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Jan Nyssen

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Jan Nyssen is full professor of geography at Ghent University (Belgium). He carries out research on land degradation and land resilience in Ethiopia since 1994. He lived many years in the small town of Hagera Selam in Tigray, where he frequently returns; among others, he coordinated interdisciplinary international research programmes at Mekelle University.

Rising tensions between federal government of Ethiopia and the regional government of Tigray intensified to erupt into an open armed conflict on 4 November 2020¹, with its concomitant massacres, destructions, lootings, deprivation and human suffering. The war started on the very day of the US elections; this, a total communications black-out, and the numerous news items on the worldwide pandemic, made that this war is hardly mentioned in mainstream media.

Despite the internet black-out that still continues in January 2021, by the mid of November 2020, I have sent an email message to all my friends in Tigray, hoping that this “message in a bottle” would be picked up by some through satellite telephones and distributed somehow. That was the moment that the Ethiopian prime minister promised to conquer the town of Mekelle and the region “at any cost”, reworded later to “final offensive”.² This made me fear for all my beloved. I lived in Tigray for numerous years and was cut off from all people I shared rich experiences with, in all ways of life, be it smallholder farmers, development workers, small traders, or university staff. Having lived and worked close to farmers for nearly three decades, they say that I know every stone on every footpath... In better times, I wrote a book in Tigrinya to contribute to livelihood systems that were reviving after the dark ages of the 1980s: “ካብ ሓረስቶት ደጉዓ ተምቤን እንታይ ንስምዕ?” (What do we hear from the farmers in Dogu’a Tembien?).³ Now, I can only tell them ኣጅኹም ! [adjókum] in Tigrinya language – “Be strong!”, or, more precisely “Be strong as I am suffering on your side; this too shall pass soon”!

Thu, Nov 26, 2020 at 9:35 PM

From: Jan Nyssen

To: <list of friends in Tigray>

Dear friends in Tigray,

አጆኹም !

We are feeling so much sympathy for all of you during these hard times! If you can read this email, please distribute the message further. I hope you and your family are fine. It would be nice to hear back from you, if you can, please.

I cannot imagine the situation that you are in, without food, water, electricity, telephone, cash money, so many internal refugees, the people who are killed and wounded. This makes me cry.

You should know in the first place that the outside world overall shouts for this war to stop. Many friends here in Europe are very involved with advocating towards our authorities in order for the international community to facilitate a cease-fire and humanitarian access. Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs Demeke is in Europe now and in every capital there is lots of diplomacy ongoing – in most countries, like in Belgium, the government calls for peace in Ethiopia, rather than war. We have heard enough war-talk!

We have constituted support groups in several countries. Lots of press articles are published, too many to enumerate. Both through our own writings as through contacts with journalists. For example, with my colleagues we wrote an article that describes the dire situation of the people in Tigray.⁴ We have provided information to journalists, for example for an article by Associated Press.⁵

Together with eleven other colleagues, we have also launched an appeal by concerned scientists to avoid another humanitarian catastrophe in Tigray.⁶ By the end of November, around 2500 scientists have signed. They include most of the international researchers who have been working with partners in Ethiopia in various universities over the last ten years.

These bubbles have got together and contributed the various governments and the UN security council making statements in favour of a cease-fire.

I wish you all the best and hope better times to come soon, so that we can resume our lively discussions and activities, and hopefully we'll meet in the near future!

አጆኹም !

Jan

The above was written at the beginning of the war. Still, in January 2021, except for Mekelle, and a few areas that are now controlled by the Amhara region,⁷ the large majority of Tigrayan people has

no access to humanitarian aid, medical services and telecommunication. They are suffering huge war damage, including civilian victims, looting, sexual violence and abduction.

When saying “አጅብ!” , this is not free talk, it is a commitment, and the rest of this article is the diary of my commitment for the millions of poor people who suffer enormously these days.

End November

The “hot” news is of course the closing in of battle fronts towards Mekelle and bombings of the city. The bombing has started on Saturday Nov. 28 in the morning despite diplomatic mediation efforts. The United Nations and governments should step up efforts to mobilize and work towards achieving a ceasefire, protecting civilians and expediting independent press coverage.

Numerous people have died or have been displaced, all over Tigray. We only received very occasional messages (formal letters and email messages) from inside Tigray, crying for the world to help them.

The “Portrait of Mekele, a threatened Ethiopian city” was written by our colleague Eloi Ficquet.⁸

Early december

After a month of Tigray being totally cut off from the world, the UN has negotiated aid delivery to the region, yet, the international aid corridor is not yet operational! EU top official Janez Lenarcic:⁹ “the aid pact for Tigray is not good enough” - “Humanitarian aid should also go to areas not under government control in line with the fundamental principles of humanitarian aid. There may be malnourished children on the other side also.”

With regard to the humanitarian situation, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) also highlighted the plight of the refugees fleeing to Sudan,¹⁰ and the dire situation in Tigray itself.¹¹ Let us remind also that, except for some border areas to Amhara region, not any communication is possible with Tigray since more than a month. Even after controlling Mekelle, the authorities do not allow communicating with our friends, relatives and colleagues there!

Mid December

Together with many others, we are working hard to bring the tragedy to the attention of the broader public and political representatives worldwide. In combination with emerging evidence from within Tigray, this led to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet taking a strong stand: “There is an urgent need for independent monitoring of the human rights situation in the Tigray region, for all necessary measures to protect civilians, and for accountability for violations.”¹²

Plight of the people in Tigray

There are dramatic situations regarding refugees. About 45,000 people who fled into Sudan are in danger of forced repatriation to government controlled areas in Ethiopia.¹³ Eritrean refugees in Tigray are reportedly being forcibly repatriated to Eritrea¹⁴ and when a UN team tried to verify the situation in a refugee camp, they were shot at.¹⁵ Others, who managed to reach Addis Ababa are

forcibly brought back to the war zone in Tigray.¹⁶ The number of internally displaced people in Tigray must be huge; figures up to 1 million people are mentioned. Tigrayan towns occupied by the army are largely deserted. We have seen a report by a large apolitical social organisation in Tigray, mentioning that “the people are displacing within the region from one district to another district and then still from that district to another and just living within the church compounds, streets, schools, health centers;¹⁷ the households not displaced are without access to basic necessities”.

In a rare ETV broadcast of a meeting called by the Ethiopian authorities,¹⁸ the elders in the town of Shire mentioned large looting and killings (“people were slaughtered like chicken”), with the majority of population gone out of the town. Tigrayans in Europe fear that this broadcast by the official Ethiopian TV channel describes what is ongoing in numerous places in the region.

Massacres have occurred, with particular mentions for Chercher in South Tigray and also May Kadra and other places in Western Tigray, with both parties incriminating the other one. Independent investigations should be allowed, that not only comprise interviews, but also forensic methods such as DNA identification of victims and their relatives. Yet, Ethiopian authorities have rejected independent probes¹⁹ and announced that they themselves will carry out the investigations.²⁰

Despite denials by the Ethiopian government, the Eritrean involvement of which we heard anecdotic evidence, is increasingly being recognised.²¹

Universities in Tigray

Mekelle University officials are subject to a smearing campaign on Amhara Mass Media and on Facebook.²² They are blamed for alerting the outside world when Mekelle University was bombed on 19 November. We have no precise news about the whereabouts of our colleagues. There is an absolute communication black-out since three weeks – to our understanding they have not been arrested, but must be going through a difficult time. Besides running out of medical supplies,²³ Mekelle’s Ayder University referral hospital has also been targeted by looting soldiers.²⁴ On 9 December, the ICRC representative reported the situation of the hospital: “No supplies, no fuel, no running water. Doctors and nurses have suspended intensive care services and are struggling to do routine care like delivering babies or providing dialysis treatment.”²⁵

The University of Aksum, has been subject to wide looting, with computers and other equipment shipped to Asmara (Eritrea).²⁶

By mid December news is also trickling in from Adigrat and Raya Universities, both hugely damaged and inaccessible.

Humanitarian aid

On 28 November, the Ethiopian PM announced that the “Tigray operation is over”.²⁷ On 8 December, however, the Ethiopian embassy in Belgium has circulated a message saying that “the situation is far from over as the most wanted leaders of the TPLF remain fugitives.”²⁸ This tends to confirm fears that Tigray and the wider Horn are bound for long-lasting conflicts.²⁹

The Tigray regional broadcasters have stopped broadcasting, but the Oromo chain OBN now also broadcasts in Tigrinya, with occasional reports from Mekelle.³⁰ The Tigray forces left the city on 28 November. There is some imagery of ENDF (Ethiopian National Defence Forces) soldiers posing in

front of known monuments, and other photos of streets that have been barricaded by youth in order to prevent looting.

The Ethiopian authorities started sending food aid to Tigray, but corridors are not opened for foreign aid.³¹ The National Disaster Risk Management Commission mentions that 1200 tons of wheat were delivered to Mekelle on 10 December. The photo accompanying the related press article shows a column of lorries near May Nebri,³² 56 km south of Mekelle. Yet, volumes of aid required are of another order of magnitude:³³ the UN and humanitarian partners are urgently seeking US\$96.9 million until January 2021 to help 1.1 million people in Tigray, and the bordering areas of Afar and Amhara regions.



A unique nestbox for doves (considered peace bird) in the wall of a homestead, in Zerfenti (Tigray).³⁴ In 2019, the owners of the house told me that Zerfenti village was severely bombed and then torched by the Derg army. It is one of the martyrs' villages of the war of the 1980s. *"We now know how sweet peace is, we don't want war to come back, that's why we shelter doves around our house"*.

10 December

In line with the contents of our appeal, the latest FEWS (Famine Early Warning System) report warns that Tigray faces a food emergency if access constraints persist.³⁵

Before 26 years

When I went the first time to Tigray (Ethiopia) in 1994, the people in Hagera Selam gave us the best house in town:³⁶ the only house with the old black-red-white tiles on the floor, mud walls plastered with cement, and a heavy iron door with three holes in it, through which the kids tried to peak in and see "how *ferenji* (Europeans) are living". These holes were the result of indiscriminate shooting by Derg soldiers, on behalf of the central Ethiopian military government, when they left Hagera Selam in 1989, retreating from the pressure of Tigray guerilla forces. Back in 1994 the story was told vividly to me, with all victims remembered by their names.

Battlefields and revenge on civilians

History seems to repeat itself. Despite official claims that the Tigray war is over, battling is ongoing on numerous fronts, right now. The official objective of this huge war, i.e. capturing a few Tigray leaders has not been met. One of the battlefields is around the town that adopted me, Hagere Selam. The inhabitants informed me (by telephone after walking to Mekelle), that numerous Hagere Selam people have been shot by ENDF soldiers in recent days. It happened that, after the TDF (Tigray Defence Forces) retreated from Mekelle, the Hagere Selam and Tembien area have become a major battlefield. In one of the nearby battles, the ENDF (Ethiopian army) were defeated by TDF. As a matter of revenge the ENDF entered Hagere Selam and terrorised the town.

In the village of Addi Qoylo, near the frontline, several priests and elders have been shot.³⁷ The father of one of our field staff is badly injured. The old man uses to call me ወጊደ (my son) though I am only 15 years younger than him. Just now, I get a second evidence of this massacre from a twitter message³⁸ – I know the pictured priest Yemane by face, and rock type as well as building style of the wall are typically Addi Qoylo's... There is no more doubt about this massacre!!! Right now somebody is going to Addi Qoylo on foot (the only means of communication) and he carries among others my recovery message to "my father"...

After five weeks of black out, telephone services have resumed to Mekelle. That is for Mekelle only, not the rest of Tigray region. And only telephone, not internet, not water, some hours of electricity and not banking services. In the few cases that it is working, when calling our friends and colleagues in Mekelle, we get a narration of the plight they went through: "we went to a rural area to avoid the bombings on Mekelle; the area where we were was then bombed also, we returned to Mekelle, some of our relatives are still in the rural area". Several people responded only briefly because "I am at a funeral ceremony right now"...

When we ask our friends in Mekelle about war conditions, overall silence follows, with some general message "thank you for being with us, in happiness and in sorrow". And, nowadays, it is the period of sorrow!

Burning of standing crops

We hear about ongoing battles, not only Hagere Selam, but also between Wukro and Adigrat, Samre, Ala'isa, Kolla Tembien, May Tsemre, around Maychew. In Wukro, after executions of civilians between 25 and 29 November (similar to what happened in Bisober),³⁹ the entire population has fled the town.

There are also heavy consequences for the rural population. For instance, like elsewhere in Tigray, it is harvesting time, but crops have been burnt. Just in one Sentinel satellite image scene⁴⁰ of approx. 3 km by 3 km, the standing crops of 70-80 farm plots have burnt between 7 and 12 December. There are also a dozen homesteads in the burnt areas. There are like a hundred "Sheraros" occurring all over Tigray!

Ethnic cleansing in Western Tigray

For our research related to Tekeze river,⁴¹ I had the chance to visit Humera in Western Tigray. At that time, back in 2017, a peaceful town with a particularly attractive historical centre with cobble stone streets.

Nowadays, we read unequivocal reports of Tigrayans being forced out of Western Tigray, properties looted and burnt down by Amhara militias, and signs of Amhara region taking over the administration of Tigray's Western Zone. Details can be retrieved from the daily EEPA Horn situation reports.⁴²

From the central Ethiopian side

There is a parastatal Ethiopian Human Rights Commission⁴³ but they remain silent about Tigray... On 13 December, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed welcomed Sudanese PM Abdalla Hamdok for a two day visit to Ethiopia.⁴⁴ However, noticing that there was no willingness from Addis officials to enter into a negotiated cease-fire in Tigray, the Sudanese PM left after two hours.⁴⁵

Later on Sunday, Lt. Col. Abiy's message to his generals was that as long as the people of Tigray do not hand over their elected leaders, they will be collectively punished.⁴⁶ At that time, no evidence was brought that any Tigray leaders were under custody of the ENDF army.⁴⁷ But helicopters continued dropping soldiers in Tembien, terrorising farmers in order to make them tell the whereabouts of the Tigray leadership.⁴⁸

18 December

Pressure on the Ethiopian government

The war in Tigray shifted to a mix of conventional and guerrilla war. New conflicts emerge, between Amhara and Benishangul-Gumuz regions, and between Ethiopia and Sudan.⁴⁹

Thanks to the interventions of several MPs, in the European parliament, and in national parliaments, as well as awareness in the public opinion,⁵⁰ the EU has now taken steps that go beyond "expressions of deep concern". Indeed, the EU delays its budget support to Ethiopia because of the Tigray conflict.⁵¹ The European Commission spokeswoman told the BBC there were five conditions for the aid to be resumed:

- Granting full humanitarian access for aid workers to reach people in need in all affected areas;
- Allowing civilians to seek refuge in neighbouring countries;
- Ethnically targeted measures and hate speech must stop;
- Mechanisms to monitor, and investigate allegations of, human rights violations; and
- Communication lines and media access to Tigray should be fully re-established.

More news from Mekelle University

After the conflict started, Mekelle University has continued functioning. On Thursday 17 December, the university graduated 3290 undergraduate and postgraduate students. The ceremony lasted for half an hour, which is extremely short, for Ethiopian standards. We could not recognise any of the professors or lecturers on the photos of the ceremony,⁵² but wearing face masks doesn't really help... Mulu Nega, CEO of the Tigray Transitional Government gave a brief speech. Reportedly, one of the aims was to give an image that the situation had returned to normal in Mekelle.

The plight of war

The Ethiopian military promised a reward of 10 million Ethiopian birr (250,000 USD or 205,000 euros) to any person who knows the exact location of the Tigray leaders who went to the mountains for staging a guerilla war.⁵³ Most landscapes in Tigray are indeed very rugged, and only accessible on foot. People whom we reach through telephone in Mekelle also tell us that war is ongoing. The same stories are repeated over and over again: looting, no food, (groups of) people shot dead, girls and women being raped, no medication, shelling in surrounding mountains, no water in the towns,

As an independent means of verification, Sentinel satellite imagery is increasingly used. FIRIS (Fire in Settlements) reports some detected large fires, related to ongoing battles.⁵⁴ Just for the last days, there is evidence for battles in Tigray in and around Shimelba Refugee Camp (17 December), Hagere Selam (night of 15 to 16 December), Sheraro (7, 11, 12 December), and Adwa (Almeda textile factory on 6 December).

Donations for humanitarian aid

On 18 December, the well-experienced NGO Caritas International has launched an emergency appeal, along with other NGOs present in Tigray (CRS, CAFOD and Caritas Adigrat and Mekelle).⁵⁵ With this humanitarian operation, Caritas aims to reach a total of 187,000 people, most of them children. Aid will also be provided to Eritrean refugees living in camps in Tigray, and to Tigrayans who have fled to the neighbouring provinces. Special attention will also be paid to the promotion of peaceful coexistence and social cohesion.

It will dawn!

I would like to thank the many eyewitnesses who shared information from the field, as well as several internal reviewers. Information provided is correct to the best of our knowledge. See also the follow-up article "The situation in Tigray early 2021" in this same volume. And... as soon as conditions allow, I will travel back to Tigray, to work with the communities and colleagues. ክፍግሕ'ዩ! ([kiwigih'yu], it will dawn!)

¹ The politico-military situation is not the object of this article. For background analysis, see these articles by leading political analysts, written at the beginning of the war. Tsedale Lemma: [How did Ethiopia slide from optimism to war?](#); Alex De Waal: [Abiy Ahmed's war against Tigrayan rebels endangers a fragile union whose collapse would destabilise the Horn of Africa](#); Awol Allo: [How Abiy Ahmed's Ethiopia-first nationalism led to civil war](#) - ironically, colleague Awol who had nominated Abiy Ahmed for the Nobel Peace Prize, is now ["wanted" by the Ethiopian authorities](#); Mesfin Hagos: [Eritrea's Role in Ethiopia's Conflict and the Fate of Eritrean Refugees in Ethiopia](#); Nizar Manek: [Sudan Will Decide the Outcome of the Ethiopian Civil War](#); Tom Gardner, World Politics Review: [How Abiy's Effort to Redefine Ethiopia Led to War in Tigray](#); Mehari Taddele Maru, Opinion on Aljazeera.com: [Ethiopia's war is threatening domestic and regional stability](#); Eugène Bakama Bope, The Conversation: [Did Ethiopia's attack on Tigray violate international laws?](#) Don't expect *unisono* analysis – but it is all strongly evidence-based!

² The Guardian, 26/11/2020. [Ethiopia's military to begin 'final offensive' against Tigray capital.](#)

- ³ Nyssen, J., Seifu Gebreslassie, Romha Assefa, 2016. [ከብ ሓረስቶች ደገዓ ተምቢን እንታይ ንስምዕ? What do we hear from the farmers in Dogu'a Tembien?](#) [in Tigrinya]. Hagere Selam, Central Tigray, Ethiopia: 100 p. ISBN: 9789090300184.
- ⁴ Deckers, S., Nyssen, J., Lanckriet, S., 2020. [Ethiopia's Tigray region has seen famine before: why it could happen again](#). The Conversation, 17/11/2020.
- ⁵ Associated Press, 26/11/2020: [Ethiopian PM says troops ordered to move on Tigray capital](#)
- ⁶ [Appeal by concerned scientists and development professionals](#) , including list of signatories
- ⁷ Before the installation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the country was organised in large provinces, that incorporated populations of various ethnicity, as documented also on maps dating back to imperial times. As of the early 1990s, the structure of the country was totally reorganised along ethnic borders (federalism), and the bilingual Tigrinya-Amharic parts of the ancient Gondar and Wollo provinces were transferred to Tigray, just like the Afar-speaking areas of Tigray and Wollo formed the Afar region. The Amhara nationalists use the current conflict to try and incorporate the Tigrinya-speaking parts of the previous Wollo and Gondar provinces into the Amhara region. See: Labzaé, M., 2020. « [Tedjemerwal](#) » : [ressorts sociaux, enjeux matériels et significations locales d'une entrée en guerre](#). Politique Africaine Novembre 2020, 7196; [Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 52](#) - 11 January 2021
- ⁸ Ethiopia Observer, 27/11/2020: [Portrait of Mekele, a threatened Ethiopian city](#)
- ⁹ Reuters, 4/12/2020: [Ethiopia aid pact not good enough, says EU official](#)
- ¹⁰ ICRC: [Photos and stories from Ethiopian refugees who fled Tigray for Sudan](#)
- ¹¹ ICRC: [Ethiopia: Hospitals in Mekelle struggling to care for wounded as medical supplies run out; Red Cross ambulances evacuate the injured](#)
- ¹² UNHR: [Exceedingly worrying and volatile situation in Ethiopia – Bachelet](#)
- ¹³ New Business Ethiopia, 27/11/2020: [Ethiopia prepares to repatriate refugees from Sudan](#)
- ¹⁴ UNHCR, 11/12/2020: [Statement attributable to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi on the situation in Ethiopia's Tigray region](#)
- ¹⁵ Reuters, 7/12/2020: [U.N. security team blocked, shot at near Ethiopian refugee camp](#)
- ¹⁶ Eritrea Hub, 11/12/2020: [Photographs of Eritrean being forcibly returned to Tigray war from Addis](#)
- ¹⁷ As mentioned in eyewitness reports, people were and are also hiding in caves, ravines, forests, ...
- ¹⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/Senenuhamilu/videos/10221973498678130>
- ¹⁹ Aljazeera, 9/12/2020: [Ethiopia rejects independent probes into Tigray conflict](#)
- ²⁰ [Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 20](#) - 9 December 2020.
- ²¹ The Guardian, 9/12/2020: [Diplomats back claims Eritrean troops have joined Ethiopia conflict](#); Reuters, 11/12/2020: [U.S. says reports of Eritrean troops in Ethiopia's Tigray are 'credible'](#).
- ²² [Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 19](#) - 8 December 2020.
- ²³ ICRC: [Ethiopia: Hospitals in Mekelle struggling to care for wounded as medical supplies run out; Red Cross ambulances evacuate the injured](#)
- ²⁴ [Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 17](#) - 5 December 2020.
- ²⁵ Aljazeera, 9/12/2020: [Ethiopia rejects independent probes into Tigray conflict](#)
- ²⁶ [Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 19](#) - 8 December 2020.
- ²⁷ Aljazeera, 28/11/2020: [Ethiopia PM says Tigray operation over after army seizes Mekelle](#)
- ²⁸ [Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 21](#) - 10 December 2020.
- ²⁹ New Frame, 10/12/2020. [John Young: The looming long civil war that could break Ethiopia](#)
- ³⁰ https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=420333219121671&id=100034349881220
- ³¹ AFP, 10/12/2020: [Ethiopia sends grain to Tigray, but problems persist for foreign aid](#)
- ³² Fana BC, 10/12/2020: [Ethiopian Gov't sends humanitarian aid to Tigray regional state](#); at least one lorry that was part of such convoy was sent back south and confiscated by Amhara officials, see <https://twitter.com/tvbempt/status/1347427680476680192>
- ³³ OCHA, 10/12/2020: [Daily Noon Briefing Highlights: Ethiopia](#)
- ³⁴ Zerfenti is part of [Addi Azmera tabia](#) or municipality.
- ³⁵ FEWS NET, 11/12/2020: [Emergency \(IPC Phase 4\) expected in parts of Tigray in 2021 if access constraints persist](#)
- ³⁶ For understanding the local context, see on Wikipedia: [Hagere Selam](#), [Derg](#), [Tigray guerrilla forces](#)
- ³⁷ Although it is very difficult to get information from rural areas in Tigray, we could make a detailed report on the killing of 54 civilians by ENDF and Eritrean army in four *tabyas* (municipalities) located between Mekelle and Hagere Selam: [tabia Ayninbirkekin](#), mainly *qushet* (hamlet) Addi Qoylo (30); [tabia Addilal](#), *qushet* Addilal (6); [tabia Arebay](#), *qushet* Addi Amdey (4); [tabia Addi Azmera](#), *qushet* Tukhul (4), *qushet* Miheni (5), *qushet* Mesenkoy (5). This is what happened in just four out of the approximately 700 rural *tabyas* of Tigray. And it

does not include deaths by starvation. Sources:

<https://twitter.com/yared96018266/status/1347990518635094016/photo/1> ; <https://www.tghat.com/victim-list/> and <https://www.tigraigenocide.com/>

³⁸ https://twitter.com/Alula_Solomon/status/1338597119851171842

³⁹ AFP, 15/12/2020: ['Terrified' survivors recount attacks on civilians in Tigray](#)

⁴⁰ <https://twitter.com/ryanmofarrell/status/1338283949815193602>

⁴¹ Annys, S., Tesfaalem Ghebreyohannes, Nyssen, J., 2020. [Impact of Hydropower Dam Operation and Management on Downstream Hydrogeomorphology in Semi-Arid Environments \(Tekeze, Northern Ethiopia\)](#). *Water*, 12: 2237.

⁴² Europe External Programme with Africa (EEPA) [situation reports](#). See also note 7.

⁴³ <https://twitter.com/EthioHRC>

⁴⁴ <https://twitter.com/AbiyAhmedAli/status/1338045080276508672>

⁴⁵ Voice of America, 13/12/2020: [Sudan PM Visits Ethiopia for Talks on Restive Tigray Region](#)

⁴⁶ Full message by Lt. Col. Abiy Ahmed, with English subtitles can be visualised here:

<https://twitter.com/Tseday/status/1338381821436956673>

⁴⁷ Veteran TPLF leaders were captured in Mekelle and transferred to Addis Ababa on 9 January 2021. The younger generation of Tigray leaders reportedly is at the different guerrilla war fronts.

⁴⁸ [Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 25](#) - 14 December 2020

⁴⁹ Reuters Graphics, 18/12/2020: [The conflict in Ethiopia](#); Der Spiegel, 15 December: [A Country on the Brink - Ethiopia Sinks Deeper into Ethnic Conflict](#); European Council on Foreign Relations, 15 December: [How Europe can stop Ethiopia's slide into a regional war](#).

⁵⁰ Alex de Waal, 14/12/2020: [Five Reasons Why the UN Security Council Needs to Deal with the Humanitarian Crisis in Ethiopia](#): "There's little doubt that starvation crimes are being committed in Tigray"; the [African Women Appeal for a Horn of Africa Peace Initiative](#), signed by women from all over Africa (including by Julia Cassell, the former Minister of Gender of Liberia and Tsedale Lemma, editor of Addis Standard), in favour of a cease-fire and an African women-led peace force.

⁵¹ AFP, 16/12/2020: [EU delays budget support to Ethiopia over Tigray conflict](#).

⁵² <https://twitter.com/addisstandard/status/1339870553478488064>

⁵³ France24, 18/12/2020: [Ethiopia offers reward for help finding dissident Tigray leaders](#)

⁵⁴ https://twitter.com/FIRIS_FireAlert

⁵⁵ This appeal includes a call to donate, in English ([CAFOD](#) or [CRS](#)), en [français](#), in het [Nederlands](#), und auf [Deutsch](#).