



Immediate Attention Required: Drone Attacks on Amhara Region and Escalating Humanitarian Crisis

Dear Esteemed Representatives of the UN Permanent Mission in Geneva,

We are reaching out to urgently bring to your attention the grave situation in Ethiopia's Amhara region, which has been subjected to over 100 drone attacks from August 2023 to January 2024. These attacks have led to significant civilian casualties, extensive infrastructure damage, and have exacerbated an already dire humanitarian crisis. The involvement of drones, reportedly sponsored by various countries, in targeting civilian areas including residences, schools, hospitals, and religious sites, has resulted in the tragic loss of hundreds of innocent lives.

Summary of Drone Attacks on Amhara Region

Ethiopia's Amhara region has been the target of over 100 drone attacks from August 2023 to January 2024. These attacks, acknowledged by Ethiopian Defence Chief FM Berhahu Jula, have resulted in significant civilian casualties and infrastructure damage. The use of drones, reportedly sponsored by the UAE and originating from various countries, including Turkey, Iran, and China, has exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in the region. The attacks have targeted civilian areas, including residences, schools, hospitals, marketplaces, and religious sites, resulting in the tragic loss of hundreds of innocent lives and widespread injuries. Despite Ethiopia's international commitments to protect civilians during times of conflict, the government's actions have blatantly violated these agreements and exacerbated the already dire situation in the Amhara region.

Multiple incidents of drone strikes resulting in civilian casualties have been reported in Ethiopia's Amhara region, indicating a concerning trend in the government's counterinsurgency campaign. The use of drones, including Turkish Bayraktar TB2 models, has become prevalent, reflecting a broader global trend in modern warfare.

The most recent incident occurred on February 19, targeting an Isuzu truck transporting civilians, including individuals returning from a baptism ceremony; witnesses described the aftermath as horrific, with body parts strewn across the site and survivors suffering from severe injuries. The target, an Isuzu truck transporting civilians, was struck by a military drone, resulting in the deaths of over 30 people and numerous injuries. Similarly, strikes in December 2022 and August 2021 targeted civilian vehicles, schools, and bus stops, highlighting the indiscriminate nature of these attacks.

The Ethiopian military has denied targeting civilians but admitted to using drones for combat purposes. However, human rights experts have raised concerns about the lack of oversight and accountability, especially in remote areas where strikes occur. Despite claims of identifying militants before striking, reports suggest that civilians continue to bear the brunt of these attacks.

Summary of Attacks on Orthodox Church and Members

Orthodox Christians in Ethiopia, particularly those in the Amhara region, have faced escalating persecution, discrimination, and violence in recent years. Extremist groups, including factions within the Ethiopian Federal Army, armed militias, and militant perpetrators, have targeted Orthodox churches, clergy, and congregants, resulting in numerous casualties and widespread destruction of religious sites. Attacks have included mass killings during religious ceremonies, church bombings, and targeted assassinations of religious leaders. Additionally, government interference in religious affairs, including the formation of breakaway synods and restrictions on religious practices, has further marginalized the Orthodox Christian community. These systematic attacks and discriminatory practices not only violate basic human rights but also threaten the rich religious heritage and cultural identity of the Amhara people.

Appeal for International Investigation

The termination of the UN's human rights commission on Ethiopia has further dampened hopes for accountability, leaving civilians vulnerable to ongoing violence. Analysts argue that drone strikes alone are not a viable strategy for defeating the genocide fueled Amhara people's grievances, emphasizing the need for broader political solutions.

In Ethiopia's Amhara region, the cry for help from the international community to address the ongoing genocide has fallen on deaf ears. The Amhara people have been relentless in their efforts to alarm the UNHRC about the atrocities being committed against them, only to have their pleas ignored and their quest for justice obstructed.

The international community's failure to intervene effectively has emboldened the perpetrators of the genocide, allowing them to continue their campaign of violence with impunity. The excuse given by the commission for abandoning the investigation – placing the responsibility for investigation, prosecution, and judgment of crimes in the hands of the Ethiopian Government, the very author of the genocide – is not only unacceptable but also a grave betrayal of the victims' trust.

The Amhara Fano resistance is not merely a response to ethno-nationalist grievances; it is a desperate bid to halt the atrocities and genocide being committed against the Amhara people.

It is imperative that immediate action is taken to stop the mass killings and ensure that justice is served. This is not a matter to be taken lightly; it is a dire humanitarian crisis that demands urgent attention and intervention from the international community.

Given the gravity of the situation and the alarming reports of human rights abuses and atrocities committed against the Amhara people, we urgently appeal to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to re-initiate an international investigation team specifically dedicated to investigating the ongoing Amhara genocide in Ethiopia.

The systematic targeting of civilians, including Orthodox Christians, and the use of drones to inflict widespread destruction and loss of life demand immediate international intervention.

We call upon the UNHRC member states to prioritize the protection of civilians, uphold the principles of justice and accountability, and take decisive action to address the humanitarian crisis unfolding in the Amhara region. The establishment of an international investigation team is crucial to uncovering the truth, holding perpetrators accountable, and preventing further atrocities. The international community must stand in solidarity with the victims of the Amhara genocide and take concrete steps to ensure their safety, security, and well-being.

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