



Health for All Now!

People's Health Movement East & Southern Africa

PHM East and Southern Africa call to action on the war against the People of Tigray, Northern Ethiopia

It is now almost four months since the fighting between Tigray regional forces and the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) (along with Amhara Special forces, Amhara militia, and Eritrean Defence Forces) broke out in Tigray. The situation in Tigray is *extremely concerning*, as there is no or limited access to food, nutrition supplements, healthcare, and other basic services and commodities. There are several reports including viewpoints on the health crisis in Tigray due to the war about the unbearable humanitarian crisis including the collapse of the healthcare system collapse. The threat to the health of the people of Tigray is massive and increasing every day in which the war is not halted and aid cannot be delivered.

This viewpoint shows evidence that: (i) almost 85-90 percent of health centers were non-functional, and about 90 percent of ambulances were either destroyed or looted; (ii) 5,000 mothers have been left without access to ANC and 41,000 children have not been immunized; (iii) 180, 000 people with chronic non-communicable diseases have missed clinical follow-ups and disease management plans; (iv) 75 percent of the regional population (approximately 4.5 million people of which 2.2 million are children) are now food insecure and in need of immediate humanitarian assistance; and (v) more than 100 women and girls were raped.

Despite the evidence showing the magnitude of the humanitarian catastrophes in Tigray, access for humanitarian organizations to the region is extremely limited. Humanitarian organizations are pleading for access to the region. The few that have access cannot meet the need. The key reason for the current humanitarian crisis (including total collapse of the health system) is the ongoing fighting.

PHM calls on international, national, and multinational organizations to stop the fighting and allow unhindered access to humanitarian and medical support.

Our concerns for Tigray reflect the statements in the People's Charter for Health which:

- *Identifies war and conflict, and forced migration as determinants of health*
- *Identifies Global Health Governance as an area for action and is recognized as an important voice for healthcare rights of victims of war and refugees*
- *Identifies nutrition and food sovereignty as one of Health For All Campaign thematic areas*
- *Targets gender justice and health*



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Therefore PHM East and Southern Africa (ESA) demands that:

1. Country leaders and foreign ministries as well as international bodies, as duty bearers, including the United Nations, African Union, and European Union should help stop the war and defund the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea until the fighting has stopped.
2. UN, WHO, UNICEF, and other organizations must provide aid to ensure access to medicines and basic health services to the victims as a short-term goal, and re-build the health care infrastructures as mid and long-term goals.
3. Starvation must not be used as a weapon and that the World Food programme (WFP) and other relevant aid agencies must facilitate and deliver food aid to the victims of war.
4. An independent investigation into the alarming rate of sexual and gender-based violence, including rape must be undertaken and emergency funding provided so that gender-relevant organizations can provide short and long-term support to survivors of sexual violence.

The People of Tigray are voiceless and PHM commits to providing them with a voice.

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