the people of Ethiopia into poverty.

We call for an ending of arms selling and arms trafficking to all parties involved in the conflict and equally, the enforcement of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) continue to be the weapon of choice in this particular violent conflict and other conflicts on the Africa continent, causing millions of deaths and untold suffering to the people. We also believe that International investment in local and national peacebuilding strategies in the region are needed

Pax Christi International joins the Catholic Bishops of Ethiopia and the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) in appealing to the Federal Government and the Tigray regional government of Ethiopia to stop using violence and engage in constructive and peaceful dialogue in mutual respect and trust. This will not only benefit the people of Ethiopia but also the neighboring countries who are in danger of escalating violence as the conflict is spilling over.

Brussels, 23 November 2020