

TOPIC 2: The situation in Tigray.

The question of regional responsibility for population movement resulting from conflict.

I. Introduction to the Topic

The population movement council focuses on addressing the regional responsibility for population movement resulting from conflict. The issues on this agenda are undeniably important, as the topics affect millions of lives worldwide as well as the security concerns of the refugees and humanitarian concerns.

Ethiopia had been a country strictly governed by the Tigray's People's Liberation Front (TPLF) for decades. Upon the election of Ethiopia's new prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, Abiy quickly challenged and threatened the TPLF's political power over its land with his own political party: the Prosperity Party. On November 4th 2020, Abiy Ahmed, the prime minister of Ethiopia, ordered a military offensive on Tigray's regional capital Mekelle. This marked the beginning of the civil war in Ethiopia between Ethiopia and Tigray.

From November 2020 to the present day, the civil war and violence has forced over 60,000 Tigrayan refugees to flee to South Sudan. The United Nations called it the worst mass evacuation Ethiopia has experienced in the last two decades. For those Tigrayan refugees stuck in the country, Ethiopian and Eritrean forces have been reported raiding refugee camps and ceasing and intercepting humanitarian aid to the population, regardless of the fact that Abiy Ahmed pledged that he would withdraw militaries from the region. As the ever concerning issue of the Ethiopian civil war between Ethiopia and Tigray continues, Tigrayan refugees are left insecure from basic necessities.

II. Definition of Key Terms

Exodus: The mass movement of people, most notably immigrants. The invasion of Tigray has caused mass fear within the population and forced over 60,000 citizens to seek refuge in South Sudan.

Humanitarian crisis: According to the OHCHR: "A humanitarian crisis is defined as a singular event or a series of events that are threatening in terms of health, safety or well-being of a community or large group of people. It may be an internal or external conflict and usually occurs throughout a large land area.". The Ethiopian and Eritrean military has been reported to threaten Tigayaran refugees residing in refugee camps. "The desperate situation in these camps is a stark example of the impact of the lack of access and supplies affecting millions of displaced persons and other civilians throughout the region," said Boris Cheshirkov, a UNHCR representative.

Tigray famine: An extreme scarcity of food, most often leaving large groups of people starving. In this case, there are over 400,000 Tigrayan refugees suffering from the famine caused by the military intervention of Ethiopia, intercepting the humanitarian aid.

III. Key Stakeholders

The Prosperity Party: The Prosperity Party, created in December, 2019, and run by Abiy Ahmed, the prime minister of Ethiopia, the main initiator of the Tigray invasion. Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity Party sought to challenge the already established power of Tigray's People's Liberation Front (TPLF). This conflict led to the invasion of Tigray.

Tigray's People's Liberation Front (TPLF) : Formed in 1975 to rebel against the military government, fighting for the for ethnic autonomy, the TPLF had achieved autonomy over their land. In recent years, their autonomy had been threatened by the Prosperity Party and went to war against Ethiopia as a result.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA):

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has been founded to coordinate a global emergency response to save lives and protect people in humanitarian crises on a global scale while also being responsible for utilizing a variety of different humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. Since the response towards global emergencies is quite vital in dealing with this specific topic, you can infer a connection between the key stakeholder and the OCHA.

IV. Key Issues including Background Information

The TPLF fights for ethnic autonomy of the land:

The TPLF fights for ethnic autonomy of their land, attempting to liberate those who threaten their autonomy and ideologies. This would be relevant to the issue as the Prosperity Party wanted to rearrange the coalition that the TPLF founded, causing conflict throughout the country.

Tigrayan refugees:

The invasion of Tigray has caused the displacement of 2.6 million people, over 240,000 returnees and more than 97,000 refugees & asylum-seekers in Tigray and neighbouring regions. This creates a major humanitarian crisis as Tigray has a population of 7.07 million citizens, having lost to one third of the population displaced.

Humanitarian Crisis:

Since the war started, there have been over 150,000 - 200,000 reported cases of death due to starvation in Tigray. Tigray is suffering from major food insecurity, as 86% of the population in the Tigray region are in need of food aid. This has spilled over, affecting surrounding regions in Tigray, causing an estimated over 13 million people to be in need of food aid.

V. Timeline of Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

Date	Description of event
December 1st, 2019	Abiy Ahmed's political group was formed. The beginning of his rise to power.
November 4th, 2020	Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed ordered the military offense on Tigray. Initiating the civil war.
December 23rd, 2020	The United States promised to contribute \$18 million to help the refugees and the internally displaced people of the Tigray conflict.

March 26th, 2021	Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that Eritean forces had agreed to withdraw from the Tigray region.
March 2021	More than 60,000 Tigrayan refugees and asylum seekers have sought refuge in Sudan.
March 22, 2022	The Prime Minister declared an "immediate humanitarian truce" to allow humanitarian aid for the refugees suffering in the Northern region of Ethiopia.

VI. Possible Challenges & Solutions

A peace treaty seems to be the most viable solution in this situation whereas both parties should get the opportunity to unify a leader and political party to avoid conflict among the countries. Furthermore, human rights should be considered as these should not be disregarded when discussing possible government solutions. However, there should be a large regard towards the sovereignty of Tigray to further avoid limited sovereignty throughout the state.

Additionally, the most expedient solution would include a Tigray led re-election campaign as this could satisfy Ethiopian ideologies but also help reunify Tigray and create an independent state. However, suggesting a Post Westphalian sovereignty concept could insinuate a conflict between neighbourly states.

VII. Recommendations for Resolution Writing including Research

Delegates should further research into the social factors throughout the countries as it is quite important to consider the public opinion when addressing sovereignty and power. Does the country believe that Tigray should independently be able to select leaders? However, delegates should focus on considering both perspectives with a variety of different sources and evaluating the collected data.

VIII. Bibliography

Mackintosh, Eliza. "Ethiopia Is at War with Itself. Here's What You Need to Know about the Conflict." *CNN*, CNN, 3 Nov. 2021, edition.cnn.com/2021/11/03/africa/ethiopia-tigray-explainer-2-intl/index.html.

"Why Is Ethiopia at War with Itself?" *The New York Times*, 2022, www.nytimes.com/article/ethiopia-tigray-conflict-explained.html.

"Tigray: Eritrean Refugees 'Scared and Struggling to Eat' amid Aid Obstacles." *UN News*, 21 Jan. 2022, news.un.org/en/story/2022/01/1110252.

"We Apologize for the Inconvenience... - United States Department of State." *United States Department of State*, 12 Aug. 2022, www.state.gov/404.

Jazeera, Al. "Explainer: What Is Happening in Ethiopia's Tigray Region?" *Aljazeera.com*, Al Jazeera, 6 Nov. 2020, www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/6/explainer-what-is-happening-in-ethiopias-tigray-region.

"Ethiopia's Tigray Refugee Crisis Explained." *Unrefugees.org*, 2020, www.unrefugees.org/news/ethiopia-s-tigray-refugee-crisis-explained/#Who%20is%20most%20affected%20by%20the%20crisis%20in%20the%20Tigray%20region?.

Jazeera, Al. "Ethiopia Declares Unilateral Truce to Allow Aid into Tigray." *Aljazeera.com*, Al Jazeera, 24 Mar. 2022, www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/24/ethiopia-declares-truce-to-allow-aid-into-tigray.

Akinwotu, Emmanuel. "Ethiopian Government Declares Tigray Truce to Let Aid In." *The Guardian*, The Guardian, 24 Mar. 2022, www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/24/ethiopian-government-declares-tigray-truce-to-let-aid-in.

Giulia Paravicini. "Nearly Half the People in Ethiopia's Tigray in 'Severe' Need of Food Aid, World Food Programme Says." *Reuters*, Reuters, 20 Aug. 2022, www.reuters.com/world/africa/nearly-half-people-ethiopias-tigray-need-food-aid-wfp-2022-08-19/.

TUBS. "File:Tigray in Ethiopia.svg - Wikimedia Commons." *Wikimedia.org*, 6 Dec. 2011, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tigray_in_Ethiopia.svg.

IX: Additional Resources

Map of Tigray region:

Areas bordering Tigray: Ethiopia is a landlocked country with Tigray in the Northern region. To the South, Tigray is bordered by the Amhara region, residing in Ethiopia; to the North is Eritrea, the West is Sudan and the East is the Afar region.