



TIGRAY AMERICAN IMPACT FUND

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Re: Threats to Terminate the Mandate of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia

To: Permanent Representatives of Member and Observer States of United Nations Human Rights Council

Excellencies,

We, the undersigned civil society, and human rights organizations, are alarmed by the 15 February announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia to the Executive Council of the African Union that the Ethiopian government is planning to present a resolution at the upcoming session of the UN Human Rights Council to terminate the mandate of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts (ICHREE).

We write to urge your delegations to reject any resolution to prematurely terminate the mandate of ICHREE, and to express your support for the mandate and work of the Commission. The independent mandate and work of ICHREE is crucial to preserve the opportunity for victims of grave international crimes to have access to justice particularly because of the eroding environment for independent media and human rights monitoring of conflict-affected areas of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's attempts to terminate ICHREE's mandate during its term is unprecedented. Not only does it suggest that states can politically maneuver to overturn the decisions of the Human Rights Council to avoid independent scrutiny and accountability, it could set a dangerous precedent regarding international scrutiny and impunity for rights abuses elsewhere.

In November 2022, the Ethiopian federal government and Tigrayan authorities signed [a cessation of hostilities agreement](#). While the agreement restored some long overdue aspects of civilian life, including easing some restrictions on basic services and humanitarian assistance, independent, effective investigations with a view to prosecution of grave international crimes will be key. The work and mandate of ICHREE would complement the cessation of hostilities agreement which recognizes **the need for accountability and justice.**

Victims of violations and their families in northern Ethiopia, as well as in other parts of the country, have expressed [a lack of trust in state institutions](#) and continue to seek greater international attention to their suffering and for action to end impunity.

Ethiopia's efforts to terminate ICHREE's work would silence the hope and trust that



victims have placed in it, including those who have already engaged with the ICHREE in the hope that their stories would be told.

With ongoing human rights abuses, and credible investigations and accountability at the domestic level still elusive, the Human Rights Council and its members should

support those seeking justice and enable ICHREE to continue to fulfill the mandate it was given in 2021: to collect and preserve evidence of serious crimes committed, to identify those responsible, with a view where possible to make such information accessible and usable in support of ongoing and future accountability efforts.

We reiterate our call to members and observers of the UN Human Rights Council to block Ethiopia's efforts to terminate the mandate of the ICHREE, and to confirm your support for the ICHREE and the protection of the integrity of the Human Rights Council and its mandated bodies.

Sincerely,



Tigray American Impact Fund (TAIF)