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Written statement* submitted by Elizka Relief Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Extrajudicial Killings and Executions in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian civil war that has been going on for nearly two years has resulted in several extrajudicial killings and executions by the Ethiopian army and pro-government militias as well as anti-government militias that the Ethiopian government has been unable to fully control or put a stop to. grave human rights violations have happened over the past 6 months in which unarmed civilians, including women and children, have been brutally killed and had their properties either destructed or stolen. In some instances, explained below, the government did not even show up to the murder scenes or have arrived late after the assailants have left. Extrajudicial killings were not only reserved for Ethiopian civilians but have been used on non-nationals as well in the case of the execution of 7 Sudanese soldiers. This report provides details of the violations committed in the past 6 months followed by several recommendations.

First: Extrajudicial Killings/Executions by different Ethiopian Stakeholders:

The Amhara militia, a state-affiliated militia, attacked civilians in Botoro Bora kebele of Abe Dengoro woreda on February 12 2022. The armed group were originally looking for two of their members who went missing before they started attacking civilians (1). This attack happened at dawn where the militia killed whoever was in range and had consequently claimed the lives of 29 people including women and children (2). Besides extra-judicially killing civilians, the militia burnt down more than 64 houses, with people still inside of them, forcefully took several young girls and women and stole their cattle (3). The heads of 9 people were found in nearby locations strongly suggesting that they have been beheaded (4). It was reported by the residents that neither the local administration nor security forces made any attempts to counter the violence which meant that the residents were left to defend for themselves as they went to nearby kebeds to seek refuge (5).

A video circulating on social media has shown that on March 3rd, 2022 in Aysid Kebele of Guba District, Ethiopian security forces extra-judicially arrested 8 men on the basis that they have been involved in an attack on a convoy that took place the day before (6). The men were Tigrayan civilians who had a pass letter proving their release from prison (7). The government forces proceeded to torture the 8 men to force a confession out of them before killing them and burning their bodies (8). Moments later, two Gumuz civilians were also killed for expressing objection to what happened to the 8 men (9). An 11th man, who was of Tigrayan origins, was accused of having a relationship with those who were just killed and was consequently tied up and burned alive (10).

At the end of March, 2022, a vehicle, transporting an estimate of 100 militia members in Oromiya, was passing through the town of Korke when it was ambushed by a group of armed men who are suspected to be from Ethiopia's Amhara region (11). The attackers came in seven vehicles from a close by town in Amhara (12). This ambush resulted in the death of 26 people and the injury of 15 people (13). After the attack, the attackers called Oromo militia members through one of the deceased's phone to deliver a message, revealing their identity by saying that they were members of the Fano volunteer Amhara militia which is known to be a militia closely affiliated with the Ethiopian government (14).

After deterring the Oromo Liberation Army's attack in Gambella, the Ethiopian security forces committed grave human right violations against the residents themselves in June of 2022 (15). Individuals who were suspected of participating or collaborating in the OLA attack were killed by the Gambella regional forces through "door to door executions" (16). A total of 11 civilians had been killed. (17)

The deadliest attack in recent months took place on Saturday June 18, 2022 in Tole Kebele, Gimbi Woreda of West Wollega zone (18). The attack is said to have happened following some clashes between government security forces and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), which trapped civilians in between (19). A resident of the area has counted 230 bodies but there could be more bodies nearby (20). Twelve days later, a representative for the Prime Minister, stated that 338 victims had already been identified (21). Most of whom that died were women and children who were unable to quickly escape the attackers. Although this

attack was instantly reported to district and zonal officials, they were unable to take any action against the attackers due to the closure of roads. Government forces failed to intervene during the five-hour attack on Tole despite the existence of the local district administration just 49 kilometers away from the scene. When government forces finally arrived, it had already been hours since the OLA fighters had left the area.

Towards the end of June 2022, the Ethiopian army extra-judicially executed seven Sudanese soldiers and one civilian. The soldiers were captured in a border region adjacent to the disputed area of Al-Fashaga where there has been a long-standing quarrel between the two countries over the fertile land. Sudan's Foreign Ministry stated that the soldiers were taken into Ethiopia after they were held captive in a Sudanese area on June 22 (22). Ethiopia openly displayed the bodies of the murdered soldiers and there was even a picture proving this where the seven of them were lying motionless in their military uniforms (23). The ill treatment of prisoners before and after their death, which has been displayed by Ethiopia, is a breach of all conventions of war and international law. The killings were later confirmed by Ethiopia's Foreign Ministry who explained that the soldiers had crossed into Ethiopia with the help of rebels from the Tigray region, suggesting that that is when they were murdered (24).

Recommendations

Due to the continuous extrajudicial killings and executions committed by the Ethiopian army and pro-government militias, in addition to Ethiopia's inability to protect its citizens from other anti-government militias, Elizka relief foundation recommends the following:

1. All necessary measures must be undertaken to protect civilians including the implementation of maximum caution by all law enforcement units when conducting operations to avoid direct or indirect targeting of civilians.
2. Impartial and thorough investigations of extrajudicial arrests, killings and executions must be conducted through an independent mechanism to capture perpetrators, especially those who were in a commanding position and ensure that they are tried in a court of law.
3. Cooperate with and facilitate the work of the national human rights institution to promptly investigate human rights violations due to the ongoing conflict.
4. Appoint more peacekeeping units through UN Peacekeeping to aid and empower the Ethiopian authorities to successfully fulfill their obligations towards the Ethiopian people.

6. <https://bit.ly/3JUnkuJ>

7. Ibid

8. Ibid

9. ibid

10. ibid

11. <https://bit.ly/3AqHB7O>

12. ibid

13. ibid

14. ibid

15. <https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/468205.aspx>

16. ibid

17. ibid

18. <https://bit.ly/3PsDsF1>

19. ibid

20. ibid

21. <https://bit.ly/3zWIvaN>

22. <https://bit.ly/3zYUGee>

23. <https://bit.ly/3Pvqje6>

24. ibid