

For Immediate Release: Ethiopian Americans in Seattle met to denounce ethnic violence targeting Tigreans, formed a committee for further actions.

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Where: Video/Tele (Facebook live/other)conference to be determined.

What: Briefing on the formation of committee.

When: Wednesday, September 7, 2016

Seattle, WA, Ethiopian Americans, specifically ethnic Tigreans, in the Greater Seattle Area met on Saturday, September 8, 2016, at the Tigrean Community Center and elected a committee to monitor, respond and mobilize resources to help victims of ethnically motivated attacks against Tigreans in Gondar and other parts of Amhara region. The public meeting was prompted by the very few diaspora extremist group's recent wave of deplorable ethnic violence and harassment against Tigreans in Ethiopia and the diaspora.

Concerned community members expressed outrage and disgust at the violent attacks against the lives and property of Tigreans by hate groups in parts of Amhara region, Ethiopia. In addition, community members mandated the elected committee to combat hate crimes, hate speech and hate groups on their behalf. The committee will also make contacts and coordinate with other anti-hate groups in Seattle and elsewhere.

The committee is currently engaged in establishing a network in every part of the world, and pledge the communities across the globe to remain united, be vigilant, and strengthen existing communities, towards a common goal, greater impact, and outcome.

The committee has since met on several occasions to produce this statement and discuss further actions.

The resurgence of cruel racist and bigoted groups with their persistent hate campaigns through extremist media outlets have escalated in recent months and risen to actions tantamount to ethnic cleansing in Amhara region, Ethiopia. The violence has been perpetrated by violent hate groups embed in anti-government protests. Ethnically motivated hostilities against Tigreans, aka Tegar, have also risen in the diaspora. These online and offline hostilities include harassment, bullying, silencing, spreading hateful stereotypes and prejudice, disruption of social and cultural events intended to intimidate, marginalize, traumatize and isolate Tigreans. This has to stop.

The committee will work diligently within the scope of each cities/countries' jurisdiction toward the safety and well-being of Tigreans both in Ethiopia and the diaspora through education,

litigation, and advocacy. The committee will announce further steps in the coming weeks to the public.

Some of the most recent unfortunate ethnically motivated attacks are:

1)* On August 21, 2016, Al-Jazeera reported around seven Tigreans were profiled and killed in Gondor by gangs. Many homes and business were destroyed and many fled the city to spare their lives. Most notably, four recognized hotels/motels were destroyed/damaged because they were owned by Ethiopians of Tigrean-origin.

2)* A Task Force formed by the state of Tigray region recently released press release recognizing ethnically motivated mass deportation. Their exact number of the racially motivated victims are unknown as they are scattered and displaced throughout Ethiopia and Sudan. So far, 4060 citizens were fled to the Tigray state leaving some of their properties and loved ones behind.

3)* On Sunday, September 04, 2016 around midnight racially motivated groups violently stormed at the law abiding Ethiopian-Canadians citizens while celebrating the "Ashenda" event in Calgary, Canada.

4)* Multiple Sudanese media outlets have reported thousands of Tigrayans have entered the Sudan fleeing anti-government protests from bordering Amhara region.

The anti-Tigrean movement is supported and financed by hate groups in the diaspora. Hate groups and individuals have been publicly advocating attacks on the people of Tigray to further their political ends. Deliberately and systematically targeting ethnic groups and races has always had dark consequences. We say, "Never Again!". This hate campaign will simply not be met with silence anymore. We are sending a clear message to agents of hate that we won't relent in pursuing justice. We won't appease hateful groups.

Despite the victimization of Tigrayans in the Amhara Regional State, concerned Tigreans have no resentment on the Amhara people nor fall into the trap of the forces of destruction. We welcome, thank and recognize reports that the Amhara people who have been sheltering and protecting ethnic Tigrayans from violent bandits in the region. We encourage and hope the people of Amhara will continue this exemplary function. We will also be remiss if we fail to mention our gratitude to the Ethio-Somali Region for their generous contribution of 10 million ETB for Tigreans displaced from Gondar.

Going forward, we will expose hate groups to the public. At this moment, we are unambiguously saying the targeting of Tigreans for such assault campaign and propaganda to further political ends is intolerable. We condemn all and any form of ethnic attacks in the strongest possible terms. The sheer belligerency of the verbal assault and bigotry against the Tigreans is unprecedented in its incivility and savagery in workplace and public.

We understand the provocation by anti-Tigrean hate groups is putting an undue burden on Tegar individuals and are reacting emotionally to the attacks by well-organized hate groups.

We urge all Ethiopian Tegar and law abiding citizens specifically the youth to show a great restraint and not to be tempted to respond in the violent ways of haters. Do not be lured to their levels by taking the law into your hands. If their actions even remotely compromise your safety alert the authorities right away. Revenge and vigilantism of any sort could lead to untended consequence as well create a cycle of violence that escalates out of control.

Ethio-American Tegar who reside in the great state of the Washington believe a strong society is built based on respect for all peoples regardless of their ethnic origin, race national origin, gender, religion or other protected status. We the people of the United States of America regardless of ethnic heritage are inspired by the remarkable idea that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity which owes much to the people of many different ethnic origins and cultures who have chosen to make their homes. Sadly, many innocent Ethio-American Tegar have been traumatized, attacked and bullied physically and emotionally recently through persistent by well-organized groups.

The Tigrean people have throughout their history shown that their collective willpower of survival and their bravery of resistance in the struggle to combat the dangers of extermination through displacement, human-caused misery, and insurmountable violence. No current or earlier watchdogs, no human rights groups and no government of dignity were up to condemn the scorched earth policy and killing squads of those hateful groups.

This is paving a foundation for something more sinister. What history teaches us is not good. More importantly, silence and denial in the face of this brewing storm is consequently tragic. We have witnessed serious signs of the unimaginable destruction to follow and have resolutely chosen to act now to diffuse the gathering storm rather than mourn for generations to follow.

We will champion the ideals of democracy, peace, and ethnic equality. No Ethiopian shall ever be persecuted because of ethnicity, gender or religion or other protected statuses enshrined by national and international law. This should be more obvious to our fellow Ethiopian-Americans. It is a supreme irony that those who had fled oppression and persecution are fueling a campaign of hate and ethnic cleansing from the comforts and privilege of democracy.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of many innocent lives and their loved ones as a result of the protest clashes and prison deaths. This is a tough time for everyone involved that require great restraint. It is morally disgraceful to take advantage unsuspecting youth and civilians.

Finally, we call upon fellow Ethiopians to join and combat sinister hate campaigns and violence before it ignites an indistinguishable civil war and/or communal clashes where we all lose. This declaration under no circumstances disavows political opposition and peaceful protests. It, however, disavows violence and any semblance of ethnic cleansing.

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” ~ **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

The Committee, Wednesday September 6, 2016, Seattle, Washington.

- .1. [Al Jazeera report](#)([Original](#) limited by location),
2. [Tigray Administration.](#)
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vovVkrjSKSw> (Ashenda, a cultural event, disruption by misguided group in Calgary, Canada)
4. [Assayha report](#), [Dabanga Sudan report](#)