

**Addis Ababa University**

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**Institute for Peace and Security Studies**

**THE IMPLICATION OF THE US RESPONSES ON THE WAR IN NORTHERN  
ETHIOPIA**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES OF ADDIS  
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STUDIES (IPSS)**

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## ABSTRACT

*This thesis argues that coercive peacebuilding has its drawbacks in that it has the possibility of further escalating the conflict and at the same time risking the stability of the country in conflict. Since November 2020 Ethiopia has been experiencing a civil war, which was initially considered a 'law enforcement operation' that is to take a few weeks, in its northernmost region of Tigray. The war brought about a great loss to Ethiopia. The destruction of property, loss of human life, internal displacement and risk of famine are among the most mentioned. However, apart from these, the war has also brought internal fragmentation that has threatened the existence of the state. The war, in principle, is being fought between the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). However, there are a plethora of actors that are involved both directly and indirectly. Actors such as Eritrea, Amhara regional forces and militia (Fano) and other regional forces have been involved directly. On the other hand, actors such as the US, EU, AU and UN have been involved indirectly by giving responses and/or taking actions. This thesis in particular focuses on the responses the US gave to the war. It tries to examine the implication of the US response to peacebuilding efforts in regard to the war. In order to do this the thesis classifies the war into four phases marked by distinct events in the war. This thesis finds that the US responses aimed at bringing peace to Ethiopia through coercive means using both its soft and hard powers. Despite these coercive measures things did not go the way the US planned it would go. The US employed coercive measures consisting of diplomatic, military and economic/financial pressures to compel the warring parties to halt hostility. Among these measures, military coercion can be considered the most successful despite having faced hefty resistance from the GoE and the Ethiopian public as well. Although the economic/financial measures had brought some degree of behavioural change in the GoE, the coercive policies of the US were more of a gamble or calculated risk that could have gone terribly wrong and further worsened the situation in Ethiopia. The thesis used digital ethnography where data was collected from official websites and accounts of persons and organisations involved in the conflict as well as news outlets to draw upon the conclusion.*

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AI- Amnesty International

DoS- Department of State

ENDF- Ethiopian National Defense Force

GoE- Government of Ethiopia

GCS- Government Communication Service

HPR- House of Peoples' Representatives

MFA- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PMO- Primeminister's Office

TPLF- Tigray People's Liberation Front

US- United States

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

When one looks at the history of Ethiopia's political process it is easy to identify its violent nature. For instance, Yonas (2022) mentions that Ethiopia has been experiencing violence in its political activities throughout history. For example if we take a look at the modern Ethiopian state formation, one can observe that the state was born out of violence. In the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century Ethiopia was in internal strife where different principalities fought against each other which was commonly known as *Zemene Mesafint* (Bahru, 2002). This period ended with the coming of Emperor Tewodros II who employed violent methods, i.e. conquests, to reunite the state (Ibid). These are not the only cases where Ethiopia faced such a violent political process. This sort of activity continued in the subsequent regimes up until this day. This confirms that the violence is indeed the modus operandi of the Ethiopian state.

Additionally it is important to note that the politics in Ethiopia is mostly interfered with by external actors throughout history. This external interference and/or involvement has to do with the geographic location of Ethiopia. Ethiopia is a country that is located in the Horn of Africa. This region is considered to be one of the most strategic regions in the world. Berouk (2011) mentions that the Horn of Africa is important not for its raw materials but for its proximity to the Red Sea, which is an crucial route for international maritime trade connecting the Middle East, the Far East and Europe. At the same time the Horn of Africa is crucial for creating a navigation route for the Oil of the Persian Gulf to North American and European consumers (Ibid). On a similar note Remnek (1990) mentions the relevance of the Horn of Africa in relation to the Bab El Mandeb strait which is a strategic trade route. Hence disruption in the Horn means disruption in this strategic location.

However one might argue that the relevance of the Horn is dependent upon the Suez canal that was opened 1867. This might seem true, for instance Bereket (1980) stated that the importance

of the Horn of Africa augmented after the opening of the Suez canal in 1867. He also adds that this—opening of the Suez internationalised the strategic and commercial importance of the Horn consequently increasing the probability of external interventions (Ibid). But this does not mean that the Horn was not important and that there has not been any external intervention. If one takes a closer look at the history of the region, specifically at the history of Ethiopia, it is visible that there was indeed external intervention prior to the opening of the Suez. One prominent example can be the Portuguese and Ottoman intervention in the war between the Christian Kingdom and Adal.

Mukerrem (2017) states that the Ottoman intervention was made based on political and economic interests of the empire. He stated that prior to the arrival of the Ottomans, the Portuguese established contacts in Abyssinia where they were able to redirect the eastern trade route from Muslims hence in order to control this trade the Ottomans intended to establish contact in the region (Ibid). This shows that the Horn was important prior to the Suez and that there was also external intervention. However the argument by Bereket (1980) holds water as well as the opening of the Suez did increase the relevance of the region. This was especially true during the Cold War where, as Lefebvre (1981) mentions, it was an arena of East-West confrontation.

Maintaining the above arguments it is not surprising to see Ethiopia caught up in a civil war where external actors are meddling in it. And this is what is exactly happening in Ethiopia since November 3, 2020. Since this date Ethiopia has been engaged in a fierce civil war in its northern region of Tigray. The war is principally being fought between the government of Ethiopia (GoE) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), a group that claims to be the legal administrative body of the region. Though these are the principal actors, there are also other actors that are involved in the war such as Amhara National Regional Forces, Fano (Amhara based militia group), Eritrean forces and other regional forces and militia groups from other regions.

In addition, several external (both international and regional) actors composed of states, international organisations and media were also active. For instance Abbink (2021) states that the internal crisis in Ethiopia has garnered the attention of the international community, more

specifically from the US, the EU and international media outlets giving responses on the unfolding of situations. Moreover Yohannes and Cheesman (2021) mention that the war in Ethiopia has been internationalised. Here it is important to note that internationalisation entails intervention as it means that there are other actors that are not directly a part of the war.

Generally, an intervention can be defined as “an intended, planned, and targeted operation in a system or process which aims at removing or preventing an undesirable phenomenon” (Loss, 2008: 808). From this definition we understand that intervention is contextual, meaning the intent of the interveiner makes the intervention. This thesis, focusing on the civil war in Tigray, contextualises intervention in terms of civil war intervention.

Traditionally intervention in the internal affairs of a state was forbidden under international norms, despite there being certain cases of intervention (Woo, 2017). This was primarily due to the Westphalian notion of the international system which is state centric. The Westphalian system conceptualises the international system based on three principles, i.e. legal equality of states, autonomy of states and non-interference in affairs of other states (Mulcaire, 2014). From such a conception of the international order one can see that the sovereignty of the state is sacrosanct. Here state sovereignty has two aspects, internal and external, internally sovereignty entails autonomy while externally it entails independence (Akani, 2019). Hence according to Woo’s (2017) statement, intervention in internal affairs of a state are minimal, traditionally speaking.

However, the notion of intervention was subject to different interpretations. Gevorgyan (2014) mentions that the state centric conception of sovereignty has been outdated. This is primarily due to the concept of security. In the 90s there was a rise in the concept of security shifting from the state towards the people as there was a surge of oppressive regimes (Kenkil, 2013). Hence this reduced the significance of the Westphalian notion of sovereignty giving rise to a more people centred notion of sovereignty making individuals superior to the state (Künnemann, 2017). This gave rise to the concept of Responsibility to Protect (R2P). Gagro (2014) mentions that the concept of R2P dwells on three important points which are:

*“a) to prevent - to address both the root causes and direct causes of internal conflict and other crises putting populations at risk; b) to react – to respond to situations of compelling human need with appropriate measures, which may include coercive measures like sanctions and international prosecution, and in extreme cases military intervention; c) to rebuild – to provide, particularly after a military intervention, full assistance with recovery, reconstruction and reconciliation, addressing the causes of the harm the intervention was designed to halt or avert.” (Gargo, 2014: 61)*

This entails that failure of one state to protect its citizens would result in intervention, thus it is under this auspices that intervention currently is undertaken. This perception of interventions have magnified the concept of coercive peacebuilding. Coercive peacebuilding, as will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, entails peacebuilding in a coercive manner. According to Tschirgi (1996) peacebuilding is a response to violent conflicts from the international community. Eggar (2015) mentions that the international community urges the peacebuilders to contain the conflict. Maintaining the above definition forwarded by Loss (2008), peacebuilding has an element of intervention, consequently meaning that coercive peacebuilding has an element of intervention.

However it is important to question the effectiveness of such a measure, i.e. coercive peacebuilding, when it comes to achieving its intended goal. As mentioned above coercive peacebuilding has an element of intervention within it and the effectiveness of interventions has been questioned throughout the years. For instance Regan and Aydin (2006) mentioned that empirical evidence shows that intervention in civil wars have prolonged the conflict and increased the level of hostility between the protagonists. Additionally Woo (2017) stated that the legitimacy of interventions are also questioned where states that intervene also deny their intervention by presenting the Vietnamese intervention in Cambodia.

Coming back to the case of the civil war in the northern part of Ethiopia there was visible intervention from the international community. This thesis focuses its attention on the US where it examines the responses it gave and measures it took in the course of the civil war. The paper

argues that the US responses indeed have an element of coercive peacebuilding but mainly revolved around its interests and this had its own consequences in the course of the war.

Moreover the thesis further looks into the role the media played and is still playing in the war and how that relates to the US response. This is because the issue of humanitarian intervention often comes in conjunction with media coverage as it is assumed that media has the ability to propagate support for reconciliation and protect the vulnerable group (Tomiak, 2018). Thus, where there is an inclination by Western governments to intervene in a humanitarian crisis the issue of the media influence over policy, i.e. the 'CNN effect,' is a notion that is going to be raised (Balabanova, 2010).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The Horn of Africa is described as one of the most hostile regions in the world. The problems range from natural, such as drought, to human made, such as civil wars ravaging the region. For instance, Christopher Clapham, a prominent scholar on the region, states that Horn of Africa is usually described as a problematic region which got global attention in the mid-1980s vis-a-vis the Ethiopian famine then followed by the Somalian case which saw the collapse of order in the beginning of the 1990s (Clapham, 2017). Additionally, the region is historically characterised by conflict ranging from Guerilla warfare to conventional warfare (Ibid).

Among this the issue of internal strife and civil war are arguably the most prominent. For instance looking at the data presented by the Fragile State Index (2022) the Horn of Africa hosts one of the most fragile states in the world. Somalia ranked second, Eritrea at eighteenth and Ethiopia at thirteenth and also adding Sudan and South Sudan ranked seventh and third respectively (Ibid), if one considers the Horn as the greater Horn. This indicates that the region is a region where humanitarian issues are grave and could worsen at any moment. As a result, in order to mitigate the effects interventions have taken place and are taking place.

Additionally, it has been argued by Polch (2011) that the US has little strategic interest in Africa. This has been manifested in the fluctuating engagements of US administrations. However this has not been the case in the Horn of Africa. In this specific region the US interests have been high. This is due to the strategic significance the region holds. Remnek (1990), as mentioned in

the introduction, stated that the Horn region is important for its geostrategic location, i.e. the Bab El Mandeb. This importance is shown in the presence of multiple military bases in the region. For example Djibouti hosts 6 military bases, namely China, US, Japan, France, Italy and Saudi Arabia. However these are not the only countries that have bases in the region. The UAE, Turkey and Russia have bases in the region.

Amidst such chaos and strategic significance, Ethiopia used to serve as the 'ideal' partner to stabilisation efforts in the region. Kłosowicz (2015) argues that Ethiopia is a good ally with the West in the Horn region due to its comparative advantages in economic, political and security aspects. He states that Ethiopia has shown incredible economic growth, politically it hosts a plethora of regional organisations and plays an important role in counter terrorism and extremism (Ibid). Mulugeta (2019) also affirms this position stating that Ethiopia is a key partner to the US in security issues.

However to the one who looks at the history of Ethiopia closely it is visible that civil war and internal strife are common, from ancient times to the modern era, from the war between the Axumite empire to the war between the Derg and the rebel forces. Hence it is no surprise for scholars interested in studying the history of Ethiopia to see the country in another civil war. And as stated above interventions via responses have been prominent since the beginning of the war. In a region where intervention in internal conflict is common this might seem a repetition of previous works.

However in this case the US did not behave in the same manner as previous conflicts in the region. In the case of Tigray the US measures went from efforts of peacebuilding to coercive peacebuilding. Given the relative advantage Ethiopia holds amongst the regions it serves as an important ally to the US. This importance was manifested after the conclusion of the Cold War where the Marxist-Leninist regime fell. The US went as far as officially stating that Ethiopia was a 'lost ally' to the US (Schreder, 1992). And for one state to benefit from an alliance the partner state should be stable. Hence the war that broke out in the northern part of Ethiopia has posed a threat to the 'lucrative' alliance between the US and Ethiopia. Therefore the US called for peacebuilding efforts which all parties involved in the war did not comply with, consequently the

US followed coercive measures to bring peace. This thesis examines the effects of this coercive peacebuilding process on Ethiopia.

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general objective of this thesis is to examine the effects of external responses in internal conflicts of a state.

Specifically it intends:

- To examine the nature of the war in Tigray
- To assess the US responses to the war
- To examine the nature of coercive peacebuilding in relation to the US responses

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Emanating from the above objectives this thesis attempted to answer the following questions

- What is the nature of the war in Tigray?
- How did the US respond to the war?
- What is the nature of coercive peacebuilding?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This thesis contributes to the existing body of knowledge regarding western intervention in internal conflicts. It can be an additional source of reference for future researchers who are interested in studying the subject of intervention, with a more contemporary view. Specifically this thesis moves away from the more conventional idea of peace intervention, i.e. liberal peace, to coercive peace. This thesis would give readers a different perspective to peace interventions than the dominant literature on the subject.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

The research uses a qualitative research methodology as its aim is to examine the implications of the US responses on resolving the war and building peace in Ethiopia. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research allows researchers to make interpretations, assessments and predictions in a flexible manner. From the aim of the research, it is visible to see that this methodology is integral to the study. Examining an implication entails predictions and as mentioned in the first chapter since the issue is political it needs the flexibility to assess. Thus the thesis employs qualitative methodology. To add to this Kothari (2004), in his argument, affirms this stating that qualitative research gives more flexibility to analysis.

## **1.7 Research Design**

The research employed a case study as a design as it uses a single case to draw conclusions. According to Kumar (2011) a case study is a research design where a single case becomes the base for the research in making assumptions through in-depth studies of that single case. A case study can be relevant in drawing assumptions in cases related to it which are considered 'atypical' by researchers (Ibid). Thus this research, having similar dimensions of the above elaboration, followed the case study design. In addition to that the thesis employed an exploratory design as well since its aim is to discover the implications of the responses the US gave regarding the war in Tigray and how that contributes to peacebuilding and resolving the war in Ethiopia.

## **1.8 Data Collection Methods**

This thesis used both primary and secondary data to make the analysis. In order to do this the researcher employed digital ethnography as a method of collecting data from official sources. Digital Ethnography is:

a form of online and digitally mediated qualitative research, which includes the use of digitally-mediated field notes, digital archives, content analysis, online participant observation and online discussions (Richmond, 2014: 15)

This is due to several reasons. The first one is that since the issue is ongoing and political there might not be willing informants. Second is that in order to get crude information it is better to use what is already said in that moment rather than ask informants, i.e. even if they are willing, after they have analysed the situation. Thirdly certain informants, i.e. the TPLF, are obviously not available thus in order to level the ‘playing ground’ it is better to use digital data. Fourthly the bulk of the data is from official websites thus interviews will be repetitions of information that are easily accessible on the internet.

The digital data has been collected from twitter accounts, official websites and youtube channels (both verified and unverified). From the side of the GoE the official youtube channel and twitter account of the PMO and the twitter account of the Government Communication Service (GCS), the House of Peoples Representatives (HPR) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) were used. In instances the tweets by Abiy Ahmed were also used. From the side of the TPLF the primary source of data was the tweets by Getachew Reda as he is the advisor to the president of the TPLF and a member of the central committee and the head of external affairs of the TPLF. Additionally, Tigray and US based youtube channels that are official mouths of the TPLF were used for interviews and press statements from top TPLF officials.

For the US data, the primary source of data was the official website of the US Department of State but also twitter accounts of officials, specifically during the Trump administration, such as Mike Pompeo and Tibor Nagy were used. Also, an official twitter account of the Bureau of African Affairs was employed. For the media data the official websites of both CNN and Fox News were used. At the same time the official website of AI was used for collecting humanitarian data on the war.

The researcher first collected all the necessary data from the websites separately, i.e. Department of State, Government of Ethiopia, TPLF, Media (CNN and Fox) and finally from Amnesty International. This was followed by chronologically merging the data so as to get a clear picture of the events. This allowed the researcher to analyse the war and connect the dots. Finally the researcher took the most important data that was used for the analysis.

## **1.9 Sampling**

The sampling method used was a purposive sampling where the researcher collected data from the selected websites and key media pages of the key politicians and officials.

## **1.10 Data Analysis**

According to Braun and Clarke (2006) the data analysis method that is applied for the purpose of identifying, analysing and reporting data by a way of organising and describing the data in detail then after making it possible to interpret it in different manners is the Thematic method. Due to this reason the researcher will be applying this method to analyse the data that is collected since the methodology of the paper is qualitative and as mentioned previously the aim of this thesis is to examine the implication of the US response to the war on the contribution of peacebuilding and resolving the war in Ethiopia.

## **1.11 Delimitation of the Study**

This thesis is primarily limited to the time frame starting from the beginning of the war (3 November, 2020) up until the humanitarian ceasefire was announced by both the TPLF and the GoE (30 March, 2022). However certain data outside this framework, for setting context, was used. Additionally the thesis limits the internal actors to the TPLF and the GoE, despite the existence of other actors in the war. Foreign actors are limited to the US as the major foreign state giving responses and the CNN and Fox News as major international media outlet reactors of the war. Additionally the statements from Amnesty International were also used.

## **1.12 Limitation of the Study**

The major limitation of this thesis was the ongoing nature of the case. At the time of the study it was difficult to draw up on a conclusion and create a clear pattern for the analysis. This is due to the dynamics of the war where the situation was changing in an unpredictable way. In addition to this, the nature of the study made the researcher to be solely based on digital sources rather than personal interviews. This is because the information that was needed for the study was sensitive

and also it would only be possible to conduct interviews from one side of the warring party which would make the study biased.

### **1.13 Organisation of the Study**

The thesis is categorised into four chapters. The first chapter introduces the thesis to the readers of the paper and at the same time presents the methodology the thesis employed. The second chapter includes existing literature and concepts that help elaborate the topic to readers. The Third chapter presents the data collected and the analysis of the data. Finally the fourth chapter concludes the entire thesis and presents the major findings briefly.

### **1.14 Ethical Consideration**

The study due to its sensitive nature and also its close relation to the researcher, the research presented a challenge to the researcher. However the researcher attempted to maintain impartiality in presenting and analysing the data. Additionally the data was presented with no alteration except the avoidance of using inflammatory language by the officials unless it described the situation.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

##### 2.1.1 Coercive Peacebuilding

The concept of coercive peacebuilding can be understood in conjunction with coercive diplomacy. According to Ohnishi (2012) the utilisation of coercion in peace operations are mostly related to coercive diplomacy. Additionally, Wilen and Williams (2016) mention that international organisations, including the AU, employ coercive diplomacy as conflict management tools. As a result, it is necessary to understand what coercive diplomacy means in order to grasp the concept of coercive peacebuilding. However, it is non-negligible that it is crucial to first conceptualise what coercion means as it is common in both cases—coercive peacebuilding and diplomacy.

Coercion can generally be seen as “*the art of influencing the behaviours of others through threats*” (Ellsberg, 1968: 2). On the same note the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) stated that “*coercion is often – in a narrow sense – understood as external influence on an actor, by means of the threat or actual use of force, in order to bring about behaviour that would not otherwise occur*” (PRIF, 2018: 5). According to Nozick (1969) threats are unexpected changes in events that usually occur in a repeated manner. This he mentions can be both in a positive or negative manner, if a certain negative event happens repeatedly and there is a condition for a positive event happening then this can also be considered a threat (Ibid). This shows that where there is threat there is fear, as a result fear is also central to coercion.

For instance, Gippert (2017) mentions that the coercive power rests on threats or punishments to bring about compliance and at the centre of this there is fear. He states that the target complies in fear of the negative consequences that follow in the case of non-compliance (Ibid). As a result, coercion is a continuous act of threatening and punishing until the desired outcome is reached (PRIF, 2018). However, this does not mean that the target is not free to make independent choices. As Nozick remarks, “*...being coerced into not doing an act is neither a necessary nor a*

*sufficient condition for being unfree to do it.*” (Nozick, 1969: 440). This takes us to understanding of Ohnishi (2012) about coercion which he stated:

*...Coercion is designed to induce the opponent to voluntarily take actions that are desirable to the coercer by working on the opponent’s anticipation of what is going to happen... whether the opponent ultimately takes actions desirable for the coercer entirely depends on decisions to be made by the opponent.* (Ohnishi, 2012: 55).

The above definition entails that there is both freedom of choice and fear when one discusses the concept of coercion. Ohnishi (2012) further mentions that coercion can be divided into deterrence and compellence. Here deterrence is a protective action where one threatens another not to take action while compellence is a reactive action where one threatens another to reverse an action (Levy, 2008; Romeo and Moro, 2016; Ohnishi, 2012). However, there is no consensus on the division of coercion as deterrence and compellence. For instance, Romeo and Moro (2016) mention that scholars such as Alexander George regard coercion different from both deterrence and compellence while scholars such as Thomas Schelling regard them—deterrence and compellence as types of coercion. Despite the rift of scholars on the issue of coercion there is a commonality, i.e., the use of threats to get a desired outcome. As a result, the thesis uses this conception of coercion as “*...demands issued by one state (the challenger) against another (the target) with the aim of either changing the target’s behaviour or preventing them from taking some action*” (Poznanski and Scroggs, 2016: 732-3).

As stated earlier it is crucial to understand coercive diplomacy in order to understand coercive peacebuilding. This is because the concept of coercive diplomacy predates the activity of peacebuilding and it was common to integrate peace processes into coercive diplomacy. One example that could be mentioned here is the Treaty of Versailles at the end of World War I. Apart from being myopic and opportunistic to the side of the victors of World War I (Bottom, 2003), the Versailles Treaty is also criticised for possessing traits of Carthaginian Peace (Trachtenberg, 2000). The term Carthaginian Peace refers to the peace agreement that was made between Rome and Carthage during the Punic wars where the terms of peace were set by Rome (Cook, 1979). Here the terms set by Rome were not fulfilled as a result Carthage was re-invaded

(Ibid). This shows that there is an element of coercion within the peace treaty—the Versailles treaty.

Considering diplomacy as bargaining between two parties (Schelling, 1966), coercive diplomacy is a type of diplomacy that has an element of coercion in it (Jentleson, 2006). According to Sauer (2007) coercive diplomacy is an approach that is employed when positions in negotiations become rigid and it is difficult to come to certain compromises. And as a result of lack of agreements actors in the negotiations will use threats to bring about compromise (ibid). Similarly Levy defines coercive diplomacy as “*a political-diplomatic strategy that aims to influence an adversary’s will or incentive structure.*” (Levy, 2008: 539). Additionally, he adds that the strategy uses threats and at times limited use of force but at the same time positive inducements in order to compel the adversary (Ibid). This in other terms is the concept of ‘stick’—the threats and ‘carrot’—the incentives (Romeo and Moro, 2016). This is confirmed by Jentleson (2006) where he stated that coercive diplomacy mostly uses the ‘stick’ but also employs the ‘carrot’.

Additionally, it is mentioned that, like in any other diplomacy, its aim is to avoid war and to induce compliance on one side (Romeo and Moro, 2016; Levy, 2008; Abdurahmanli, 2021). From this the conception that coercive diplomacy is the ‘middle ground’ between war and peace which is employed to maintain peace and status quo between states (Abdurahmanli, 2021). Reichberg and Syse also mention this by stating that “*Threats have traditionally occupied a significant place in diplomacy, representing an uncertain ground between consensual agreements on the one hand and armed confrontation on the other*” (Reichberg and Syse, 2018: 180).

Furthermore Sauer (2007) states that coercive diplomacy has three characteristics, namely, demands, threats and time pressure (ultimatum) where each characteristic supplements one another. However, one other important characteristic that Sauer could have added was power. According to Schelling (1966) power—military force of a state is integral to coercive diplomacy as a country with enough military power does not need to bargain. Here the word ‘enough’ is in relation to the adversary's power (Ibid).

Coming to coercive peacebuilding, as the name indicates, it is peacebuilding through a coercive approach. Defining peacebuilding as *“the international community's response to violent conflicts, threats of violent conflict or aftermath of such conflicts.”* (Tschirgi, 1996: 1). And at the same time considering the Westphalian notion that the principal actors in international relations are states thus the international community consists of states, then coercive peacebuilding is a practice that existed throughout history but as coercive peace rather than coercive peace building. As Cook (1979) mentions during the Punic wars the Roman empire imposed certain conditions that Carthage should fulfil in order for there to be peace and the failure of Carthage to do so led to its re-invasion by Rome. This, as mentioned earlier, led to the concept of ‘Carthaginian peace’ (Ibid). For instance, Mantoux (1946) stipulates that there was an element of ‘Carthaginian Peace’ within the Treaty of Versailles as argued by John Maynard Keynes. Additionally, the Locarno Treaty of 1925 has also exhibited an element of the ‘Carthaginian Peace’ by which the victors of World War I possessed the privilege of coercing measures against Germany to get its compliance (Silverstone, 2012).

However, in the contemporary world the view that states are primary actors in international relations is challenged. According to Ataman (2003) the proliferation of non-state actors which are increasingly conducting economic, political and socio-cultural activities have not only challenged but also weakened the state-centric view of international relations. As a result, the term international community in this regard goes beyond the states. To add to this Eggar mentions that *“contemporary peacebuilding implies complementary involvement on the part of various global, regional and non-state actors.”* (Eggar, 2015: 1). One such non-state actors are international organisations. International organisations such as the UN have shouldered the issue of peacebuilding in the international arena due to the ad hoc and fragmented nature of the peacebuilding agenda (Tschirgi, 2003). This nature of the peacebuilding agenda came due to the fact that the issue of peace became unconventional such as civil war, illicit crimes and many more (Ibid).

Another point worth noting is the inclusion of peacebuilding into the broader sense of peace operations. Peace operation is a broader term that consists of mitigating conflict where activities such as peace enforcement and peacebuilding are incorporated (Ohnishi, 2012). Peace operations traditionally have been undertaken by the UN however this has grown out of the UN where other

organisations and coalition of states are undertaking such activities (Findlay, 2002; Novosselof, 2019). Through time peace operations, beginning with peacekeeping in the post-World War II era, have evolved from non-use of force to using force through lessons such as Rwanda, Bosnia and Somalia (Kenkil, 2013; Pugh, 2012). This integration of use of force in peace operations came due to the existence of spoilers and the precedence of human rights in the conduct of peace operations and this has been incorporated to the mandates of such operations (Kenkil, 2013). This shows that there is an integration and legitimization of the use of force in peacebuilding activities.

The legitimization of use of force in peace operations, consequently peacebuilding, one can threaten another. For instance, states coerce their citizens to abide by the law due to its ability to use force in case of non-compliance. This arises from the claim that a state is “*a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory*” (Weber, 1946: 78). Thus, in the same manner, as mentioned above, due to the mandate of peace operations actors can coerce conflicting parties to halt their actions via the threat of the use of force. But this mandate is operational when there is an active peacekeeping mission that has been authorised by the UN security council (Blair et al., 2021).

Therefore, the question, ‘what if there is no authorised mission?’ must be asked. In this case, coercive diplomacy is used to coerce belligerents to come to peace and/or to protect human rights. This was the case that Wilen and Williams (2016) raised with the AU’s response to Burundi’s 2015 coup d’etat. However, it is not only international organisations that take such responsibilities but also other states. As mentioned earlier Eggar (2015) mentioned that a variety of actors engage in peacebuilding, these actors range from state to non-state actors from the global to the regional. Rising from Schelling’s aforementioned argument that states with sufficient military power need not bargain but can coerce, these actors also which have sufficient power can also coerce.

However, not all actors have military power or could use it in all parts of the world. Defining power as the ability to influence outcomes, it can be subdivided into ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ power (Gray, 2011). Here in the former case one co-opts another in order for the other to share its values while in the latter case one uses military and/or economic power to influence another

(Ibid). Here as a result any actor engaged in peacebuilding possessing both ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ power, but primarily ‘hard’ power, can coerce another. Additionally it is important to note coercive policy succeeds when it is directed towards a government not insurgents, rebels and/or terrorists (PRIF, 2018).

In the context of this thesis coercive peacebuilding is used to explain interventions/actions by the US government which are primarily centred on making peace more attractive/structures for peace. These interventions invited the use of both soft and hard power of the US, ranging from restricting visas to suspension from economic incentives. These interventions came under the auspices of humanitarian intervention as the concern for humanitarian conditions worsened as the war in Tigray progressed.

## **2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.2.1 The US Interests in Africa and Its Policies**

Different authors have stated that the US had very little interest in Africa, especially after the conclusion of the Cold War. For instance, Rothchild (2001) mentions that with the conclusion of the Cold War the geostrategic interest of the US, i.e., balancing against the USSR, was no longer important. Thus, US’ interest in Africa was limited in the 1990s , despite some attempts of revival during the Clinton administration. Additionally in 1995 the Department of Defence made a statement stating, “*ultimately we see very little traditional strategic interest in Africa.*” (Ploch, 2011: 32). This indicates that the US had little interest in the continent. Moreover, Pham (2005) mentioned that most foreign policy analysts considered Africa as a continent of little interest to the US until the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Events that took place in the late 1990s changed the perspective of US foreign policy towards Africa. Ploch (2011) mentions that terrorist attacks on US embassies in Nairobi and Dare Salaam, and the US retaliation on Sudan (for hosting Al Qaeda which took the above mentioned two attacks) changed the course of US policy in Africa. Initially, during the Cold War, the threat of the US in Africa came from the USSR. As such the US policy towards the continent was about combating this threat. Woodward (2006) stated that “the guns and butter of the Eastern

Bloc were potential threats to the US” (Woodward, 2006: 11) by mentioning that the Soviet model presented itself as a better economic model and liberator from neo-colonialism. As a result, one can say that there was very little emphasis towards the needs of Africa during that period but to the image of the US, as Lauren Ploch stated, “*during the Cold War, United States foreign policy toward Sub-Saharan Africa had little to do with Africa*” (Ploch, 2011: 13).

During the Cold War period the US policy towards Africa fluctuated between low-trajectory approaches and more assertive approaches, but generally it can be taken as passive. For instance, Rothchild’s (2001) assessment of US policy towards Africa starting from the Nixon administration to the Clinton administration shows that the US has generally indeed followed a passive policy with some exceptional cases in the Regan administration and early periods of the Clinton administration. This trend, despite gaining some attention through the discourse of ‘war on terror’, followed in the subsequent administrations.

During the Bush (Junior) administration in 2002 it was stated that “*In Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war, and desperate poverty. This threatens both a core value of the United States preserving human dignity and our strategic priority combating terror. American interests and American principles, therefore, lead in the same direction: we will work with others for an African continent that lives in liberty, peace, and growing prosperity.*” (United States, 2002: 10). Despite this war on terror rhetoric the US mainly focused on the Middle East rather than Africa (Pham, 2005).

During the Nixon years there was high Soviet and Cuban intervention in Southern Africa and Kissinger’s suggestions of direct intervention were declined to avoid another Vietnam. Thus, an approach favouring peaceful settlement was followed (Rothchild, 2001). Rothchild (2001) further mentioned that the Carter administration inclined to a passive engagement with Africa where it opted for OAU to take centre stage in the mediation of African conflicts, however during the Reagan administration the US followed assertive measures to counter the Soviet such as supporting neighbouring countries of Soviet backed states.

When the Bush administration (1988-1992) took office, the US went back to its low-profile engagement with Africa, primarily due to Gorbachev’s policy which allowed cooperation

between the US and USSR. This state of affairs continued until the end of his office, when the US unilaterally intervened in Somalia in 1992 (Rothchild, 2001). According to Alden (2000) initially there was a lack of foreign policy interest in the Clinton administration as he asserted in his election campaign. Even more so there was expectation that the Clinton administration would reduce its contact towards African conflicts as it perceived that African nationalism would pose constraints for American intervention (Banjo, 2010).

According to Alden (2000) the US foreign policy is based on the dissemination of American ideology and with the conclusion of the Cold War there was a gap that was left. Thus the lack of interest in foreign policy engagement followed, it is in this context that the Clinton administration found itself initially (Ibid). But as Rothchild (2001) asserted the Clinton administration was very active in its first term in office. This was because the void that had been created by the end of the Cold War, i.e ideological dissemination, was filled by another ideology which was the spread of democracy and its values (Alden, 2000; Banjo, 2010). However, tables turned and the Clinton administration where it opted to follow the traditional low-profile approach towards Africa after the 1993 incident in Somalia, this incident led to the inaction of the US in the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Rothchild, 2001).

As mentioned previously, it is after the September 11 attacks that US foreign policy trajectory towards Africa changed, and a new rhetoric of ‘the war on terror’ dominated it. Within this framework, the US National Security Strategy of the Bush administration mentioned that ‘Quasi-states’<sup>1</sup> pose a threat to the US as the government of such states cannot effectively control their territories they provide safe havens for terrorists (Pham, 2005). Pham (2005) adds that the ‘quasi-state’ not only provides safe-havens but also has the potential to create terrorists as the state by its nature is exploitative of its citizens. Thus the long-term policy is to create a stable and democratic Africa, but the short-term goals subscribe to the US interests in economic, security and political aspects (Ibid).

Additionally Ploch (2011) stated that in 2006 the Bush administration made a statement that the security of the US depends on Africa and that it is imperative that they work together towards

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<sup>1</sup> “Quasi-states are those states who are internationally recognized as sovereign states but they lack political will, institutional authority, and organised power to protect human rights or provide socio economic welfare” (Pham, 2005: 21).

strengthening fragile and failing states so that they could be able to control their territories effectively. The US, in order to forward its interests and at the same time to promote regional security and stability the US through its African Command (AFRICOM) has strengthened its partnership with African countries and helped to strengthen local security forces (Husted, 2021). However, despite such developments, the US again followed a low-profile trajectory towards Africa. For example, Rattan and Whitmore (2022) mention that since 2010 the US halved its trade with Africa and on top of that US presidents visited the continent only twice within that period, showing the decline in their foreign policy trajectory towards Africa.

Yet again there was a turn of events which led the US to give attention towards Africa. Due to the absence of the US, China and Russia have filled the void left by the US (Husted, 2021; Rattan and Whitmore, 2022). This is why the Trump administration accused China and Russia for hijacking US opportunities in Africa and, specifically China, for spreading corruption and authoritarianism. Additionally it also made the decision to de-emphasise on the policy of counter-terrorism and replace it with inter-state competition (Husted, 2021). On top of that, when the Biden administration took office it took a step back from the US's traditional foreign policy approach which addressed its European allies and rather started by focusing on Africa which showed the turn of US foreign policy towards Africa (Ratten and Whitmore, 2022). However this thesis argues that this is subject to new developments in international politics.

### **2.2.2 US Interests and Policy in the Horn of Africa**

The Horn of Africa is the most dynamic region in Africa, if not the world, where it is often written off as one of the most volatile and treacherous regions. It is taken as a unit of analysis to explain limits, failures, inter and intrastate with a plethora of security issues and intervention by foreign powers interests that have influenced and re-written the historical ambit of the countries in the region.

For instance, Berouk (2011) mentions that the Horn of Africa is a region that can be identified by its high level of deprivation and poverty. As a region that is overridden by conflict and violations of human rights. This is also a view shared by Christopher Clapham, a prominent scholar on issues of the Horn of Africa. According to him the Horn of Africa is usually described as a

problematic region which got global attention in the mid-1980s vis-a-vis the Ethiopian famine then followed by the Somalian case which saw the collapse of order in the beginning of the 1990s, additionally the region is historically characterised by conflict ranging from Guerilla warfare to conventional warfare (Clapham, 2017). Additionally, Lionel Cliffe mentioned that “It has become commonplace to assert that violent conflict which is disruptive of the state is endemic in the Horn of Africa” (Cliffe, 1999: 89).

Moreover the Horn of Africa is one of the most hostile regions in the African continent where there are interstate and intrastate conflicts. It is divided among ethno-linguistic lines and cultural groups, the lack of good governance prevails in the region and huge population size and competition over scarce resources coupled with porous boundaries, refugee crisis and proliferation of arms that perpetuates violence (Woldeselase, 2010).

Despite such chronic problems, the Horn of Africa is a very vital region in global geopolitical and economic activities which is attributed to the Strait of Bab el-Mandeb. The strategic importance of the Horn, and simultaneously the Bab el-Mandeb, emanates from its proximity to important regions such as the Red Sea and the oil-rich Gulf region (Remnek, 1990). In addition to that Lefebvre (1981) mentions that 50% of the oil that goes to Europe from the Middle East and the Gulf passes through the Horn of Africa. This shows the importance of the Horn region in its geostrategic and economic aspect and also it explains why there are eight foreign military bases in the tiny country of Djibouti alone. In light of this, Remnek (1990) mentions that the U.S highly invests its policy attention towards the Horn of Africa as it provides a security for the oil flow from the Persian Gulf.

Coming to the policy, Woodward (2006) argues that the Horn of Africa is historically connected to the Middle East and thus the US policy towards the Horn should be seen in relation to its policy for the Middle East. Additionally, Lefebvre (1981) mentioned that the Horn of Africa is involved in the geopolitics of the Middle East, Persian Gulf and the Northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean considering its geostrategic location. From this it is visible that any policy that the US has to come up with for the Middle East, in one way or another, touches up on the Horn of Africa. Apart from its geostrategic location, the US had certain resource interests from the Horn as well, such as oil and gas from Sudan (Woodward, 2006).

The Horn of Africa was more subjected to the Cold War than the other parts of the continent. As Rothchild (2001) mentions, the US faced continuous threats from Cuba and the USSR in southern Africa where both countries had a strong foot in Angola supporting the Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). This was also the case in the Horn of Africa. Lefebvre (1981) mentions that the strong presence of Cuba and the USSR in the Horn of Africa via Ethiopia posed a grave danger to the US were it was assumed that this may destabilise western oriented states in the region such as Egypt, Sudan and Saudi Arabia which were considered to be key in stabilising the Horn and the Middle East.

Economic aid and nationalism also posed a threat to the US as in the 1950's colonialism declined and nationalism rose as such movements inclined to the USSR than the US, which also presented a better economic system than the US (Woodward, 2006). However, Lefebvre (1981) stated that the loss of states to Marxist regimes was not a threat per se, but it was also the psychological effect it had on the allies of the US that posed a great danger. Thus it is in this context that the US foreign policy was designed towards the Horn.

From the above argument it is visible that the US planned to do very little for the region and a lot for itself. Schreder (1992) stated that during the Cold War period the US foreign policy of the Horn of Africa was formulated to solve non-African problems, rather it was formulated to solve their own problems, i.e., to prevent Soviet encroachment into the region. This statement goes against the argument of Paul Henze, a former senior diplomat of the US to Ethiopia. He mentioned that apart from internal changes the Horn also needs external help and stated that:

*By help I do not mean primarily emergency relief or development aid, though both are required. The region needs more fundamental kinds of help and guidance: internationally coordinated protection, pressure and continuing strong doses of both carrot and stick (Henze, 1991: xi).*

Henze's argument holds water if one observes the Carter administration's policy towards the region. The Carter Administration defined five goals of American policy in the Horn of Africa:

*1) to maintain cordial relations with all countries in the area; 2) to assist, within the limit of its resources, in improving the well-being of the region's peoples; 3) to*

*lend American support to decrease tensions, to reduce the need for the large importation of military weapons, and to encourage Ethiopia's pursuit of a truly non-aligned foreign policy; 4) to sustain efforts aimed at finding political or neglected solutions to the longstanding problems of the area, to lessen the need for foreign intervention; and 5) to provide military assistance when it serves legitimate defensive purposes but to continue the policy of arms restraint in the Horn (Lefebvre, 1981: 33).*

However, from a practical point of view one may not see the above goals in the US engagement in the Horn. As mentioned above Woodward (2006) argued that due to historical connections the US policy of the Horn is relative to its policy of the Middle East. Schreder (1992) stated that the “Eritrean conflict was the southern extension of the Arab-Israel war” as Israel (a close ally to the US) had close ties with Ethiopia and Eritrean rebels had close ties with Arab states. Throughout the Cold War the US was against an independent Eritrean state since, despite the US’s and Saudi’s economic policy compatibility, the political policy was incompatible where Saudi and Red Sea littoral Arab states wanted to create an “Arab-Lake” where the independence of Eritrea was key and this posed a threat to Israel's maritime trade, thus the US was not in favour of an independent Eritrea (Lefebvre, 1981).

Another evidence for the claim that the US policy towards the Horn, during the Cold War, was structured in a non-African way comes from the statement by Henze. He stated that:

*The effective priorities of the U.S. and its allies in the Horn were always (a) facilitation of modernization and rational economic and social development - i.e., strengthening of Horn societies and making state structures more responsive to peoples' needs; and (b) peaceful resolution of quarrels both between and within Horn countries. (Henze, 1991: 1).*

Both these statements are debatable, the first claim can be refuted by Schreder. He mentions that the US foreign policy during the Cold War was manipulated by leaders such as Haileselassie I and Siad Barre for economic and military purposes and simultaneously the US disregarded the authoritarian nature of leaders while providing aid (Schreder, 1992). The second claim can be

refuted by the previously mentioned argument by Rothchild where it was stated that the US supported neighbouring countries of communist backed states during the Reagan administration. More specifically he stated that measures such as supporting neighbouring countries and internal insurgents of countries with close Soviet ties, such as Ethiopia, were taken and such measures ignored the necessities of African politics (Rothchild, 2001).

However, with the conclusion of the Cold War the policy of the US towards the Horn changed as it did throughout the continent and even the world. Immediately after the end of the Cold War the US had cooperative relations with Russia indicating that there is no need for competition (Schreder, 1992). This indicated that there was a creation of a less threatening international environment for the US as there was an absence of another Superpower and thus countries were open to US policy consequently creating a "New World Order " which was centred around liberal economies and globalisation, liberal democracy and potential intervention whenever needed (Woodward, 2006).

This was evident in that, during the 1990's the US was in favour of regional self-determination via "the ballot box" and that it adopted a policy of "no democracy, no cooperation" (Schreder, 1992). This clearly shows that as part of the "New World Order", as stated previously, the US began to follow a policy that involved the spread of democracy and democratic values after the conclusion of the Cold War as an American Ideology (Alden, 2000; Banjo, 2010). Moreover, the US also had strategic shifts after the end of the Cold War. As Schreder (1992) stipulates, due to advancements in communication technology, the relevance of Eritrea being a part of Ethiopia was no longer important to the US and as a result the US was indifferent towards the secession of Eritrea if it was done through "the ballot box".

Additionally, the US also made shifts in alliances among states of the Horn, and one major shift was with that of Ethiopia. Schreder (1992) mentioned that the Department of State made a statement whereby it mentioned that Ethiopia was seen as a "lost ally" of the US and the changing environment was seen as an opportunity for the US to take. This is true looking at the Cold War dynamics of the Horn. After the Derg overthrew Haile Selassie I in 1974 it pushed away the US as its primary supporter in order to gain the support of the USSR, however before the Derg came to power the US had been supporting Ethiopia for 20 years but latter shifted

towards Somalia following the Derg's decision (David, 1991). It is in this sense that Ethiopia was considered a "lost ally". At the same time the US considers Ethiopia to be the ideal ally in the Horn, considering its large population, resource and area, as a result when the fall of the Derg was certain the US applied a proactive policy towards by organising talks among various groups so as to avoid catastrophe following civil war like Somalia where the US was reactive (Schreder, 1992).

As such, under the framework of the "New World Order", the US followed policies concerned with democratisation and humanitarian intervention. Robinson (2005) stated that in the 1990's humanitarian intervention came into the spotlight in foreign policy of both the US and the UK. One such intervention was the unilateral intervention of the US in Somalia in 1992. However this policy approach did not continue for so long. As mentioned earlier the unfortunate incident in Somalia in 1993 caused the US to change its policy approach (Rothchild, 2001).

Woodward (2006) mentioned that as the "New World Order " came into decline the US changed its foreign policy, with expansion of neo-liberalism becoming the crux of US national interest. This was not the only change but also there was a rise of new threats to the US. Again citing from Woodward (2006), he mentioned that the US foreign policy was no longer how Americans viewed the world only but also how others reacted to the existence of a sole superpower as such terrorism and anti-americanism came into existence. Such activities existed in the Horn of Africa as well, where groups such as Al Shabaab exist.

Woldeseliasie (2010) mentions that the Horn of Africa is the world most terrorist affected region where states such as Somalia, a "failed state", is a safe haven for terrorists and Eritrea a state that "sponsors" terrorism exist. Additionally, Sudan was also accused for sponsoring terrorism and for being responsible in the 1998 US embassy attacks in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi where the US took retaliatory measures against, which aligns with the fact that "quasi-states" pose a threat to the US (Pham, 2005). Thus one can safely say that when the global war on terror was put in effect, the Horn of Africa was certainly one of the top destinations.

However Woodward (2006) highlights that the US foreign policy goes beyond protection of narrowly defined national interests such as anti-terrorism or need for oil. There is a broader

agenda of promoting liberal democracy, spreading capitalism, deterring aggression from weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that might threaten the US directly and many more. Maintaining its role as a dominant superpower, or even if competitors were to arise from Europe or Asia, is also central to US foreign policy. This is where the US finds itself currently.

The Crisis Group (2020) mentioned that in the past 20 years there has been the absence of US engagement in Africa leaving China to be one of the most important partners to the continent. The US' recent attempts to outplay China and take over its role in Africa making it look like a new 'Cold War'. China, starting from the 1990s is attempting to rebuild its ancient trade route, i.e., the so-called Silk Road, through the Belt and Road Initiative and furthermore to project its influence through this initiative (Ylönen, 2020). Additionally, unlike the western states, the relationship between China and African countries is more of a partnership due to its South-South trait and in the former case there is a patron-client relation as it is a north-south relation (Aaron, 2019). This argument holds true for the current state of relations between African states and China despite existing signs of patron-client relations between them as well (Gashaw, 2018).

The arena for this new confrontation between the US and China is surely the Horn of Africa. In addition to Remnek's argument on the importance of the Horn, Lefebvre stated that, *"In December 1977 a US House of Representatives' Fact Finding Mission to Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya returned to the United States espousing the view that the Horn of Africa is the area on the African Continent with the greatest potential for East-West confrontation."* (Lefebvre, 1981: 31). Therefore, one can assume that, given this competition between China and the US, the US might once again return towards the policies and approaches it used during the Cold War in the Horn of Africa as its importance is regrowing.

### **2.2.3 Media and US Foreign Policy**

This section discusses the relation between US foreign policy and US based media. There has been much debate over this issue where some argue that the media plays a huge role in foreign policy making and others argue otherwise. This phenomenon is what is called the 'CNN effect'. The 'CNN effect' is defined as "elite decision makers' loss of policy control to news media" (Livingston and Echaus, 1995: 413). Gibola (2005) mentions that there has been debate over the

'CNN effect' between and amongst politicians, scholars and journalists which has created confusion and uncertainty over the matter. Additionally, Robinson (1999) mentions that there is intellectual unclarity over the matter of the 'CNN effect'. For instance, he mentions Stroble argument of where he stated that “the media ‘can exert strong influence’ on policy, that it only plays ‘a supplementary role’, that it can ‘have a decided effect’, but in the end does not ‘cause intervention” (Robinson, 1999: 305).

Due to uncertainty there have been different perspectives on the 'CNN effect' where it was seen as an after effect of the Gulf war, as the quick transmission of information and as injection of “false” information within news outlets (Gibola, 2005). Additionally, according to Livingston and Echaus, (1995), despite being managed during the Gulf war, it has been viewed as an impediment to policy especially considering the Vietnam war.

The rise of the 'CNN effect' came due to two reasons, the first is the end of the Cold War created a situation where the US did not have clear policy goals and the second is the advancement in communication technology which brought real-time coverage (Livingston, 1997; Jakobson, 2000). The 'CNN effect' is mainly caused by policy uncertainty where plethora of scholars stated that this was the case at both the micro and macro levels where in the former the events in Bosnia took policy makers by surprise and in the case of the latter the US did not have a clear policy immediately after the end of the Cold War (Gibola, 2005). Additionally, Robinson (1999) mentions that despite the uncertainty that surrounds the role of media on policy ('CNN effect'), the certainty of policy directions indicate that the media has little role in policy.

Livingston and Echaus (1995) argue that the 'CNN effect' emanates from two contradictions, the first being the need to create policies in a closed environment where public pressure does not exist. The second being a multiplicity of media creating the public pressure and this has been exacerbated by the end of the Cold War as there was loss of policy direction (Ibid).

However, these arguments are not accepted by everyone. Advocates of the 'CNN effect' mention that the media serves as a ‘fourth state’ where it has the ability to influence policy making (Robinson, 1999). For instance, policy makers such as Madeleine Albright, Lawrence Eagleburger and James Baker III have all confirmed that the media has impacted the US foreign

policy, more interestingly Boutros Boutros-Ghali stated that the 'CNN effect' by stating “CNN is the sixteenth member of the Security Council” (Gibola, 2005). Additionally, the claim that government intervention is done against its will is depicted by John Shattuck who stated that, on the 1992 intervention in Somalia, the media was responsible for both the entrance and exit of the US from Somalia (Jakobson, 2000). Furthermore Mamdani (2009) similarly argues on the case of Darfur in the 2000s where the media first attempted to react then understand the conflict. George Kennan also mentioned that there has been a power shift from the state machinery to the media in regards to policy making (Livingston and Echaus, 1995).

Despite such policy makers supporting the power of the 'CNN effect', others have refuted it. Policy makers such as Colin Powell, Anthony Lake, Andrew Natsios and Brian Buckley have downplayed the 'CNN effect' but also acknowledged the impact of media (Gibola, 2005). Livingston and Echaus (1995) also refute the 'CNN effect' stating that in absence of policy the media does not create policy independently. They mention Andrew Natsios where he stated that the US was already engaging in Somalia before the media coverage as it was busy on other issues such as the dissolution of the USSR and the Gulf war (Ibid). Moreover Jakobson (2000) mentions that, in regards to intervention, it is not the result of blunt media coverage but rather by calculation of governments of risks, i.e., the government is willing to intervene if and only if there is a low-risk of casualties during intervention. Additionally, Robinson (1999) mentions that proponents of the ‘manufacturing consent’ school argue that the media is manipulated by political elites in a certain way by which the media supports/matches their policies.

However, the 'CNN effect' has 3 effects which are the accelerant effect, the agenda-setting effect and an impediment (Livingston, 1997). Here Livingston (1997) argues that the media as an accelerant means that the media shortens the time it takes to pass decisions. For instance, Andrew Natsios mentioned that the decision to use US military airlifts was designed to increase media attention so more aid would flow into Somalia (Livingston and Echaus, 1995). This statement indicates that the involvement of the media made it easier to make decisions to send more aid which would have been difficult without.

Media as an impediment comes either as an emotional inhibitor or as a threat to operational security (Livingston, 1997). In the case of the former it comes in the form of the Vietnam

syndrome, a case where the media exposes events of war/intervention so as to reduce support of the government from the public and erode morale of troops (Ibid). In the case of the latter it is more of keeping operational confidentiality which is difficult to do with media coverage (Ibid)). For instance, looking at Madeline Albright's statement, "Television's ability to bring graphic images of pain and outrage into our living rooms has heightened the pressure both for immediate engagement in areas of international crisis and immediate disengagement when events do not go according to plan. Because we live in a democratic society, none of us can be oblivious to those pressures" (Gibola, 2005: 328-329). It is visible that the media can arouse pressures on the government which significantly hampers its ability to function.

Finally, media as an agenda-setting is that "the choices and selections of national interests are too heavily weighted in favour of what happens to get covered by CNN or other media" (Livingston, 1999: 6). This argument holds water when considering the case of Sudan and Somalia where the latter gained much attention by the media and the former did not (Jakobson, 2000). Jakobson adds that the latter was in the same or even worse situations than the latter and this was due to the media favouring short bloody conflicts rather than longer conflicts at a stalemate (Ibid).

The media does indeed have its own effect in foreign policy as Livingston and Echaus (1997) argued however it does not pressure the government to make decisions in areas where it has clear cut interests. Additionally it does not, even in the absence of policy from the government, manufacture policies for the government to implement. Moreover the Horn of Africa, from the above explanations is not a region where the US has no interest. The Horn of Africa has been at the centre of US interest since the Cold War. Hence the media in such cases aids the US to pursue its interests. This is the case where the 'manufacturing consent' comes into play.

Manufacturing consent or the propaganda model regards the media as a tool for the dominant elite (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). In their argument they add that in such a model the focus is on power and money and whoever, mostly the government, possesses them has the ability to filter news (Ibid). Additionally Robinson (1999) states that the manufacturing consent school is a school of thought that argues that the media is manipulated by governments in order to facilitate their policies and does not create its own policies.

The manipulation of can take place through narratives. According to Autesserre (2012) narratives are frames by which views are shaped. She examines the case of Congo (DRC) by which frames were used to depict the conflict as simple so that policies and actions can be taken quickly (Ibid). However a good example of elite manipulation of media through narratives is the Vietnam War. Here the US government used the media under the narrative of 'protecting South Vietnam' so as to carry on its aggression on North Vietnam (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). In the same manner as Herman and Chomsky's argument this thesis maintains that the elite manipulates the media for its foreign policy objectives.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. THE WAR IN NORTHERN ETHIOPIA AND US RESPONSES

#### 3.1 Nature of the War

This section analyses the cause and nature of the war as presented by the different actors. This as is described below has a bearing on suggestions, solutions and recommendations.

##### 3.1.1 Cause of the War

The cause of the war has various perspectives. There is belief that the Tigray national regional state election and its postponement in Addis was the cause for the war, others mention that it goes prior to the elections. This section attempts to explain what caused the war from the gathered data.

Starting with the simplest explanation, CNN wrote that the war in Tigray that began on the 3rd of November, 2020, has its roots in prior events (CNN: 5 November, 2021). It wrote that the tensions—tensions between the TPLF and the government of Ethiopia (GoE) goes back to September 2020 where the TPLF, despite orders from the federal government to postpone elections due to COVID-19, conducted elections (Ibid). This view holds some water especially considering that the GoE via legislation had denounced the elections of the Tigray region prior to its conduct calling it ‘unconstitutional’ (Ethiopian observer, 2020). The act was labelled as ‘unconstitutional’ because in the FDRE constitution (1995) article 51 sub-article 15 places the power of elections to the Federal government.

On the 30th of July 2020 Abiy Ahmed made a statement that indicated that the TPLF are attempting to provoke conflict by conducting elections (Abiy Ahmed: 30 July, 2020)<sup>2</sup>. He stated that it is easier for the TPLF to legitimise its authority by invoking such conflict than that of elections (Ibid). This, although not in confirmation, was confirmed by the TPLF. On November 20, 2020 by Colonel Gebre Gebretsadik where he stated that there were provocations by both

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<sup>2</sup> Abiy Ahmed briefing the representatives from HPR, available at: (1:58-4:12)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NeMXsYFP11c>

Abiy and Isayas prior to the regional elections and ‘we needed to defend ourselves’ (Gebre Gebretsadik: November 20, 2020)<sup>3</sup>. These statements indicate that the regional elections indeed had something to do with the underlying cause of the war, but it is important to ask how does this—conducting the elections provoke war?

The CNN mentioned that with the coming of Abiy into power the TPLF had been ‘pushed aside’ as he rearranged the EPRDF party (CNN: 5 November, 2021). This posed a threat to the TPLF, as the EPRDF, being a coalition of four parties from different ethnic groups, was merged into a single party posed a challenge to the federal system which was divided along ethnic lines (Ibid). This explains the retreat of the TPLF to its regional base in Tigray.

The CNN mentions that despite those moves by the PM it is the postponement of the elections that could be considered the boiling point of the tensions (CNN: 5 November, 2021). This postponement of elections was seen by the TPLF as an authoritarian act and the rationale for postponing it was futile. Debretsion Gebremichael stated that the elections followed COVID protocols and on top of that ever since the elections there were military preparations (Debretsion Gebremichael: 3 November, 2020)<sup>4</sup>. This view was also shared by other TPLF officials such as General Tsadkan. He stated that the beginning of the war is not what is claimed to be the attack on the Northern Command (General Tsadkan Gebretensae: 1 November, 2021)<sup>5</sup> Despite the arguments forwarded by the Tigray National Regional Government the war was ignited by the attack on November 3, 2020.

The next day the deputy PM Demeke Mekonen stated that the TPLF has committed an act of betrayal on the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF)—the Northern Command which has been protecting the people of Tigray from external enemies (Demeke Mekonnen & Redwan

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<sup>3</sup> Press briefing by Colonel Gebre Gebretsadik released on Tigray TV, available at (1:07) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfxvVIHnojA&list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bq7Fu\\_yt4OyVv8ra&index=16](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfxvVIHnojA&list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bq7Fu_yt4OyVv8ra&index=16)

<sup>4</sup> Press briefing by Debretsion Geberemichael released on Tigray TV available at: (21:52) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5nR-x88i14&list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bq7Fu\\_yt4OyVv8ra&index=36](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5nR-x88i14&list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bq7Fu_yt4OyVv8ra&index=36)

<sup>5</sup> General Tsadkan Gebretensae interview with Tigray TV (1:00) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0znM0zm7nj8&list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&index=73>

Hussien: 4 November, 2020)<sup>6</sup>. As a result, the GoE instated a state of emergency in the region of Tigray and announced the commencement of a ‘law enforcement operation’ (PMO: 4 November, 2020)<sup>7</sup>. This statement shows that the act of the TPLF attacking the Northern Command surely started the war. However, this does not mean that the GoE was not anticipating some sort of confrontation with the TPLF before this date.

Hostilities with the TPLF were felt by the government. As mentioned above, the PM stated that the TPLF was provoking war, he then continued stating that there are desires for provoking conflict and labelling the government as an attacker (Abiy Ahmed: 30 July, 2020). Additionally the PM, earlier than the previous statement, mentioned that the people of Tigray should not be equated with a single party—TPLF and additionally not everyone in the party is a criminal (Abiy Ahmed: 21 June, 2020)<sup>8</sup>. These statements show that war between the TPLF and the GoE was a question of when and not if.

Moreover it is visible that the hostility well precedes the attacks on the Northern Command. To add to this we can take the example of Getachew Reda’s statement in an interview. He mentioned that the Abiy regime has been oppressing the people of Tigray for two years (Getachew Reda: 8 November, 2020)<sup>9</sup>. This statement shows that hostility existed between the federal government and the TPLF ever since Abiy took power, seen from the side of the TPLF. Similar arguments can be stated from the side of the government. Abiy Ahmed stated that the TPLF has been obstructing justice and that it has been attempting to de-rail the democratic transition and has been preparing for attacks since 2018 (Abiy Ahmed: 8 November, 2020)<sup>10</sup>. Again in this statement the two years hostility has been mentioned, as a result one can conclude that the hostility predates the elections. But this begs the question, if the hostilities existed ever since the coming to power of Abiy, who then began the war.

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<sup>6</sup> PMO Press briefing by deputy PM Demeke Mekonnen and Redwan Hussien, available at: (0:28) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJXL1k2KElw&t=206s>

<sup>7</sup> Twitter post by the PMO available at: <https://twitter.com/pmethiopia/status/1323901191902822406?lang=en>

<sup>8</sup> PM briefing for representatives of HPR released by PMO available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfLPJ6E8rpg&t=794s>

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Getachew Reda conducted by Tigray TV available at: (0:37) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNjZ88tHuel&list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&index=109>

<sup>10</sup> Statement by Abiy Ahmed on the commencement of operations, released by PMO available at: (1:02) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReZ3A-2Ozjs>

It is obvious that the war began with the attack on the Northern Command. This is obvious in both the story of the CNN and the statements of the government that immediately followed the attacks. CNN wrote that following an attack on a federal military base in Tigray—Northern Command, the government announced, on November 4, that it commenced operations (CNN: 5 November, 2021). This is exactly what happened, on November 4, 2020, in a press briefing Demeke Mekonnen and Redwan Hussien announced the beginning of operations following the attacks on the Northern Command which it was called a ‘betrayal’ (Demeke Mekonnen & Redwan Hussien: 4 November, 2020). This was also posted on the official Twitter page of the PMO. The attack however was not denied by the TPLF but the justification differs. As mentioned previously, in the statement by Colonel Gebre Gebretsadik , what the TPLF did was only an act of ‘self defence’. Debretsion also mentioned, on November 3, that there was a threat to the nationality of Tigray and thus it has been forced to act (Debretsion Gebremichael: 3 November, 2020). Thus this entails that the TPLF is claiming that an attack from the GoE was being anticipated and it took a preemptive strike.

This shows that the attack on the Northern Command is what ignited the conflict and that it was the TPLF that attacked. However, it is not possible to totally attribute the cause of war to the attack on the Northern Command. This is because it is the hostility between the conflicting parties—TPLF and GoE that led to that event. General Tsadkan Gebretensae mentioned that:

*The war did not start because we—the TPLF attacked the Northern Command, the dispute was there for some time. Issues such as the unlawful dissolution of Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front and formation of the Prosperity Party, postponement of elections, the non-institutionalised relations with Eritrea and its neglect of Tigray, Abiy’s provocations (moving the Northern Command with in Tigray) and other unconstitutional acts by the government so we defend ourselves. The Northern Command was a pretext for the war. (General Tsadkan Gebretensae: 1 November, 2021)<sup>11</sup>.*

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<sup>11</sup> General Tsadkan Gebretensae interview with Tigray TV (1:00)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0znM0zm7nj8&list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&index=73>

This statement, however not totally, sums up the situation. Hostilities were followed by actions on both sides that led to the event—the attack on the Northern Command which then overtly turned into war. Both parties have differing rationales for their actions. For instance, the government has stated that it is upholding rule of law and the constitutional order so as to end ‘impunity’ in Ethiopia (Abiy Ahmed: 8 November, 2020). Additionally, the government stated that the TPLF has acted in rebellion of the constitution and committed potential acts of terrorism (Redwan Hussein & Gedeon Timoteos: 23 November, 2020)<sup>12</sup>. On the side of the TPLF the war is considered to be a just war. For instance Debretsion stated that the war was waged against the people of Tigray thus, he went on to add, we are engaged in a ‘just war’ (Debretsion Gebremichael: 3 November, 2020). Colonel Gebre Gebretsadik added that the TPLF is engaged in defensive war and the federal government in aggressive war as there were military preparations close to Tigray (Gebre Gebertsadik, 20 November, 2020).

Another reason for the beginning of the war could be attributed to the issue of self-determination. In one particular interview Debretsion mentioned that the self-determination of Tigray should be ascertained (Debretsion Gebremichael: 7 August, 2021). This statement entails that the self-determination of Tigray has been ‘transgressed’ by the federal government. And this seems to counter the government’s decision to postpone the elections. Another reason that is quite interesting was forwarded by General Tsadkan. He mentioned that the war started due to incompatibility of nation building process mechanisms (General Tsadkan Gebretensae: 1 November, 2021)<sup>13</sup>. He stated that the incompatibility is between a unitary type of state building and a federal type, where he called the unitary type which is followed by the federal government resembles Emperor Menilik II’s method which is authoritative while the latter is democratic (Ibid).

However, despite the accusations between the ‘major’ protagonists of the war—the TPLF and GoE, there has not been any official statement from CNN and the US government on who began the war. Rather they both mentioned how the war began. As mentioned above, CNN simply

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<sup>12</sup> PMO Press briefing by Redwan Hussien and Gedeon Temotios available at: (11:20-12:08) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgdrNWJT3A>

<sup>13</sup> General Tsadkan Gebretensae interview with Tigray TV available at: (10:00) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0znM0zm7nj8&list=PLDpMt3PlsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&index=73>

mentioned that attacks on the Northern Command ignited the conflict but there were tensions prior to the event (CNN: 5 November, 2021). This indicates that CNN is avoiding making accusations towards the TPLF or the GoE. Additionally the US government also stated its concern regarding the Northern Command attacks by the TPLF (Mike Pompeo: 5 November, 2020)<sup>14</sup>. Again despite this statement the US government never accredited any of the parties as responsible for the commencement of the war. This statement shows a degree of bias by the US government. This is because it was clear that the TPLF is the one that orchestrated the attack and as mentioned previously the media—CNN mentioned hostilities were there prior to the attack but confirmed that the attack was the igniting factor. Thus the US government could have, given this information and reports considered the TPLF responsible for commencing the war.

From the above one can understand that the cause of the war is debatable and that one can not simply conclude based on the reasons forwarded by one side. Furthermore the explanation of CNN for the cause of the war captures the general picture and is easy to understand for the readers. This relates to the argument forwarded by Autesserre where she stated that media outlets write stories that are short and understandable to audiences, policy makers can formulate policy quickly and NGOs can develop plans easily (Autesserre, 2012).

### **3.1.2 Consequences of the War**

Like any other war, the war in Tigray has various ranges of consequences that have been felt from the individual level up until the regional level. These consequences include humanitarian issues— human rights violations, sexual violence and internal displacement, sanctions, Destruction of property and deterioration of the economy. Debretsion mentioned, in the early days of the war, that there were consequences on human, material and national aspects (Debretsion Gebremichael: 10 November, 2020)<sup>15</sup>. As a result one can only assume that as the war progressed the consequences will only be much worse.

The humanitarian consequence can be considered the most covered and dominant narrative in the war. Every actor—ones that are within the framework of this thesis has raised the issue a couple

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<sup>14</sup> Tweet by Mike Pompeo available at: <https://twitter.com/secpompeo/status/1324121664108580875>

<sup>15</sup> Press briefing by Debretsion on Tigray TV available at: (1:52)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqdrNWJTw3A>

of times. At the start of the war, Amnesty International (AI) made a statement in which it expressed its concern for humanitarian issues and called for the protection of human rights. It called for the use of force to be conducted only in situations which are unavoidable and that there should be respect for international human rights (AI: 4 November, 2020). Despite this call, the humanitarian issues increased. This was manifested in the continued reports and investigations by AI, the reiterated demands by the US government to halt human rights abuses, CNN reports and investigations, investigations and reports from OHCHR and EHRC and reports from the GoE and Tigray Regional Government.

CNN wrote that humanitarian issues ranged from battlefield deaths to extrajudicial killings to an exodus of refugees (CNN: 5 November, 2021). The first case of humanitarian consequence was reported by AI on the 12th of November, 2020. AI reported the Mai-Kadra massacre which was unveiled by Amhara forces and the ENDF where there were about 500 victims (AI: 12 November, 2020). This massacre was then reported by CNN on the same day as the AI report (CNN: 12 November, 2020) and the US Bureau of African Affairs posted on Twitter that it condemns the action (US Bureau of African Affairs: 13 November, 2020).

Sexual violence is also one of the humanitarian consequences. For instance Fox News reported that hundreds of women had been raped and hundreds other were killed in the region of Tigray (Fox News: 14 February, 2021). The other issue related to the humanitarian consequence is the issue of refugees and IDPs. For example, AI reported that, on the same day the Mai-Kadra massacre occurred, 7,000 people had fled western Tigray into neighbouring Sudan (AI: 12 November, 2020). In addition to this, refugees mentioned that they had to flee because they were facing atrocities (CNN: 8 December, 2020). Internal displacement is also a consequence of this war. According to the GoE, the number of IDPs started to increase as TPLF incursions into Amhara and Afar continued (Billene Seyoum: 9 September, 2021)<sup>16</sup>.

The other humanitarian issue that was caused by the war is detentions. AI reported that ‘ethnic based’ detentions are being conducted in Addis Ababa which is creating fear amongst ethnic Tigreans under the auspices of a state of emergency (AI: 12 November, 2021). These acts were

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<sup>16</sup> PMO Press briefing by Billene Seyoum available at: (8:48-10:04)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUMaRLXZuhc>

condemned by the US government and demanded the GoE to halt such actions (Department of State: 6 December, 2021). Despite these statements the GoE refuted the argument that it was engaged in ethnic based detentions. It stated that the state of emergency was instated not to create anti-Tigray sentiments but to defend the state and public order and the detentions are based on investigations and is not targeting Tigrians but TPLF sympathisers (Billene Seyoum: 30 November, 2021)<sup>17</sup>.

These are not the only humanitarian issues that were mentioned throughout the war but a few examples to show that there were indeed humanitarian consequences. Additionally it was both the TPLF and the GoE, together with other actors such as Amhara forces and Eritreans, that were accused of atrocities (CNN: 5 November, 2021). On top of that both the TPLF and GoE were accusing each other of committing human rights violations. For instance the GoE had accused the TPLF for committing a massacre on IDPs in Galikoma (Billene Seyoum: 12 August, 2021). And the TPLF had accused the GoE over airstrikes on civilian targets on multiple occasions where the first one came on 18 October, 2021. At the same time other actors such as Amhara forces and Eritrean forces were also accused of atrocities.

Moreover, the true figures of the consequence are difficult to be known due to multiple reasons such as lack of communications. For instance, AI's regional director to East and South Africa Deprose Muchena, after the Mai-Kadra massacre mentioned:

*We have confirmed the massacre of a very large number of civilians, who appear to have been day labourers in no way involved in the ongoing military offensive. This is a horrific tragedy whose true extent only time will tell as communication in Tigray remains shut down. Deprose Muchena (AI: 12 November, 2020).*

This lack of information and detail about atrocities also applies to other events. For instance the casualties of the Humera and Axum massacres, which were allegedly perpetrated by ENDF, Eritrean forces and Amhara forces, are not yet known as well. Especially considering the case of the latter which was one of the worst recorded massacres in the war at the time. This was confirmed by AI where it was stated that:

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<sup>17</sup> PMO Press briefing by Billene Seyoum available at: (28:20-30:00) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hzigN8nenPQ>

*This atrocity ranks among the worst documented so far in this conflict. Besides the soaring death toll, Axum's residents were plunged into days of collective trauma amid violence, mourning and mass burials. Deprose Muchena (AI: 26 February, 2021)*

The other consequence of the war is responses and actions such as sanctions from external actors, primarily from the US. The US has imposed sanctions to all parties that participated in the war. The sanctions were urged by the CNN which stated that it had gathered evidence of the 'deteriorating' situations in Tigray and that the US government should push for actions via sanctions (CNN: 13 May, 2021). Following this the US imposed its first sanctions. Antony Blinken mentioned that the US has, being concerned with the humanitarian situations, imposed sanctions which consist of Visa restrictions and withdrawal from economic and security supports (Antony Blinken: 15 May, 2021).

Another sanction was also imposed by President Biden's Executive Order which placed financial restrictions on all individuals that are connected with the war (Antony Blinken: 17 September, 2021). In a special briefing by the department of state, it was mentioned that the Executive Order was issued because of the failure of the conflicting parties to adhere to international calls to end hostilities (Department of State: 20 September, 2021)<sup>18</sup>. This statement here well shows that the sanction/Executive order was imposed because of the continued war, thus one can say that it—the sanction was a consequence of the war.

In addition, the US stated that it is willing to impose more sanctions however the sanctions that are being imposed are not intended and will not affect the Ethiopian people but selected individuals (Antony Blinken: 12 November, 2021). However on December 28 the US mentioned that one of the preconditions for AGOA is non-violations of human rights and since Ethiopia were out of compliance with this precondition its suspension will take place in January (Ned Price: 28 Decembre, 2021). The AGOA suspension contradicts the previous statement by Blinken, i.e. sanctions not being intended towards the people but selected individuals. This is due to Ethiopia's huge benefits from AGOA, the suspension means that there will be huge loss of

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<sup>18</sup> Department of State special briefing available at: <https://www.state.gov/telephonic-press-briefing-on-the-biden-%e2%81%a0harris-administration-actions-in-response-to-the-ongoing-crisis-in-northern-ethiopia/>

revenue, jobs and investments as well (Addis Fortune, 2021). These losses are losses of the peoples, not a few individuals.

These policy responses had also resulted in deterioration of relations between Ethiopia and the US. For instance Jeffery Feltman stated that since Trump's statement on the GERD in 2020 the relation between Ethiopia and the US has soared and since the break out of the war in Tigray there has been an on and off relation between the two countries (1 November, 2021). Considering the historical relation between Ethiopia and the US, an on again and off again relationship shows that there is friction between the two states. This can be seen in the same statement by Jeffery Felt man where he mentions that both states have experienced good relations prior to 2020 (Ibid).

The destruction of property, both private and public, was the other consequence that the war brought. For instance the government, on multiple occasions, mentioned that after the end of the first phase of operations—after it entered Mekelle it had spent 100 billion birr on reconstructing the damage. On one occasion the PM mentioned that it had spent 100 billion Birr, a sum he mentioned that equates with 10 years of the region's budget, while discussing the international community's 'negligence' to the government's effort (Abiy Ahmed: 30 June, 2021)<sup>19</sup>. However the destruction did not end there, as the war spread into the neighbouring regions, i.e. Afar and Amhara, destruction increased. For example the GoE mentioned that the TPLF has been deliberately destructing infrastructure in the Amhara region which include schools, hospitals and other facilities that are part of daily livelihood (Ministry of Foreign Affairs: 12 October, 2021)<sup>20</sup>.

Although not mentioned by the government and other entities—within the framework of this thesis, like any other war this war also has consequences on the economy of the country. For instance, from the aforementioned statement by the PM where the country invested 100 billion birr on the rehabilitation of Tigray, is a huge sum of money that was pulled from the country's economy and would have been used for other projects. Additionally, the government mentioned that the TPLF during its capture of the cities of Desse and Kombolcha had destroyed

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<sup>19</sup> Abiy Ahmed briefing after exit of Tigray available at: (11:10) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xvv-YSRv3Y>

<sup>20</sup> Tweet by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs available at: <https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1447840041292767232>

infrastructure (Billene Seyoum: 7 December, 2021). The Kombolcha industrial park is a source of foreign currency for the country. For instance, since the industrial park commenced operations after the TPLF occupation, it generated 3 million USD up until April (Addis Fortune, 2022).

This amount might not seem much as it was damaged during the war, but it is proof that the industrial park has the potential of generating foreign exchange. Additionally it is a huge source of employment, where initially it had the potential to recruit around 20,000 employees (Ethiopian Investment Commission, 2018). With sustained damage one can only expect that employment will decrease, this addition of unemployment into the market will create more macroeconomic problems for the government. On top of that as the country is engaged in war, valuable resources will go into the war effort rather than augment the economy. Therefore it is possible to say that, like in any other war, the consequences of the war in Tigray has negatively affected the country.

Besides these tangible consequences there were also intangible consequences. These intangible consequences are all interconnected and are products of one another. The one to start with is the increase of nationalistic feelings amongst the warring parties. These nationalistic sentiments were visible from day one of the war. On the 3rd of November, 2020 Debretsion made a statement saying:

*...what I want every nation and nationality to know is that the Federal government is oppressing us as a people—Tigrian people and what it is doing has nothing to do with political differences because settling political differences has its own method but this is being done as a people. (Debretsion Gebremichael: 3 November, 2020)<sup>21</sup>.*

At face value this statement seems to be an appeal to the Ethiopian people. However this also has a message of calling up the people of Tigray to arms as there is an ‘invading force’. Additionally Debretsion also mentions that the GoE is collaborating with Eritrea (a foreign force) to attack Tigray (Ibid). This statement is made to further stimulate the people to rise up to the ‘Tigriyan cause’. The arousal of such a nationalistic sentiment is evident in that for 8 months since the

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<sup>21</sup> Press briefing by Debretsion Gebremichael (1:05) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5nR-x88i14&list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bq7Fu\\_yt4OyVy8ra&index=36](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5nR-x88i14&list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bq7Fu_yt4OyVy8ra&index=36)

ENDF took Mekelle the Tigrian forces have been continuous fighting until it left the region. General Abebaw explained this phenomenon stating that “*for 8 months the TPLF retained its structure and was working on its propaganda and this made the people—Tigriyans rebel against us*” (General Abebaw Tadesse: 21 January, 2022)<sup>22</sup>. Despite this justification it is evident that the Tigrian people rose against the ENDF through their stimulated sentiments by the TPLF.

The ‘Ethiopian’ national sentiment was also stimulated by the war. The GoE continuously employed the ‘Ethiopian’ rhetoric throughout the war. One manifestation of the increased ‘Ethiopian’ sentiment is the No More movement where both the diaspora and the Ethiopian citizens were actively engaged. Furthermore the ‘Ethiopian’ national sentiment was also materialised considering that a vast majority of people were joining the front. The war also woke the Amhara national sentiment which was evident in the increased number of its militia, the Fano, who were actively engaged in the war. These nationalistic sentiments led to derogatory speech which exasperated the effects of the war. Words such as ‘Junta’ and ‘facist’ were abundant throughout most of the war to describe each other where the latter was used for the GoE and the former for the TPLF.

The culmination of such consequences of the war has also led to the threat to the very existence of the Ethiopian state. This is because the derogatory speeches and the increased nationalisms has created a rift in Ethiopian society making reconciliation difficult. And pushing the people further away from each other. This impact on the integrity of the Ethiopian state was also manifested in the contentious response the US gave mentioning that the stability and integrity of Ethiopia is in its interest. This shows that the integrity of Ethiopia faced difficulties. Moreover the Fragile State Index (2022) shows that Ethiopia’s rank in fragility increased from 23rd in 2020 to 13th in 2022.

### **3.1.3 Proposed Solutions to the War**

Solutions to the war were heavily proposed by the US government. The solutions proposed were mainly focused on ending hostilities through negotiations and respecting the territorial integrity of the country. This was the same proposition that was made under the Trump administration and

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<sup>22</sup> General Abebaw Tadesse Interview (11:53) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMSLZyjG0qY&t=103s>

the Biden administration. The halt of hostilities has been reiterated by the US government in almost all Department of State press briefings. In an interview with CNN, Blinken mentioned that the US wants the end of the war as soon as possible when he was asked why the US actions to end the conflict were not effective (Antony Blinken: 19 November, 2021)<sup>23</sup>.

This is probably due to the fact that the solutions proposed by the US were more or less favourable to the Tigray National Regional Government. For instance Getachew Reda mentioned that for negotiations to take place there needs to be the fulfilment of three preconditions, i.e. fulfilment of territorial integrity and self-determination of Tigray, the sovereignty of Tigray and the insurance of the survival of Tigray (Getachew Reda: 28 February, 2022)<sup>24</sup>. In this preconditions the territorial integrity part is controversial. In a call made between Blinken and Abiy Ahmed it was mentioned by Blinken that all troops—Amhara and Eritrean forces from Tigray—western Tigray in particular (Department of State: 6 July, 2021)<sup>25</sup>.

The western Tigray region, specifically the Wolkait area, is a very controversial area. The area has, despite officially being part of the Tigray region, questions by the Amhara ethnic group who claim that the area belongs to them (John, 2021). Therefore for a policy maker or mediator one has to understand this context—the Wolkait question when one makes propositions. Here the contradiction lies in the official boundary, which makes part of the TPLF demands and the question of the Amhara people over the ownership of the land. As a result any one who understands this situation would not make such a hasty and one sided proposition and such propositions can not be constructive. On top of that if this proposition was, by some miracle, agreed upon by the GoE it would create a rift with the Amhara forces which means that the government would be sandwiched between the TPLF and Amhara forces.

Moreover, the western Tigray region is of strategic importance to the ENDF. General Abebaw (21 January, 2022) mentioned that “*we cannot let the TPLF take the western (Humera) and*

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<sup>23</sup> CNN’s interview with Antony Blinken released on the Department of State website available at: <https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-with-stephanie-busari-of-cnn-international/>

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Getachew Reda on Tigray TV available at: (29:49) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mhKdfRwbJ4&list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GigPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&index=5&t=323s>

<sup>25</sup> Department of state readout of a call between Antony Blinken and Abiy Ahmed available at: <https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-3/>

*eastern (Mille) corridors, it is through Mille that we get our supplies and through Humera that they get theirs*". Hence when the US demanded that forces should leave western Tigray it implies that the TPLF should get its supply route. On top of that the US used sanctions so as to get its desired outcomes. Hence one can argue that the US proposition was more or less a coercive measure to attain its objectives—restoration of stability in Ethiopia. Such a measure is what led to the non compliance by the GoE as it was a non-impartial solution. On top of that the GoE, at such a critical time, can not afford to create antagonism with the Amhara forces who are, as stated above, claiming the Wolkite region.

In addition to the complexity of certain aspects of the war, the accusations of the TPLF and GoE make prescribing a solution difficult. As mentioned in the cause of the war section it was stated that the TPLF and GoE were engaged in heavy accusations against each other consequently making the cause of the war blurry to third parties. This will also make the prescription of a solution difficult from a third party perspective. This was confirmed by Tibor Nagy who tweeted that *"Peace in Ethiopia will not come from Washington, Brussels, Beijing or the AU – but from the Ethiopian people and leaders – all of them!"* (Tibor Nagy: 26 March, 2021). Hence the prescribed solutions by the US show that there are political intentions behind the US proposed solutions.

### **3.2 US Responses to the War**

Ever since the beginning of the war in Tigray the US government has been giving responses. These responses include positions, concerns, condemnations, proposed solutions and sanctions. Additionally it is worth noting that the war in Tigray is taking place in the context of two different administrations—the Trump administration and the Biden administration. However one might argue that the war took place in the final days of the Trump administration as it started on the election date in the US. But it is impossible to ignore that major events took place during the administration. Events such as the commencement of the war, the completion of the first phase of operations, i.e. the capture of Mekelle and some grave human rights violations such as the Mai-Kadra massacre. In addition to that Tibor Nagy who was Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs of the United States gave his views on the war after the Biden administration

took office which helps compare the responses from the two administrations. As such it is difficult to ignore the responses given by the US during the Trump administration.

This section attempts to examine the responses the US government gave on the war in Tigray chronologically. Additionally the war will be divided into four phases based on the researcher's analysis to make the data presentation and analysis clearer. The first phase ranges from the beginning of the war up until the completion of the first phase of operations—capture of Mekelle by government forces, i.e from November 3 to November 30, 2020. The second phase consists of the time from which the government forces took control of Mekelle up to the time it left Tigray which ranges from November 30, 2020 to June 30, 2021. The third phase consists of the time from which the TPLF started incursions into Afar and Amhara up to the time Abiy Ahmed decided to join the front, i.e. June 30 to November 23, 2021. The fourth phase (November 23, 2021 to March 30, 2022) consists of the time when the PM decided to join the front up until the government decided to hold a humanitarian ceasefire.

The rationale behind the above categorisation is that the aforementioned dates indicate a turning point in the war where the war expanded and also shrunk. For instance the first phase was when the war was at its operational stages and more of a conventional war. However with the capture of Mekelle the conventional type of warfare was over thus beginning the guerrilla warfare. Additionally Abiy Ahmed (28 November, 2020) stated that the first phase of operations were over and what remains is the apprehension of the TPLF clique. Thus it shows that there is clear demarcation and visible transition to the second phase of the war.

### **3.2.1 US Responses and Media**

Prior to examining the US responses it is crucial to see how the media and the US responses relate to each other. As mentioned in the previous chapter, it was argued that the media is used for elite manipulation and that it sets up agendas for actions to be taken. In light of this argument this thesis maintains that the US manipulated the media in order for it to give responses and take actions.

It is abundantly clear that the humanitarian crisis rhetoric was dominant throughout the war. Both the media and US government were echoing the issue and were calling for an end to this.

For instance the US stated, in a phone call between Abiy Ahmed and Antony Blinken, that it is highly concerned of the highly growing humanitarian crisis and also the rising risk of famine due to the continuation of the war (Ned Price: 26 April, 2021). A similar statement was also given by the US when the GoE declared UN officials persona non-grata. CNN wrote an article where it labelled the humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia the worst in the world at the time of writing and that the situation was worsening (29 September, 2021). Moreover both CNN and Fox News stated that they are concerned about the humanitarian situation in the same manner that the GoE is in an interview with Billene Seyoum on 10 November and 6 December of 2021 respectively.

However most of the reports by the media were targeted at the GoE rather than the Tigray National Regional Government. For example CNN wrote, on May 13, 2021, that it had gathered enough evidence that there had been an aid blockade into Tigray the US government should sanction the GoE. This may seem that the CNN is just presenting a humanitarian crisis and asking the US to take measures. But if we take a look at the GoE's reports it mentioned that aid was moving into Tigray and the flow of aid has been improving (PMO: 8 May, 2021)<sup>26</sup>. Here one might ask what this has to do with the US government. But if looked at closely the US government has continuously demanded the Ethiopian, Eritrean and Amhara forces to withdraw from Western Tigray. This region, as mentioned previously, is an access point for the Tigray National Regional Government. Hence it is visible that the call by CNN about aid hindrance is another way of calling for access to Tigray.

Another example is CNN's story on the Humera massacre. On September 10, 2021 CNN wrote a story on the Humera massacre. The CNN was very descriptive in its elaborations where it demonised the GoE and other perpetrators of the crime. This is not to say that the crimes were justifiable but considering that Humera is the corridor in which one can get access to the Tigray National Regional Government makes it suspicious. Another fact that makes it more suspicious is that CNN failed to write on other massacres that were allegedly perpetrated by the TPLF. For instance CNN turned a deaf ear to the Galikoma massacre where refugees were shelled in the Afar region (Billene Seyoum: 12 August, 2021).

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<sup>26</sup> Tweet by the PMO available at: <https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1390977205157695490>

These show that the US government is attempting to exploit such humanitarian atrocities, through the use of media, in order to attain its objectives. In this case the exit of Ethiopian, Amhara and Eritrean forces from Western Tigray. Therefore one can conclude that the media is being manipulated by the US government in a way that it serves its interests. Such manipulation was clearly visible in the interview conducted by CNN's Becky Anderson with Billene Seyoum on November 10, 2021.

To begin with it is important to look at the statement given by General Abebaw Tadesse on the operations. He stated that:

*The force that wants to destroy Ethiopia—TPLF is not working alone, in all its operations it had complete information...this is because the 'big ones' gave them technology...on the battlefield we don't carry with us any phones or radios and this is not because of the TPLF but the ones who help them. (General Abebaw Tadesse: 21 January, 2022)<sup>27</sup>*

In this statement it is clear that the term 'big ones' refers to the US given their extensive interest in the Horn of Africa and their activeness in the war. Coming back to the interview Becky Anderson began by stating that:

*It has been a year since the war broke out where armed groups have been fighting and increasing their numbers as they advance to the capital...what is the situation and how far are they? (CNN: 10 November, 2021)<sup>28</sup>*

In order to understand the connection between this question and the intentions of the US, the interview by General Abebaw serves better than the responses of Billene. While being asked about the operations General Abebaw mentioned that:

*...due to shortage of manpower we had to leave certain places...what we want is to buy time for preparations behind and if we slow them—TPLF down we have achieved our objective (General Abebaw Tadesse: 21 January, 2022)<sup>29</sup>*

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<sup>27</sup> General Abebaw Tadesse interview with Fana Broadcasting Corporation and ETV available at (35:02) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMSLZyjG0qY&t=714s>

<sup>28</sup> CNN (0:13) <https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2021/11/09/billene-seyoum-ethiopia-abiy-ctw-intl.cnn>

As mentioned previously, from General Abebaw's statement, the US was feeding the Tigrayan forces with information. Thus one can conclude that the ENDF was also preparing a force that is capable of repelling the incursions by the Tigray regional forces and that it is trying to buy time. Thus in order for the US to maintain the status quo, i.e. numerical advantage of the Tigrayan forces which was an estimate of over 200,000 to 44,000,<sup>30</sup> conducting negotiations were crucial. And from the question posed it is clear that there is a push for pressuring the GoE to conduct negotiations mentioning the unfolding of the aforementioned events. Hence once again we can see how the US is manipulating the media in order to pursue its interests.

### 3.2.2 US Responses based on Events in the War

#### 3.2.2.1 The First Phase of the war (November 3, 2020 - November 30, 2020)

The first response that the US government gave came on the 5th of November, 2020 by Mike Pompeo, the then Secretary of State during the Trump administration. He stated that the US condemns the TPLF's attacks on the ENDF base in Tigray and urged the immediate restoration of peace and de-escalation of tensions (Mike Pompeo: 5 November, 2020)<sup>31</sup>. This response diverges from the response the CNN gave the day before. CNN wrote a story focusing on Abiy Ahmed where it highlighted the notion that a Nobel Peace Prize winner has resorted to violence (CNN: 4 November 2020). This statement by CNN seems to condemn the PM directly rather than the action. In addition to this CNN mentioned, *"Abiy's domestic record was not why he was awarded the prestigious Nobel prize last year."*<sup>32</sup> (Ibid). Thus it is observable that the US government is directly condemning the acts by the TPLF rather than personally attacking the PM and is giving emphasis on the event. On the other hand CNN personally attacked the PM.

The second response at this stage that came from the US government revolved around the Mai-Kadra massacre. The US government condemned the action and urged for the Ethiopian

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<sup>29</sup> General Abebaw Tadesse interview with Fana Broadcasting Corporation and ETV available at: (29:20) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMSLZyjG0qY&t=714s>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid (16:34) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMSLZyjG0qY&t=714s>

<sup>31</sup> Tweet by Mike Pompeo available at: <https://twitter.com/secpompeo/status/1324121664108580875>

<sup>32</sup> CNN, in 2019 wrote that Abiy Ahmed's Nobel prize win was flawed and that it only considered the international aspect of his relations (CNN: 4 November, 2020) available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/04/africa/ethiopia-military-tigray-region-intl/index.html> 2020) <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/11/04/africa/ethiopia-military-tigray-region-intl/index.html>

government to conduct a thorough investigation and hold the perpetrators accountable (US Bureau of African Affairs: 13 November, 2020). Furthermore it reiterated the need for restoration of peace (Ibid). This response relates to CNN's prior report on the 12th of November citing AI. Additionally the US stated that it condemns the TPLF's 'unjustified' attacks on Eritrea in an attempt to internationalise the war (Bureau of African Affairs: 15 November, 2020).

The US government, in a briefing by the Department of State, gave an explanation about the situation in Tigray. It responded to the situation stating that the US repeated its condemnation of efforts to internationalise the war by the TPLF and urged it to restore the peace (Tibor Nagy: 19 November, 2020). Additionally the US called for unfettered humanitarian access and stated that the goal of the US is to resume the peace in the country (Ibid). The following response that the US government gave was on the day Mekelle fell. In the statement the US expressed its concerns over the events that were taking place around Mekelle—heavy shelling and fighting to protect citizens in the city (US Bureau of African Affairs: 28 November, 2020). Furthermore it stressed the urgency to restore peace and to the need for humanitarian access to provide aid to those in need (Ibid).

The final response for this phase from the US came on 30th of November with a discussion between Mike Pompeo and Abiy Ahmed. In the discussion Pompeo reiterated the position of the US—cessation of hostility, the commencement of dialogue and unfettered humanitarian access while mentioning the importance of keeping Ethiopia in a democratic path (Mike Pompeo: 30 November, 2020). From these responses it is visible that the US responses were more or less holistic meaning that it incorporated the political and humanitarian aspects of the conflict.

In this stage it is important to note that the media was much more active than that of the US government. During this stage the media, particularly CNN, was much more engaged in following up the war and writing stories. And this is attributed to 2 reasons.

Firstly, the delay of the government responses can be attributed to the domestic situation in the US. As stated previously the war broke out on election day. The Trump administration is considered to be unpopular in the eyes of the American public. For example James (2021) argued that the Trump administration lacked quality leadership. He undermined democratic practices

which has led to loss of confidence of citizens in institutions and on top of that issues of race and racialism has exacerbated the problems of the administration (Ibid). These are but a few of the problems that the administration had to face. But it is evident that for a re-election the administration had to focus internally as a result that might explain its lagging responses as compared to the media.

Secondly, it is visible that the responses of the government do not align with that of the media. As it is shown above the media attempted to demonise Abiy Ahmed by focusing on his Nobel prize win and relating it to the war. This attempt was especially evident in a later story that CNN wrote. In that story CNN equated Abiy Ahmed to Joseph Stalin and Myanmar's leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, the former coming close to winning it—the Nobel Prize twice and the latter winning it then after wards accused of genocide against the Rohingya people (CNN: 25 May, 2021).

This story shows that CNN is attempting to demonise Abiy Ahmed equating him to such individuals where the former is considered to be one of the worst dictators in history. This report has been criticised by Bahru (2021) where he stated that “...*As if winning the Nobel Peace Prize comes with an obligation to turn the other cheek. As if he was not the prime minister of a country and commander-in-chief of its armed forces!*”. Here Bahru is indicating that Abiy Ahmed had the obligation to respond to the attacks on the Northern Command. Additionally he makes his point mentioning Obama’s Nobel prize win amid authorisation of attacks in Afghanistan (Bahru, 2021). This is indicative of the media bias on the war.

Such reports were made due to media and party affiliation in the US. According to Jurkowitz et al. (2020) media affiliation exists in the US where democrats lean towards media outlets such as CNN, NBC news and ABC news whereas republicans lean to Fox News for information. And looking at the reports by CNN and Fox News one can observe that in the first phase the latter resorted to only reporting events as they are without emphasising on issues. For instance, Fox News only reported the advance on Mekelle, rejection of talks and the capture of Mekelle. While the former—CNN reported stories concerning the beginning of the war, humanitarian crisis and the Mai-Kadra massacre.

Here it is visible that CNN is trying to create an image that shows the Trump administration, representing the republicans in the election, has problems in managing international affairs where the US is guard to liberal democracy and human rights. The reports by CNN tarnishes the image of the Trump administration, consequently the republicans, setting ground for the Biden administration representing the democrats to succeed in the elections.

Despite this one can easily observe that the US government's response diverges from CNN's. The US government responded based on the events that occurred and did not exaggerate or emphasise on individuals but rather the actions. This shows that the US attempted to balance its responses. Furthermore the US response has a multi-faceted response unlike the media which only focused on the humanitarian aspect of the war.

### **3.2.2.2 The Second Phase of the War (November 30, 2020 - June 30, 2021)**

The start of the second phase of the war saw little to no responses from the media and the US government. The months of December 2020 and January 2021 saw very little reaction from the international community [US based media and US government]. Especially the latter where there was no activity either from the US government or the media and in the former case there was absence from the government's [US] side. This absence can be attributed to the US elections and lack of eventfulness of the war during that time.

To start with the elections, as the Trump administration was reaching its end, it was desperate for re-elections. And as mentioned above the Trump administration lacked quality leadership due to certain measures it took (James, 2021). As a result one can see that the administration lacked popularity amongst the American public. Therefore the administration had to focus on garnering support for a second term in office and this was done in desperation. This desperation revealed itself when Donald Trump refused to leave the White House after his defeat to Joe Biden where he reportedly told his advisors that he will not be leaving the office when Joe Biden takes oath on 20 January (Independent, 2020). As a result the incumbent US administration of the time—the Trump administration had to look inwards to its domestic situations despite its eventual loss in the elections.

US government responses resumed in February 2021, i.e. after the Biden Administration took office. The response began with a phone call between Antony Blinken and Abiy Ahmed. Both parties discussed the war where Blinken demanded unfettered humanitarian access (Department of State: 4 February, 2021)<sup>33</sup>. This shows that there is, despite the difference between the administrations, conformity of responses on the war. Especially looking at the last response of the Trump administration where Pompeo discussed with Abiy Ahmed on the war and demanded that there should be unhindered humanitarian access (Mike Pompeo: 30 November, 2020)<sup>34</sup>.

The conformity goes beyond advocacy of unfettered humanitarian access. As the previous administration, the current administration also expressed its concerns over the humanitarian conditions and condemned humanitarian atrocities (Antony Blinken: 27 February, 2021). In addition to the humanitarian concerns and condemnation of atrocities the two administrations—the Biden and Trump administrations have similar responses on the cessation of the war. In a press briefing it was mentioned that in a discussion between Blinken and Abiy Ahmed, the former urged the latter for the ending of hostilities as the situation is further deteriorating in Tigray (Ned Price: 3 March, 2021).

Furthermore the US government insisted for investigations to be held on the reported atrocities (Ibid). Similarly after the Mai-Kadra massacre, as stated above, the US Bureau of African Affairs stated that there should be investigations held on the Mai-Kadra atrocity (US Bureau of African Affairs: 13, November, 2020).

Following a series of condemnations and demands from the US which was coupled with non-compliance by the warring parties the US had to move to the ‘sticks’. The first US action, in the form of the ‘stick’, came in this phase of the war where a sanction was imposed. The US imposed visa restrictions to all parties involved in the conflict and other economic and security support restrictions as well (Antony Blinken: 23 May, 2021). This action came after CNN wrote that sanctions should be imposed after it had gathered evidence of deteriorating situations in Tigray and discussed with US officials (CNN: 13 May, 2021). Additionally it added that there has been blocking of aid to the region by Ethiopian troops (Ibid).

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<sup>33</sup> Read out by the Department of state on the Phone call between Blinken and Abiy Ahmed available at: <https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-2/>

<sup>34</sup> Tweet by Mike Pompeo available at: <https://twitter.com/SecPompeo/status/1333457228624519170>

The last response that the US government gave regarding the war in Tigray for this phase came after the withdrawal of the ENDF from Tigray. In the statement the US government appreciated the move by the GoE to hold a unilateral ceasefire and called it a progressive step towards improving the humanitarian situation in Tigray (Ned Price: 29 June, 2021).

Starting from this phase the US heavily relied on its own intelligence to give responses. This is because, unlike the first phase, there was not much back and forth from the conflicting parties—TPLF and GoE. Throughout the second phase the combined reports of both the TPLF and GoE was 15 over the period of 7 months [the longest phase]. Compared to the first phase which was the shortest, only 1 month, 12 reports were given from both parties. As a result there was less direct information that the US government could analyse resulting in only 11 briefings throughout the second phase by the DoS. Additionally there was more of a one sided information source during this phase which was dominated by the GoE. Out of the 15 reports on the war from the TPLF and GoE, 11 were from the GoE and 4 were from the TPLF where out of these four, one was a retweet by Getachew Reda of Kjetil Tronvoll's original tweet<sup>35</sup>.

### **3.2.2.3 The Third Phase of the War (June 30, 2021 - November 23, 2021)**

The third phase of the war is the stage where the war began to spread into the neighbouring regions of Amhara and Afar from Tigray as the government troops left, or as claimed by the TPLF were pushed out and also confirmed later by the GoE as well, from the region. As a result in this stage humanitarian issues spread and the humanitarian crisis increased from the previous phases as more people got directly affected by the war. Moreover unlike the previous phase—the second phase the TPLF became more active in giving responses.

Just as the previous phase of the war, the US response for the third phase of the war began with a phone call conducted between Blinken and Abiy Ahmed. In the phone call, the US called for a negotiated ceasefire, condemned the destruction of infrastructure such as bridges that would obstruct aid flow and reiterated the importance of unfettered humanitarian access (Department of

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<sup>35</sup> Retweet by Getachew Reda available at:  
<https://twitter.com/KjetilTronvoll/status/1391758166388531200>

State: 6 July, 2021)<sup>36</sup>. Additionally Blinken highlighted the importance of conducting political dialogue (Ibid). Here it is visible that there are other entries to the responses of the US government other than the previously reiterated responses. It was also stated that the US condemned any attempt of internal restructuring of boundaries concerning western Tigray (Ned Price: 12 July, 2021). Furthermore the US government attempted to reach out to other parties of the conflict, specifically local actors such as Amhara National Regional Forces. This was stated in a press briefing where the US demanded Amhara and Eritrean forces to withdraw from western Tigray region (Ned Price: 3 August, 2021).

This phase of the war is also the phase where the US government came under scrutiny from the Ethiopian public as well. This is evident in the fact that the US was accused of supporting the TPLF. The US replied to these accusations by stating that the US stands with all Ethiopians and is trying to support Tigrians that have been affected by the war and is calling for both parties—the TPLF and GoE to come to a negotiated ceasefire (Ned Price: 5 August, 2021). This argument holds water as the US had been giving responses for both parties to halt fighting. The US had also stated that, while it demanded the withdrawal of Amhara forces from western Tigray, that Tigrian forces also should leave from Amhara and Afar regions (Ned Price: 3 August, 2021). Such balancing responses were being given since the start of the war. However the scrutiny gained momentum which led to the ‘No More’ movement that was highly carried out by the diaspora population.

A second sanction was imposed by the US during this phase of the war. The sanction came in the form of an Executive Order (EO) from President Biden where it was stated that financial restrictions are imposed on those involved in the war (Antony Blinken: 17 September, 2021). It was stated that this came due to the inactions of the conflicting parties to de-escalate the war (Ibid). This claim holds water especially considering the preceding responses the US government gave. Prior to the sanctions two events culminated to bring up the sanction. The first is Abiy Ahmed’s call for ‘national war’ effort where the US stated that such an action will escalate the situation further and make solutions much more difficult (Ned Price: 10 August, 2021). The

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<sup>36</sup> Department of State read out of the call between Blinken and Abiy Ahmed available at: <https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-3/>

other event was on the situation in the Amhara region where the US expressed its concerns regarding TPLF attacks in a village in the region (Ned Price: 10 September, 2021).

In a telephonic briefing the US government made a statement explaining the EO issued by President Biden. It stated that the US is attempting at ending the war and the EO is one step in that direction, moreover the EO was instituted because the failures of the conflicting parties to adhere to international calls to end hostilities (Department of State: 20 September, 2021)<sup>37</sup>. It was also added that the sanctions are not intended against the people and that the US is willing to take further measures if the situation does not ameliorate (Ibid).

A few days after the above explanation the US made a strong condemnation of the GoE's decision to declare 7 UN officials *persona non grata*. The US expressed its dissatisfaction with the actions by the GoE to expel UN officials amid the humanitarian crisis (Antony Blinken: 30 September, 2021). The claim of the GoE was that the officials were meddling in internal affairs (MFA: 30 September, 2021)<sup>38</sup>. Despite this claim, Blinken mentioned, the US reminded that it instated an EO due to obstruction of humanitarian aid and warned that it would take similar measures if obstructions continue (Antony Blinken: 30 September, 2021). This warning was repeated in another briefing where the option of sanctions is still on the table (Ned Price: 4 October: 2021). This conveys that the US was adamant to using coercive methods in order to pressure the GoE to take measures that were favoured by the US.

In addition to the responses the US government attempted to ease the tensions between the TPLF and GoE by collaborating with regional states apart from sending special envoys such as Jeffery Feltman. It was stated that Blinken had held meetings with Olusegun Obasanjo, Abdella Hamdok and the director of IGAD (Workneh Gebeyehu) where it reiterated its positions on the war (Department of State: 12 October, 2021). This shows the US government is keen on resolving the war and is willing to cooperate with regional actors and states. Additionally the US reiterated that the integrity and unity of the Ethiopian state is in its best interest (Antony Blinken: 13 October, 2021).

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<sup>37</sup> Department of State telephonic briefing available at: <https://www.state.gov/telephonic-press-briefing-on-the-biden-%e2%81%a0harris-administration-actions-in-response-to-the-ongoing-crisis-in-northern-ethiopia/>

<sup>38</sup> Tweet by MFA available at: <https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1443596419068305408?lang=en>

In this phase of the war, as mentioned above, there had been much scrutiny against the US both from the Ethiopian public and diaspora. In order to appease this the US also made a statement on its relation with Ethiopia. Amb. Feltman mentioned that both Ethiopia and US enjoyed good relations over the years where it was visible in economic partnership (Jeffery Feltman: 1 November, 2021). He further mentioned that the relationship soared after Trump's view on the GERD and shortly the war broke out and there has been a back and forth relationship but this can be mended by the ending of hostilities (Ibid). This statement depicts that the friction between the US and Ethiopia is acknowledged by the US as well, however it is still visible that the demands it has been pressing on remained the same. This shows that the integrity and unity of Ethiopia is still in the interest of the US.

The situation of the war worsened around the end of the third phase. The US expressed its concern of the expansion of the war as the TPLF reached Dessie and Kombolcha (Ned Price: 3 November, 2021). These worsening of the situations led the US to demand the end of the war and enter into negotiations without any preconditions (Jalina Porter: 5 November, 2021). This call for negotiations is also an attempt to pressure the GoE into serving its interest. As mentioned earlier, General Abebaw stated that the ENDF was preparing and trying to slow down the TPLF's incursion (21 January, 2022). He also added that the TPLF was fully informed by the 'big ones', i.e. the US, were feeding them such information (Ibid). Hence by halting operations and coming to the negotiation table the US could retain the force the TPLF has so that it could have sufficient power on the negotiation table thus making it possible to raise the question of Western Tigray. But, and as it also happened, if the ENDF pushes it might be able to counter negotiation terms. Therefore it was important to halt fighting quickly for the US.

Even more so the US had threatened to use force in the event that the war further progressed to the capital. This was mentioned by Major General William Zana in an interview with the BBC. After being asked about what the US is planning to do if the capital, i.e. Addis Ababa, falls, he stated that:

*Our primary role is to respond to diplomatic crises in Africa, particularly in the Horn of Africa, where our primary role is to reinforce an embassy, to respond and assist in evacuations and to do a larger scale evacuation if necessary for both*

*US personnel and citizens...Ethiopia is very concerning for us. (Major General William Zana: 12 November, 2021)*<sup>39</sup>

This response came due to the worsening situations and concerns grew further and thus the US urged its citizens to leave Ethiopia and was willing to facilitate their departure (Ned Price: 8 November, 2021). Moreover the US expressed its willingness to broker a deal between the TPLF and GoE, while still stating that diplomacy was the only measure (Ned Price: 9 November, 2021).

#### **3.2.2.4 The Fourth Phase of the War (November 23, 2021 - March 30, 2022)**

The beginning of the fourth phase of the war is marked by Abiy Ahmed's decision to join the war front. This came after the Tigrayan forces encroached upon the capital Addis Ababa and were a few kilometres away. This phase of the war can be classified into two stages, the first stage being the climax of the war and the second stage, the de-escalation of the war. Thus the US gave two distinct responses during this phase. The first stage of this phase begins from the time Abiy Ahmed left to join the front on November 23, 2021 up until December 19 that same year where the Tigrayan forces left the Afar and Amhara regions to re-enter Tigray. The second stage consists of events that followed December 19, 2021 up until the date where the humanitarian ceasefire was held.

Beginning with the first stage of the fourth phase, following the departure of Abiy Ahmed to the front, the US response began with the statement that suggested that there is a possibility of negotiation between the TPLF and GoE. It was stated that the GoE's demand was the withdrawal of TPLF from Afar and Amhara regions and the demand of the TPLF was to end the 'siege' that the GoE is enforcing (Jeffery Feltman: 23 November, 2021).

However this demand—ending the 'siege' is not an easy one to fulfil. This is because the lifting of the so-called siege requires the exit of Amhara, ENDF and Eritrean forces from Western Tigray. And as mentioned a couple of times previously, Western Tigray is considered to be a strategic location that would enable the TPLF access to resources hence the GoE can not give up

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<sup>39</sup> BBC interview with Major General William Zana available at: (1:46)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4Kc\\_xA8nV/k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4Kc_xA8nV/k)

this advantage. And Getachew Reda mentioned that there will be no negotiations unless the territorial integrity of Tigray is maintained (25 August, 2021). This in other words means the aforementioned forces should leave Western Tigray which also means lifting the ‘siege’. Therefore it is visible that negotiations are not easy to be conducted and the US, despite this difficulty, is adamant about the negotiations showing that their interests lie in there.

In addition, the US reiterated its concerns on human rights violations that were committed by both sides, despite their denial of the allegations. The US responded to what were reported to be arbitrary detentions by the GoE on ethnic Tigrians under the auspices of a State of Emergency. The US condemned these ‘ethnic’ based detentions together with its allies (Department of State: 6 December, 2021)<sup>40</sup>. On the other side the US condemned the alleged atrocities committed by the TPLF in the Afar and Amhara regions (Ned Price: 12 December, 2021). This is yet another statement that shows the attempt of the US government to balance itself between the main protagonists of the war—TPLF and GoE.

The US was highly critical of the GoE’s measures of detention under the auspices of the State of Emergency. These detentions were intensified after the Tigrayan forces were closing in Addis Ababa. The detentions were based on ethnicity where the GoE was suspicious of support to the Tigrayan forces. The US, thus, based on the reports of AI and the EHRC denounced these detentions that were being conducted (Department of State: 6 December, 2021)<sup>41</sup>. This same denouncement has been repeated by Ned Price on the 17 of December in that same year. However the US was also vocal in denouncing the atrocities that had been committed by the Tigrayan forces in the Amhara and Afar regions during this stage (Ned Price: 12 December, 2021).

Furthermore the US government stated that Ethiopia is a close partner in combating terrorism however the internal instability that broke out in to war on 3 November 2020 led to the designation, controversially, of the TPLF as a terrorist organisation (Department of State: 16

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<sup>40</sup> Department of State media note available at: <https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-detentions-in-ethiopia/>

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

December, 2021)<sup>42</sup>. This statement also shows that the US is attempting to balance its position in a neutral manner than the previous response.

The second stage of this phase saw the de-escalation of violence following the entry of Tigrayan forces into Tigray and the GoE's decision not to enter the region. Hence the US, in this stage, gave more of a positive response to much of the actions that took place from the major protagonists of the war. The withdrawal of TPLF forces from Afar and Amhara regions, the lifting of the state of emergency by the GoE and the humanitarian truce between the TPLF and GoE were warmly welcomed by the US government. At the same time the US government continued to express its concerns. For instance it was stated that the US is concerned over the reports that accused the TPLF of committing atrocities in the Amhara region (Ned Price: 22 February, 2022). The US also reiterated the need for the end of hostilities and unfettered access for humanitarian aid (Ned Price: 4 January, 2022). This was also reiterated in the meeting held between Amb. Feltman and Abiy Ahmed (Ned Price: 6 January, 2022).

Another sanction was also imposed on Ethiopia which was the suspension from AGOA. The US mentioned that one of the preconditions for reinstatement in AGOA is non-violation of human rights and since Ethiopia were out of compliance with this precondition its suspension will take place in January (Ned Price: 28 December, 2021). This sanction goes against the US previous statement that assured that the US sanctions are not intended against the people of Ethiopia but certain individuals (Department of State: 20 September, 2021).

As the US stated the suspension of AGOA, as mentioned by the US, took effect in January, 2022. This suspension has a tremendous effect on the people of Ethiopia and the state as a whole. Capital mentioned that AGOA is a major source of 'hard cash' for Ethiopia where around 100 million USD is gained (Capital, 2021). Additionally 22 out of the 27 industry parks are direct beneficiaries from this act in terms of income and also employment (Ibid). Despite the contradiction—the US claims of imposing sanctions that do not have consequences on the people and suspension of AGOA, the US was keen on ending the war. Furthermore this action aligned

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<sup>42</sup> Department of State report available at: <https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2020/ethiopia/>

with the US statements that it is willing to use further sanctions if conditions are not going to ameliorate.

### **3.2.3 US Responses Based on Representation**

This particular section, just as the above, presents the US response based on how the US government represented the protagonists of the war—TPLF and GoE. In the same manner as the previous one, this section also categorises the war into the aforementioned four stages.

#### **3.2.3.1 First Phase**

In the first phase of the war the US responses were more or less negatively inclined against the TPLF. The US government during this phase mostly criticised the TPLF. This can be seen in the first response that the US gave right at the beginning of the war. Mike Pompeo (5 November, 2020) stated that the US is concerned by the reports claiming that the TPLF attacked the ENDF base in Tigray—the Northern command. This shows that the US government, to some extent, regards the TPLF as the one responsible for beginning the war but never officially acknowledged that it did.

Additionally, as stated above, the US condemned the acts of the TPLF by which it attempted to internationalise the war by conducting attacks on Eritrea by labelling it as ‘unjustifiable’ (US Bureau of African Affairs: 15 November, 2020). Furthermore this act was again condemned in conjunction with the TPLF attacks on Gonder and Bahir Dar (Tibor Nagy: 19 November, 2020). Moreover the US highly condemned the Mai-Kadra massacre calling for the GoE to conduct investigations (US Bureau of African Affairs: 13 November, 2020). These statements signify that the US government [under the Trump administration] depict the TPLF as responsible for the war and that it is attempting to worsen the situation of the war.

However this does not mean that the US government was overtly supporting the GoE. On multiple occasions the US urged the GoE to end hostilities and commence dialogues. Additionally the US was pushing the GoE to restore the communications that were suspended during the ‘operation’ (Tibor Nagy: 19 November, 2020). This demand was urged by AI to the GoE at the start of the war (AI: 4 November, 2020). This shows that the US did not completely

support the GoE, rather the US government simply saw the GoE as a victim which is trying to apprehend perpetrators of a crime. This is more visible in the statement by Tibor Nagy where he stated that the GoE does not regard the people of Tigray as enemies, rather is targeting a few individuals within the TPLF (Tibor Nagy: 19 November, 2020). This statement further links to a statement by Abiy Ahmed prior to the war. The PM stated that “the people of Tigray are/should not be equated with a single party—TPLF. Even within TPLF not everyone is a criminal” (Abiy Ahmed: 21 June, 2020).<sup>43</sup>

### **3.2.3.2 Second Phase**

The second phase saw, as mentioned previously, the coming of the Biden administration into office and this seemed to have turned the tide in the representation of the protagonists. During this phase there was much criticism against the GoE implying that the US holds the GoE mostly accountable to events of the war such as atrocities.

Aside from the reiterating responses of humanitarian concerns, condemnations of atrocities and cessation of hostilities the US government emphasised its reports on the GoE. For instance the US pushed for the GoE to keep its promise regarding unfettered humanitarian access (Antony Blinken: 27 February, 2021). This statement came a day after the GoE mentioned it is willing to allow unfettered humanitarian aid into Tigray (PMO: 26 February, 2021)<sup>44</sup>. These statements may not seem critical of the GoE, but the response came after AI’s demand that the GoE should allow unfettered humanitarian access (AI: 11 December, 2020). And this was followed by a phone call between Blinken and Abiy Ahmed where they discussed unfettered humanitarian access (Antony Blinken: 4 February, 2021). As a result the statement urging the GoE to keep its promise seems as some sort of pressure.

On another occasion the US pressed for the PM to take urgent measures to end the hostilities as the situation was deteriorating (Antony Blinken: 3 March, 2021). This statement shows that the US is relying on the GoE to end the war. Additionally the US government expressed its concerns over the blockage of humanitarian aid by Ethiopian (including amhara forces) and Eritrean

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<sup>43</sup> Abiy Ahmed briefing to the HPR available at: (2:32)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfLPJ6E8rpg&t=794s>

<sup>44</sup> Tweet from the PMO available at: <https://twitter.com/pmethiopia/status/1365282724337119240>

troops (Antony Blinken: 15 May, 2021). Furthermore it was mentioned that both the Ethiopian and Eritrean forces should withdraw from Tigray (Ibid). Here, putting aside the Eritrean forces, there is a direct accusation by the US on the GoE. These accusation came after the GoE designated TPLF as a terrorist organisation (HPR: 6 May, 2021)<sup>45</sup> and the GoE mentioned that it has been delivering humanitarian aid and allowing it as well (PMO: 8 May, 2021)<sup>46</sup>. This shows that the US government did not, despite not being obliged to, take into account the statements from the government showing that it is critical of the government.

On the issue of the Ethiopian forces withdrawing from Tigray, again putting aside the Eritrean forces, seems to be a bit inclined to the interests of the TPLF. It was mentioned by the Tigray regional government that “*the 'Government of Tigray' will continue fighting until the people of 'Tigray' are liberated from the perpetrators of war crimes*” (Getachew Reda: 11 March, 2021)<sup>47</sup>. Here it is visible to see that there is some sort of alignment between the demand of the US and the interest of the Tigray National Regional Government. Moreover the US was continuously calling for the withdrawal of ENDF, Amhara and Eritrean forces from Western Tigray which was also in the best interest of the Tigray National Regional Government given the strategic importance of the region.

However when one discusses a war then there are two parties that are involved and there should be equal emphasis on both. This is not to say that the US government is holding sides but emphasising on one party—the GoE more than the other—the TPLF. This can be due to the fact that in the second phase of the war it was the GoE that had the upper hand. Additionally, as stated above, the TPLF due to the circumstances did not communicate—at least officially as it did during the previous stage. As a result one can conclude that the US government can only communicate officially with the GoE. On top of that governments have to be responsible to its people and not rebel groups. This thus can be an explanation to why during this stage they emphasised more on the GoE rather than the TPLF. Additionally, the US gave other neutral responses that were not directed directly to the GoE. For instance the US when it imposed the visa restrictions, it did to all the parties that are involved in the war (Antony Blinken: 23 May,

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<sup>45</sup> Tweet by HPR available at: <https://twitter.com/FDREHOPR/status/1390254652923469826>

<sup>46</sup> Tweet by PMO available at: <https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1390977205157695490>

<sup>47</sup> Tweet by Getachew Reda available at: [https://twitter.com/reda\\_getachew/status/1369881854803857412](https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1369881854803857412)

2021). Moreover the US also called for both parties to end hostilities (Jalina Porter: 4 June, 2021).

### **3.2.3.3 Third Phase**

This phase of the war was, arguably, the most dynamic of the four phases. As mentioned earlier, due to the spread of the war into neighbouring regions the effects of the war became more severe than in the previous stages. Moreover during this phase of the war the TPLF was more active as it was the one spreading and also it had regained access to media where it could spread its messages. And on top of that it was during this stage that the diaspora community was heavily involved, thus the responses that the US gave were subjected to such a phenomenon.

It can be argued that during this phase the US response was more or less balanced than the previous one due to the above developments. The US emphasised on both the TPLF and the GoE in relation to the events that were occurring. In the first half of this phase the US was a bit critical of the GoE and in the second of the TPLF.

In the beginning of this phase the US began its response with what seems like an accusation against the GoE. It was stated that the US condemns actions by the GoE that includes the destruction of infrastructure that is essential for humanitarian access such as destruction of bridges (Department of State: 6 July, 2021). Additionally, despite the GoE claiming that reports were wrong and out of context (Billene Seyoum: 5 August, 2021)<sup>48</sup>, the US government responded to claims over the PM's call for a national war effort. It stated that such statements—call for national war effort would exacerbate the situation and make solutions highly unlikely (Ned Price: 10 August, 2021).

However if one looks at the above statement by Ned Price in relation to the status of the ENDF then it is clear to see that it is an open support to the TPLF/Tigray regional government. As mentioned earlier, from the statement by General Abebaw, the ENDF had to amass its strength in order to block the Tigrayan forces from opening the logistical route of Western Tigray and from controlling Mille (logistical hub for Ethiopian trade). Hence it had to sacrifice the centre in order to protect the strategic locations in the east and west. Furthermore, the centre needed time to

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<sup>48</sup> Press briefing available at: (14:19) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG7obceY2DM>

block rapid Tigrayan force incursions so it could prepare for a counter-attack. And again arising from General Abebaw's statement that the US had full information of this preparation. In order for the ENDF to slow down the incursion of Tigrayan forces it had to amass forces from all available sources. Therefore it is possible to conclude that the US was trying to put pressure on the GoE by attempting to aid the Tigrayan force incursion which entails support to the TPLF.

Such statements by the US, also as mentioned above in the second phase of the war there was some emphasis given on the GoE regarding criticisms, led to comments targeting the US government. For instance the US government was accused of supporting the TPLF and it responded that the US does not support any group but all Ethiopians and wants to end the war as soon as possible to reach the people of Tigray who are in need of aid (Ned Price: 5 August, 2021). Such expressions of dissatisfaction later turned into the 'No More Movement' amongst the diaspora and also local Ethiopians. In conjunction with the diaspora and the Ethiopian citizens, the GoE also protested against the US response. For example the Ethiopian Government Communication Service (GCS) tweeted that the efforts by the diaspora population to put pressure on foreign governments is appreciated (22, November, 2021)<sup>49</sup>.

The US, despite such measures, attempted to appear balanced in its responses. For instance the US stated that it was heavily concerned and disturbed by the TPLF's attacks in the Amhara regions (Ned Price: 10 September, 2021). In addition to this, a similar action to that of the previous phase, the US, under the Executive Order by Biden, imposed financial restrictions on all parties involved in the war (Antony Blinken: 17 September, 2021). Despite the sanction being imposed upon both parties it is obvious that the impact is more damaging to the GoE. This is because the Tigray regional government was cut from its logistical routes and it had no way of accessing financial resources but the GoE needed and had access to financial resources thus it is visible that the sanction was more impactful on the GoE than the Tigray regional government.

However this does not mean that the US was totally siding with the TPLF/tigray regional government rather it was sticking to its interests because the US was critical of the TPLF as its interests were endangered. For example as the TPLF encroached upon Desse and Kombolcha the US responded by stating that the TPLF should halt its advance towards the cities and that it

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<sup>49</sup> Tweet by the GCS, available at: <https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1462779110485331970>

should also withdraw from Amhara and Afar regions (Ned Price: 30 October, 2021). A few days later the US also responded after the capture of the aforementioned cities by the TPLF. The US stated that it is highly concerned by the capture of the cities and the expansion of the war (Ned Price: 3 November, 2021). Yet again Antony Blinken (4 November, 2021) made a statement where he expressed his concern over the TPLF's, together with the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), advancing to the capital Addis Ababa. As mentioned a couple of times the stability of Ethiopia was in the interest of the US since the beginning of the war and this advance towards the capital was threatening to this interest. Therefore the US had to put pressure on the Tigrayan forces to halt their advance.

On top of this the US government also accepted the joint investigation, together with its allies, that was conducted by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). It stated that "*we commend OHCHR and EHRC for their impartial and transparent work.*" (Department of State: 6 November, 2021)<sup>50</sup>. This joint investigation was not welcomed by the TPLF. Getachew Reda (2 November, 2021) stated that the investigation was fraudulent due to its lack of extensive investigations in Tigray<sup>51</sup>. He also added that the EHRC is 'partisan' as it did not try to contact people from the TPLF and only took the words from the Amhara authorities in the Mai Kadra investigation (Ibid). However the GoE had to some extent accepted the joint investigation (PMO: 3 November, 2021)<sup>52</sup>. This shows that the US did not totally criticise the GoE and neglected the TPLF, where at the least it attempted to balance between the two.

#### **3.2.3.4 Fourth Phase**

As mentioned in the previous section the fourth phase had two distinctive features where the US response was different. The first stage of this phase was more or less a continuation of the third phase where the war reached its climax. Therefore the US response was still critical of the GoE.

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<sup>50</sup> Department of State Media Note available at: <https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-the-release-of-the-ohchr-ehrc-joint-investigation/>

<sup>51</sup> Tweet by Getachew Reda, available at: [https://twitter.com/reda\\_getachew/status/1455557920821755918](https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1455557920821755918), [https://twitter.com/reda\\_getachew/status/1455557940656619526](https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1455557940656619526) & [https://twitter.com/reda\\_getachew/status/1455557947887599622](https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1455557947887599622)

<sup>52</sup> Tweet by the PMO, available at: <https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1455814758372941824>

However as the war de-escalated in the second stage of this phase the US gave more supporting statements to both parties of the war rather than condemning statements as both concluded humanitarian ceasefires.

The US government, in a report, stated that Ethiopia is a good partner in combating terrorism but did not state that the TPLF is a terrorist, as designated by the HPR (Department of State: 16 December, 2021). Rather, the US government stated that the decision to call the TPLF a terrorist was controversial (Ibid). The “final nail in the coffin” which cemented the sentiment that the US government is biased was the suspension from AGOA. The US mentioned that with the turn of the New Year—2022, Ethiopia would be suspended from the AGOA benefits (Ned Price: 28 December, 2021).

Despite this action, popularly, being lightly taken where statements such as “እኛ አድዋን እጁ አጎላን አንፈልግም” were passed around, professionally there were rising concerns. As stated previously the exit from AGOA has a significant impact on Ethiopia's economy especially in the investment sector (Capital, 2021). Moreover experts from MoFA urged the US to reverse its decision as it was ‘misguided’ and that the concerns for human rights issues should not be related to AGOA (Addis Standard, 2021). On top of that the Ethiopian Investment Commission stated that the suspension of AGOA is “disappointing and regrettable” where this action will affect lots of peoples’ jobs (ENA, 2021). This shows that this action is not only felt by the GoE but also by the people in general.

Nonetheless, just as in the previous phases, it is tough to say that the US entirely pressured the GoE while neglecting the TPLF. For instance the US stated that it could not confirm that airstrikes have taken place on IDPs (Ned Price: 11 January, 2022). This statement came after the TPLF claimed that the ‘Abiy regime’ has conducted airstrikes on IDPs and stated that the people of Tigray are frustrated by the continuous statement from the international community stating their concerns and are waiting for actions (Getachew Reda: 9 January, 2022)<sup>53</sup>. This shows that the US responses are only made on concrete evidence and are not simply siding with the TPLF. Additionally the US was not wholesomely critical of the GoE, especially during this stage it showed its appreciation of the GoE’s action where it lifted the State of Emergency and its decision to hold a humanitarian ceasefire.

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<sup>53</sup> Tweet by Getachew Reda <https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1480256970330456064>

From these responses it is visible that the US did not give a deaf ear to the GoE and supported the TPLF as the public claimed. Additionally there was no official statement from the GoE accusing the US of supporting the TPLF, rather the GoE pointed fingers at the international media and organisation. However this is not to deny that the US did not put the spotlight on the GoE. This indeed happened but firstly it does not imply that the US is supporting the TPLF. Secondly it is more ideal and diplomatically correct to engage with the GoE than the TPLF. This is because as stated earlier the case for the TPLF is controversial, the GoE designated it as a terrorist but the US did not accept it or deny it, as a result the ideal thing to do, diplomatically, is to avoid such relations.

More importantly, the US' attempt to balance between the TPLF and GoE is visible in that it [the US] has been giving responses that were favourable and unfavourable to both of the conflicting parties. This was also admitted by the US. Jeffery Feltman stated that there is a back and forth relation between Ethiopia and the US especially since 2020 where relations soared after Trump's statement over the GERD and since the start of the war (1 November, 2021).

### **3.3 Coercive Peacebuilding and the US Responses**

In the previous section of this chapter, it was illustrated that the US measures had a coercive element within them. Additionally it was mentioned that the responses were purportedly centred at bringing the conflicting parties to the negotiating table while de-escalating the tension between them. In previous sections it was argued that peacebuilding is urging the conflicting parties to contain the conflict. In conjunction to this it was also mentioned that when such efforts, i.e. peacebuilding, are met with coercive policies it leads to coercive peacebuilding.

Before examining this coercive US response, it is unthinkable to leave out its—the US interests in the region. In the literature section of this thesis it was argued that the US has high interests in the Horn of Africa as it is one of the most important regions in global geopolitics. As a result the US has highly invested in its policy towards the Horn (Remnek, 1990). Moreover, rising from Lefevbre's argument that the Horn is an area of East-West confrontation, it was also argued that currently it serves as an arena for US-China confrontation. As a result the region is of utmost importance for the US and its policy makers.

And in order for the US to take advantage within this region it needs an ally within it that could serve its interests. And among the existing states Ethiopia is the most likely candidate to fill that spot. For example, as mentioned earlier, Schreder (1992) mentioned that US policy makers labelled Ethiopia as a ‘lost ally’ during the Cold War as it shifted towards the Eastern bloc. This is also true considering the post-Cold War environment of the Horn. Moreover, Ethiopia amongst the Horn countries is more advantageous than the rest. Eritrea is a ‘rogue state’ where it is suspected of supporting terrorism while Djibouti is a small state with almost no resources and Somalia is a ‘failed’ state which serves as a safe haven for terrorists (Woldeselassie, 2010). This interest was clearly placed in a statement by the Department of State:

*First, let me say that the Biden-Harris administration is determined to press for an end to the ongoing humanitarian and human rights crisis in northern Ethiopia. This expanding conflict is causing immense human suffering and threatening the unity of the Ethiopian state as well as regional stability. (Antony Blinken: 20 September, 2021)*

However when this relative advantage of Ethiopia is disrupted the interest of the US comes under threat. Hence there is no doubt that the US will respond and it did respond. The response that the US gave differentiated in the different phases as shown in the previous section. However, especially since the assumption of office by the Biden administration, the US responses had a distinct nature, i.e. coerciveness. Prior to the Biden administration the US was caught up in its own domestic affairs—the election, hence it was not able to engage intensively in the war. However this is not to say that the US was totally inactive, it had been condemning acts of violence and demanding certain actions to be taken.

The increment in coercive measures and responses can be attributed to two reasons. The first is the change in administration in the US and the second is the change in events of the war. Beginning with the first reason, as discussed in the above section, it has been argued that the Trump administration and Biden administration represented the protagonists of the war differently. The former was highly critical against the TPLF while the latter was inclined to criticising the GoE.

For instance, Tibor Nagy, who served as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs of the United States during the Trump administration, after the Biden administration took office. Unlike most of the responses of the Biden administration gave which reiterated that the TPLF and GoE should come to negotiations without preconditions, Tibor Nagy stated that the TPLF should change its leadership then come to the negotiating table (26 March, 2021)<sup>54</sup>. This statement shows that Nagy sees the incumbent TPLF leadership as the obstacle to negotiations. And if one looks at the US responses of the first phase it is visible that similar responses were given. Thus one can conclude that there was inclination towards the GoE during the Trump administration and to the TPLF during the Biden administration.

Coming to the second reason, i.e. the change of events of the war, during the Trump administration the war was fought at a conventional level hence the battlefields were confined to certain areas. This entails that the civilian casualty was controlled, though there were certain atrocities that were committed. On top of that, maintaining the above argument of administration inclinations, it can be argued that the Trump administration was seeing results it wanted. During the first phase of the war the GoE, although being outnumbered, had technological superiority hence the war was in its favour. This was also coupled with the internal dynamics of the US—the election. Therefore due to the preferable results the administration was seeing and the internal dynamics it was facing, it can be argued that there was no need and time for giving coercive responses.

However after the Biden administration took office things changed drastically. The war transformed from conventional to a guerilla warfare type. This prolonged the conclusion of the war to an indefinite time frame. This was a signal that stability in Ethiopia was not to come soon which posed a threat to the interest of the US. This event could also explain the shift towards criticising the GoE rather than the TPLF during this administration. The shift came due to the fact that dealing with the GoE would be much easier than dealing with the TPLF since the latter was now a rebel group. And being a rebel group the impact of the ‘sticks’ the US has in its diplomatic arsenal would not affect the TPLF as much as it would affect the GoE. Hence the

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<sup>54</sup> Tweet by Tibor Nagy <https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200596161146881>, <https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200597054525440> & <https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200597901783040>

logical option for the US is to side with the TPLF and put pressure on the GoE so as to bring the two major protagonists to negotiating terms.

This development in the war was coupled with other problems such as new cases of atrocities and humanitarian crisis which further exacerbated the problem of instability in Ethiopia. In order to mitigate this issue the US had to resort to coercive measures. In the second chapter, coercion was identified as an act of influencing others by an external actor through the use of threats in order to bring an outcome that would not have happened if there was no threat (Ellisberg, 1968: PRIF, 2018). And looking at the responses the US gave and the measures it took it is visible that it employed coercion as a method for gaining compliance.

Despite the early success gained in the 3 weeks operations, the GoE was facing serious constraints after it announced the second phase of operations—the apprehension of key TPLF leaders. Moreover, maintaining the statement given by General Abebaw that the ENDF was seriously outnumbered and the success of the TPLF’s propaganda, the GoE was still keen on continuing with the war. This entailed that the TPLF/Tigray regional forces had the ability to continue the war. This can be seen in the Tweet by Getachew Reda which states:

*Tigray has practically broken the backbone of #AbiyAhmed's genocidal army. With his most functional divisions totally destroyed and in captivity, #theNakedEmperor has little chance to manoeuvre militarily, politically and diplomatically. #Abiy has essentially lost the war! (Getachew Reda, 27 June, 2021)<sup>55</sup>*

Even coming to the war, as mentioned previously from the statement by General Abebaw, the GoE was not going to leave the Western Tigray region as it was a strategic corridor which would allow the TPLF to obtain logistical support. And the TPLF/Tigray National Regional Government time and again mentioned that it would keep on fighting until the siege was broken and the territorial integrity of Tigray was assured. Hence it is clear that these statements and actions stand against the demand of the US.

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<sup>55</sup> Tweet by Getachew Reda [https://twitter.com/reda\\_getachew/status/1409182560006049801](https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1409182560006049801)

Thus as Morgenthau (1948) argues, international politics is the politics of survival. Hence the saying “*the big fish eats the little fish*” applies. In this case it is obvious that the US is the ‘big fish’ as a result it was able to employ coercive measures to acquire its desired outcomes. The US used its hard power to compel the warring parties to come to its desired outcome, i.e. negotiations and ending hostilities. The US continuously threatened to impose sanctions so as to acquire the desired outcome—the outcome which is in the interest of the US. As was stated in the second chapter the act of coercion is contentious where the coercer continually pushes, via threats, the coerced party until the desired outcome is gained (PRIF, 2018). This is what happened in this case, the US diplomacy followed this coercive path in order for it to gain its preferred outcome.

However applying coercion to diplomatic activities does not guarantee success. This is because the success of such measures is dependent upon the coerced party. As stated earlier, in Nozick’s argument coercion does not imply unfreedoms, thus the coerced party has the choice of complying or not depending on the perceived consequence of its actions (see chapter 2). For instance this was the case for the Afghanistan case immediately after the 9/11 attacks. Tarzi stated that:

*...when dealing with terrorist groups or failed states in which the leadership has a radically different and highly destructive messianic religious and cultural referent, as was the case with the Taliban, coercive diplomacy is likely to fail.*  
(Tarzi, 2005: 21)

Nonetheless, when coming to the case of Ethiopia, the US neither considers the TPLF as a terrorist group nor is Ethiopia a failed state, at the most it could be considered a very fragile state. Thus this begs the question: did the coercive action/diplomacy of the US succeed?

To begin with, as stated earlier, rising from the definition by Schelling (1966) diplomacy is an act of bargaining. From bargaining parties attempt to maintain their interests. However when, as Schelling maintained, a party, in our case a state, has enough power it does not need to bargain, it can coerce. And it was also maintained that power can also be divided into soft power and hard power where the former focuses on ideals and the latter on material aspects such as economy and

military (Gray, 2011). It goes without saying that the US has the upper hand in any sort of bargaining, not only compared with Ethiopia but the world. As such the US has the ability to coerce other entities in international relations.

Despite this upper hand, this thesis maintains that in most cases the US did not receive its desired outcomes in its bargaining with the GoE and the TPLF. The TPLF and the GoE were not in the position to negotiate, despite their statements suggesting that they were ready to negotiate. For instance Getachew Reda tweeted “*We will pay Abiy in his own coins*”, after mentioning the continued attacks (8 November, 2020). And on the side of the GoE there were calls for supporting the war effort where slogans such as “*ጠብቅ፣ ዝመት፣ ደግፍ (አካባቢህን ጠብቅ፣ ወደ ግንባር ዝመት፣ መከላከያን ደግፍ)*” were being called out (GCS 30 October, 2021)<sup>56</sup>. Such calls from both sides were abundant throughout the four phases, especially after July 2021 on the side of the GoE. These went against the interest of the US, therefore in order the US had to compel the parties to adhere to its demands—to negotiate and end the war through coercive acts.

The US had been continuously demanding both the TPLF and the GoE to halt hostilities and come to negotiations. Furthermore it had been condemning acts of human rights violations, however this continuous demands failed to materialise hence the US took its first measure using its ‘stick’ on 23 May, 2021 when it imposed the visa, economic and security restrictions on all parties connected to the war (Antony Blinken: 23 May, 2021). But this action failed to achieve its desired goal since the US was to impose other sanctions.

But after a month since the first sanction was imposed the GoE announced that it had decided to withdraw its troops from Tigray. At that moment one might assume that the sanction had hit its intended target but it did not. The GoE stated that the rationale behind its withdrawal was due to its completion of its important objectives and that staying in Tigray was no longer relevant. It was stated that, “*...our main objective was to pull out weapons and troops from tigray and that has been done successfully*” (Abiy Ahmed: 30 June, 2021)<sup>57</sup>. Additionally it was mentioned that the relevance of Mekelle, i.e. in its strategic terms, has reduced and that the aim of the operations

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<sup>56</sup> Tweet by the GCS <https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1454485384214237197>

<sup>57</sup> Abiy Ahmed (0:18) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xvv-YSRy3Y>

was not occupation (Ibid)<sup>58</sup>. However from the side of the TPLF the exit was described as a victory by its forces. This view was later to be confirmed by the GoE itself where General Abebaw mentioned the ENDF's shortcomings in the war and the TPLF's propaganda success. Hence it can be said that the sanction is not the reason that led to the withdrawal of the ENDF from Tigray.

The US continued with the coercive measures as the war progressed further and also spread out of the Tigray region into the Amhara and Afar regions. The US reiterated its call for cessation of hostilities and conduct of negotiations but there was no affirmative response from both the Tigrayan forces and the GoE. Following this a second and more severe sanction was imposed by the US, i.e. the Executive Order issued by Biden. Antony Blinken (17 September, 2021) mentioned that the Executive Order was issued due to the worsening conditions of the war. However this was also followed by another contradictory action by the GoE which was the expulsion of UN officials from Ethiopia.

The coercive measures also included the threat of military evacuation of its civilians. This came when the Tigrayan forces were closing in the capital. As mentioned earlier the BBC conducted an interview with Major General William Zana, commander of the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa. He mentioned that one of the Task Force's duties is to conduct evacuations of diplomatic staff and citizens of the US.<sup>59</sup> This is a clear threat posed to the GoE as it is obvious that the US has the capability of conducting such operations. This message also can be interpreted as the US interventions in Libya which left a wound that is yet to heal. Thus it could be concluded that the US is implicitly transmitting the Libyan message.

Despite this threat the GoE remained adamant of its positions and carried on with the war. The US made a statement where it threatened to use further sanctions and that it is willing to use all available tools to ensure the war stops and the parties come to negotiations (Ned Price: 22 October, 2021). The US did do as it said and imposed a sanction which had a great effect on Ethiopia, i.e. the suspension from AGOA. As stated earlier in this chapter the AGOA suspension

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid (4:36-5:27) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xvv-YSRy3Y>

<sup>59</sup> BBC interview with Major General William Zana (1:46)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4Kc\\_xA8nV/k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4Kc_xA8nV/k)

is one that significantly impacted the Ethiopian economy, hence it begs the question why did the GoE remain adamant to continuing the war with such a threat lingering around?

Firstly it is important to note that the war was not only supported by the GoE but also the majority of the people. This was evident in the fact that a lot of people were joining the army and other forces that were fighting against the Tigrayan forces. Moreover the public were also against the US measures which was evident in the No More movement that was conducted both in Ethiopia and abroad. This resulted due to the one-sidedness of the US responses, specifically its inclination towards the TPLF/Tigray regional government.

As discussed earlier the US had inclined to the TPLF/Tigray regional government since the assumption of office by the Biden administration. The responses it gave was evidence to this as shown above. For instance its demand for the ENDF and other forces to leave Western Tigray, despite it being a strategic location and the sanctions it imposed having different implications can be mentioned. Thus this created resilience among the Ethiopian people and diaspora which served the GoE as a scaffold to continue the war.

Therefore, although the US employed coercive methods, due to its one-sidedness it failed to achieve its desired goal as it was facing serious resistance. Moreover the US responses manifested its interests creating more resistance to its demands from the side of the GoE. However it cannot be said that the US measures were totally ineffective. Rather if one considers the halt of the ENDF into Tigray one could see that the US measures were successful. On 24 December, 2021 Abiy Ahmed announced that the ENDF has halted its advance into Tigray stating “ውሳኔዎቻችን በስሜት የሚወሰኑ ሳይሆን ዘላቂ ጥቅምን ያገናዘቡ ናቸው!”<sup>60</sup>. Additionally General Abebaw mentioned that the halt into Tigray came due to the completion of the first phase of the counter-offensive so that the troops could take a break as they were exhausted (21 January, 2022)<sup>61</sup>.

Despite these statements the halt came before the US officially stated that Ethiopia was to be suspended from AGOA in 2022. Moreover, prior to the halt the MFA stated that the suspension from AGOA is “*misguided and fails to take into account the commitment of the Government of the United States to value the wellbeing of ordinary citizens.*” (Addis Standard, 2021). This

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<sup>60</sup> Tweet by Abiy Ahmed <https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1474409761789644802>

<sup>61</sup> Interview with General Abebaw (42:24) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMSLZyjG0qY>

shows that the GoE is concerned about its suspension from AGOA, hence it had to halt its advance into Tigray. Despite the halt the the US suspended Ethiopia from the AGOA benefits so one might ask why didn't the GoE enter? The logical answer is the subsequent measures would have been catastrophic to the country.

If it were not for the GoE's decision to de-escalate the war after the AGOA more serious actions would have been taken by the US such as the HR 6600. The HR 6600, if enacted, would have suspended all loans that Ethiopia could receive from the US and other financial institutions and also suspend development aid that Ethiopia receives for projects until the demands of the US are met (US Congress, 4 February, 2022). This decision would have destabilised Ethiopia which goes against the US's own interest. As a result one can argue that the US took a gamble, risking the stability of Ethiopia—their interest as well to get the compliance for its demands. Therefore one can say that the US coercive policy had seen success in this regard. Moreover the last measures can be considered the only coercive peacebuilding measure the US took as it made both the GoE and Tigrayan forces cease hostilities.

From this it can be seen that the coercive peacebuilding policy that was undertaken by the US had three forms. The first form was a diplomatic form, the second was military form and finally it possessed financial and/or economic form.

Starting with the diplomatic pressures, the US had attempted to coerce the GoE to de-escalate the tension with the TPLF by sending diplomatic missions. The missions were not only sent to Ethiopia but to other regional countries and also countries that had strong connections to the GoE. For instance the US, between May 4 to 13, 2021, sent Jeffrey Feltman to Ethiopia and other regional states such as Egypt, Eritrea and Sudan<sup>62</sup>. In the meetings with Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt Feltman discussed the issue of the Nile. Here one might assume that this act has no connections to the war in Tigray but if closely looked at it exerts pressure on the war.

The issue of the Nile is one of the most important issues that Ethiopia had to deal with and is still dealing with since 2011. Especially recently since the start of the filling up of the dam—the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) the issue of the Nile has become more sensitive than

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<sup>62</sup> Department of State (Media Note) available at: <https://www.state.gov/travel-by-u-s-special-envoy-for-the-horn-of-africa-jeffrey-feltman/>

previous times. Hence here it is visible that the US is trying to exert pressure on the GoE by raising an equally important issue to it. This can be considered a move by which the US is attempting to create an external front in hopes of pushing the GoE to de-escalate tensions with the TPLF and direct its attention towards the Nile.

Taking the definition forwarded by Ellisberg (1968) coercion is an act of influencing behaviour using threats and threats, taking the definition by Nozick (1969) are events that are out of the ordinary that are unexpected. Here the decision by the US to send Feltman and raise the issue of the GERD is an attempt to change the behaviour of the GoE. The act of raising the GERD in itself is an unexpected event as most of the actions and measures that the US took prior to Feltman's visit revolved around the war hence this can be considered an act of coercion.

The most influential diplomatic coercive act by the US is Feltman's visit to Turkey and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In this case it is important to note that the US sent its envoy to the two countries that had helped the GoE in providing military equipment, specifically the drones. The drones are, arguably, the most effective weapons that the GoE possesses as it has given it the edge in the war militarily. Therefore it can be argued that the US visit to these countries is one way of exerting diplomatic pressure on Ethiopia by attempting to cut short its supply of sophisticated war equipment. In addition to such visits, the US also changed its special envoy to the Horn of Africa from Feltman to Mike Hammer. This could be considered as a diplomatic pressure by attempting to show the seriousness of the issue to the US.

These are not the only diplomatic pressures that the US exerted on Ethiopia. For example the US stated that its citizens should be leaving Ethiopia and that it was ready to evacuate its diplomatic staff via military evacuation. This entails that the US is implicitly stating that it has the capability to reduce its diplomatic ties with Ethiopia where Ethiopia receives an enormous amount of aid from the US. Hence this would be a serious blow to Ethiopia, however this action was countered by a huge invitation of the diaspora community for the Ethiopian Christmas festivity.

Second is the military form which was a brief measure which took place when the war reached its, what can be argued as, climax in the third phase of the war. The military threat came in the form of intervention in order to evacuate the US diplomatic staff and citizens. As mentioned

earlier, through an interview conducted by BBC with Major General William Zana, the US made this threat of intervention if conditions were going to worsen. Prior to the statement by General Zana CNN wrote that the ‘rebels’, i.e the TPLF, are inclosing the capital Addis Ababa after having taken Desse and Kombolcha<sup>63</sup>. This began the build up to the pressure towards the GoE. To add to this pressure CNN further stated that there was a formation of an anti-government coalition composed of nine opposition parties<sup>64</sup>. This added up to the pressure as it added that the opposition to the GoE was now an organised one and had the opportunity to seriously counter it.

Adding to the media pressure, the US government also urged its citizens to leave the country and that it was ready to facilitate their departure by providing loans (Ned Price: 8 November, 2021). Despite these pressures the GoE attempted to counter this claim by using the ‘false narrative’ argument. In an interview with CNN, Billene Seyoum argued that CNN was engaged in fabricating false stories that revolved around the situation in Addis Ababa claiming that the stories of TPLF closing in was false<sup>65</sup>. Despite this defence by the GoE the US still made the military threat. This was because the US was fully aware of the situation that was on the ground and that the TPLF, despite the exaggerated report of CNN stating that the TPLF was at the outskirts of Addis Ababa, was indeed closing in on the capital. This was later admitted by the GoE in the interview conducted with General Abebaw. As mentioned earlier, he stated that there were different constraints that the ENDF faced hence it had to make strategic retreats until it could rebuild itself<sup>66</sup>.

General Zana was quite elaborative in his interview where he mentioned that the US had the capability of making last minute evacuations for both diplomats and civilians<sup>67</sup>. However, the threat forwarded by the US was not met with compliance. Both the TPLF and GoE continued with the fighting. The US government then demanded its citizens to leave Ethiopia immediately

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<sup>63</sup> CNN (4 November, 2021) available at: <https://www.cnn.com/africa/live-news/ethiopia-conflict-updates-11-4-intl/index.html>

<sup>64</sup> CNN (5 November, 2021) available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/africa/live-news/ethiopia-conflict-updates-11-5-intl/index.html>

<sup>65</sup> CNN interview with Billene Seyoum available at: (0:47) <https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2021/11/09/billene-seyoum-ethiopia-abiy-ctw-intl.cnn>

<sup>66</sup> General Abebaw interview available at: (29:37-35:02) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMSLZyiG0qY>

<sup>67</sup> BBC interview with Major General William Zana available at: (1:46) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4Kc\\_xA8nV/k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4Kc_xA8nV/k)

and that they should not wait for the situation to further worsen (Department of State: 22 November: 2021)<sup>68</sup>. However, before the US could make further military threats the war changed tides where PM Abiy Ahmed joined the front and the GoE started to push back the TPLF into Tigray.

The third form of coercive peacebuilding came in the form of financial and/or economic threats. This form of coercive peacebuilding was the most extensively used by the US. The first coercive measure in its financial form came in the form of economic and security support restrictions (Antony Blinken: 23 May, 2021). However this had little impact in getting compliance as the war progressively worsened. Next was the Executive Order issued by President Biden which placed financial restrictions on individuals involved in the war (Antony Blinken: 17 September, 2021). This measure was welcomed by the TPLF which was evident in the tweet by Getachew Reda<sup>69</sup>. Nevertheless this was met with a negative reaction from the GoE where its subsequent measure was far from compliance.

Following this, what can be argued as a failed attempt by the US, the measures—the financial and economic sanctions grew stronger. One that has been imposed is the suspension of Ethiopia from AGOA. The AGOA suspension, can be argued, was one of the most serious actions that the US took as an effort to compel the GoE to halt hostilities. As mentioned earlier, AGOA is a source of hard currency for Ethiopia and has facilitated employment opportunities as well. Hence this suspension creates a huge setback to the already hard stricken economy of Ethiopia due to the war. The suspension was not welcomed by the MFA and the Ethiopian Investment Commission calling it a misguided and a disappointing action respectively. Hence it is visible that this measure by the US had some significant implications.

The other financial and economic coercive measure taken by the US is the S3199 and HR 6600 legislations. Although not put into effect, it can be said that these were by far the greatest coercive acts that the US has undertaken. Both these legislation bills possessed similar economic and financial sanction threats that would have had catastrophic consequences on the Ethiopian

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<sup>68</sup> Department of State (Special Briefing) available at: <https://www.state.gov/briefing-with-senior-state-department-officials-on-the-situation-in-ethiopia-and-ongoing-efforts-to-encourage-the-departure-of-u-s-citizens/>

<sup>69</sup> Getachew's tweet appreciating the decision of Biden, available at: [https://twitter.com/reda\\_getachew/status/1439295084206362625](https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1439295084206362625)

economy and would consequently affect the people of Ethiopia directly. Both the S3199 and HR 6600 had in them resolutions that would prevent Ethiopia from receiving any development loans from both international financial institutions and the US itself, unless of course the fighting is halted.

These legislation bills saw immediate results from the GoE as tensions gradually decreased. This is especially true for the S3199 and HR 6600 legislation bills. Despite being met with resistance from the Ethiopian public, both within the country and the diaspora, where together with the ‘No more’ movement they carried out the ‘Hands Off Ethiopia’ movement, the GoE was more compliant. This was evident in the measures it took following the announcement of HR 6600 where it lifted the State of Emergency, freed prisoners (TPLF leaders such as Sibhat Nega) and held a humanitarian truce.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. Summary of Findings and Conclusion**

#### **4.1 Summary of Key Findings**

This thesis attempted to examine what implications the US responses to the war in Tigray had on the stability of Ethiopia. It assessed the nature of the war by looking at what the cause of the war was, what consequences it had brought and what possible solutions have been suggested. The thesis has also examined the US responses and assessed the nature of the responses as well.

In regards to the nature of the war, this thesis found that the war had different perspectives to it and that it was not easy to solve it from the proposed solutions, especially from foreign actors. This is due to the fact that there was no clarity over the root cause of the war rather there was only consensus over what ignited the war.

The perspectives of the main protagonists of the war, i.e. the GoE and the TPLF, were contradictory where one accuses the other of beginning the war. From the side of the GoE the war began due to the attack on the Northern Command which was perceived as a betrayal by the TPLF. However the TPLF claims that the attack was an act of self defence following ‘provocations’ from the GoE. Additionally the GoE, at the beginning of the war, called it a law enforcement operation in order to ‘end impunity and restore justice’ but TPLF claimed that it is fighting for its right of self determination that has been ‘impeded’ by the GoE.

In addition to these claims, which are contradictory to each other, both the TPLF and the GoE trace back the roots of the conflict prior to the attack on the Northern Command. This view is also shared by the media, specifically CNN, where it was stated that the friction between the GoE and the TPLF began after the coming to power of Abiy Ahmed to power and his restructure of the EPRDF. CNN further mentioned that tensions reached its peak after the elections were postponed by the Federal government. This view by the media differs from the GoE’s and TPLF’s perspective where both believe that the postponement of elections was a pretext for war. However, it is possible to argue that the attack on the Northern Command marked the beginning

of the war. Moreover the US indirectly acknowledged this by stating its concern over the attack on the Northern Command (Mike Pompeo: 5 November, 2020).

Concerning the consequences of the war, this thesis found that the war has brought about huge costs in both humanitarian and material aspects. These costs were confirmed by the GoE, TPLF, the media, AI and the US. Amongst the humanitarian consequences sexual violence, massacres, extra judicial killings, internal displacement and ‘arbitrary’ detentions were there. In regards to the material costs, destruction of property and infrastructure were exhibited. Sanctions were also among the consequences of the war which have both impacted the economy, especially since the suspension from AGOA, and soared the relation between the two states. In addition to these, the country—Ethiopia faced intangible consequences such as increase in hate speech and nationalisms which in turn posed a threat to the integrity of Ethiopia as a state.

The propositions to end the war that were proposed by the US reflected its own interests. This made the acceptance of the propositions low. Moreover the propositions that were given by the US more or less favoured the Tigrayan regional government hence it faced resistance from the GoE. A good example was the US proposition that ENDF, Amhara and Eritrean forces should leave Western Tigray despite its strategic importance. Hence the proposed solutions added fuel to the fire rather than put out the fire. The statement by Tibor Nagy sums up the problem of the propositions to end the war where he argued that the solution to the war can only be internal.

Secondly the thesis found that there were similarities and differences in US responses to the war where humanitarian concerns, condemnation of atrocities and end of hostilities was reiterated. The differences in responses was manifested in the difference of the administrations where the representations of the protagonists differed. Despite there being no official statements and no overt support of either side the responses the two administrations have had some inclination to one side of the warring parties. During the Trump administration there was inclination in favour of the GoE and during the Biden administration towards the TPLF which was evident in their statements.

The initial phase of the war the US was at the dawn of its presidential elections hence it was not as active as it was compared to the other stages of the war. However the US was not at all

dormant; it had reacted to major events during that phase such as the Mai-Kadra massacre and the siege of Mekelle. The relative inactivity of the first phase continued into the initial stages of the second phase, due to the ongoing elections. Within this phase there was a change in administration and with this change there was a rise in the response interventions by the US. The Biden administration followed suit where responses such as ending hostility, humanitarian concerns and condemnations of humanitarian atrocities were reiterated.

The third phase of the war was where the US had been active in giving responses. This activeness is related to the eventfulness of the third phase where the war spread into the Amhara and Afar regions. This significantly posed a threat to the interest of the US which is the stability of Ethiopia (Antony Blinken: 20 September, 2021). The fourth phase saw a decrease in both US government and the media responses following the unfolding of major global issues such as the Ukraine-Russia war. In addition to this the thesis found that the US responses were made independent of the media unlike what is suggested by the proponents of the 'CNN effect'. The US responses were made strictly following their interests in Ethiopia. Additionally this was manifested in the fact that the US took action when it saw fit not as pressured by the media.

Finally this thesis found that the US employed coercive peacebuilding to bring about a solution to the war. However it mentioned that the coercive behaviour came due to the interests that the US has in the Horn of Africa. Due to the strategic significance of the Horn the US needs to maintain some degree of stability. Additionally the US needs a reliable ally that can help maintain this stability and Ethiopia, among the other core Horn countries, serves it best. Hence the war in Tigray has thus threatened the US interests as it had a destabilising effect in the region. Therefore in order to mitigate this issue the US employed coercive measures. These measures took three forms, i.e. diplomatic, military and financial/economic forms. Despite the coercive measures the GoE had attempted to take countermeasures that would enable it to continue with the war. But as the coercive measures strengthened, for instance the legislations Bills S3199 and HR 6600 had had significant impact on the behavioural change in the GoE.

However, this thesis found out that the usage of coercive diplomacy to bring peace and stability—coercive peacebuilding was more of a gamble than a thoroughly planned measure. This is because there was a perception in the Ethiopian public that the US was overtly siding

with the TPLF given the TPLF's responses to US actions. Additionally this sentiment was existent within the GoE to a certain extent thus making it resilient and non-compliant to the demands by the US. On top of this the US did not consider the nature of the Ethiopian state, i.e. a non colonised state, and its responses created a sentiment of neocolonialism. It was the careful realisation and analysis of effects of more sanctions by the GoE, and also the TPLF, that led to the cooling down of tensions. But had not the GoE or the TPLF come to this realisation the situation would have been more severe.

## **4.2 Conclusion**

Just like any war, the war in Tigray has affected Ethiopia greatly. Both the human and material costs have been felt by the GoE and the TPLF. Although official numbers have not yet been known a number of people have died both directly and indirectly from this war, people in their thousands have been forced to flee their homes internally and into neighbouring countries. Additionally there was vast destruction of peoples houses and public infrastructure and facilities. For instance the GoE reportedly spent 100 Billion Ethiopian Birr on rehabilitating Tigray during its stay in the region (Abiy Ahmed: 30 June, 2021). This figure is only limited to the 8 months stay in Tigray however the war has spread into other regions, i.e. Amhara and Afar, thus the figure would at the least go up to three times.

However it is not the war that only had an impact on Ethiopia but the US responses and actions as well. As mentioned in this thesis there was some sort of inclination towards criticising the GoE than the TPLF from the side of the US, despite not being overtly, for various reasons. This was said to have brought a sentiment amongst the Ethiopian public that the US was siding with the TPLF and was practising neocolonialism. Hence the GoE got an immense amount of internal support from the public to carry on with the war. However this also posed a challenge to the GoE at the same time. This is because an immense support entailed an immense expectation.

Given the way the reform came in Ethiopia, i.e. through protests, there was dissatisfaction and frustration against the TPLF. Thus people were in support of the measures the GoE was taking against the TPLF. Hence the halt of such actions would create doubt and mistrust in the public against the GoE. This is evident in the briefings it gave when it left Tigray and decided to halt its

advance into Tigray following the TPLF's retreat. So it is clear that the people wanted the GoE to incapacitate the TPLF.

It is in light of this that one has to see implications of the US responses. As mentioned above the US responses seemed to favour the TPLF, although not overtly and officially. This enraged both the public and the GoE, specifically after the Biden administration took office. This was especially evident in the proposed solutions by the US which seemed to favour the TPLF and was also favoured by the TPLF overtly. For instance the appreciation Getachew Reda gave to Biden's executive order (18 September, 2021)<sup>70</sup>. However the paper argues that this correlation between the US response and TPLF demands is not intentional. Rather this correlation comes from the simplistic understanding of the US to the war and thus offering simplistic solutions. Nevertheless there was the perception that the US was siding with the TPLF and as the saying goes "*thinking makes it so*" thus this created resilience and non-compliance towards the US demands.

This non-compliance prolonged the war which eventually spread into other regions which further destabilised Ethiopia. Even with the spread of the war the US still employed its coercive measure to bring peace in Ethiopia further exacerbated the non-compliance of the GoE and the public. This went up to the point where the diaspora community were conducting protests across the US and other European countries under the #NO MORE 'movement'. Moreover people were also willing to join the front following the call by the GoE stating "ጠብቅ፣ ዝመት፣ ደግፍ (አካባቢህን ጠብቅ\_ ወደ ግንባር ዝመት\_ መከላከያን ደግፍ)" (GCS: 30 September, 2021)<sup>71</sup>.

The situation began to cool down when the GoE started to feel the effects of war combined with the effects of the sanctions the US imposed which had strong effects on the economy. This does not mean that the coercive measures worked. Because in the second chapter of this thesis it was stipulated that coercion is a continuous process where threats forwarded until a desired outcome is attained (PRIF, 2018). And it is these contentious threats that made the GoE non-compliant and resilient. Moreover the GoE looked to other possible allies that could support its war efforts. For instance Deen (2021) wrote that China, Russia, Iran and Turkey have been identified as

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<sup>70</sup> Tweet by Getachew Reda

<sup>71</sup> Tweet by the GCS

weapons providers to Ethiopia from small arms to sophisticated air strike drones fuelling the war. Thus this allowed the GoE to continue the war up to the point where the sanctions imposed by the US were felt.

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**ANNEX**

Date	Actor	Issue	Link
21 Jun, 2020	PM Abiy Ahmed	Difference between TPLF and Tigrayans	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfLPJ6E8rpg&amp;t=794s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfLPJ6E8rpg&amp;t=794s</a>
30 Jul, 2020	PM Abiy Ahmed	Rising tensions with TPLF	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NeMXsYFPI1c">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NeMXsYFPI1c</a>
3 Nov, 2020	Debretsion G/Michael	Press release	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5nR-x88i14&amp;list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bg7Fu_yt4OyVy8ra&amp;index=35">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5nR-x88i14&amp;list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bg7Fu_yt4OyVy8ra&amp;index=35</a>
4 Nov, 2020	GoE (PMO)	Announcement for beginning operations	<a href="https://twitter.com/pmethiopia/status/1323901191902822406?lang=en">https://twitter.com/pmethiopia/status/1323901191902822406?lang=en</a>
	Demeke Mekonnen	Announcement for beginning operations	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJXL1k2KElw&amp;t=206s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJXL1k2KElw&amp;t=206s</a>
	CNN	Beginning of "civil war"	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/04/africa/ethiopia-military-tigray-region-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/04/africa/ethiopia-military-tigray-region-intl/index.html</a>
	Amnesty International	Calling for respect for HR during operations	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/11/ethiopia-authorities-must-ensure-human-rights-are-respected-in-tigray-military-operation-2/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/11/ethiopia-authorities-must-ensure-human-rights-are-respected-in-tigray-military-operation-2/</a>
5 Nov, 2020	Mike Pompeo	Concern on the war in tigray	<a href="https://twitter.com/secpompeo/status/1324121664108580875">https://twitter.com/secpompeo/status/1324121664108580875</a>
8 Nov, 2020	PM Abiy Ahmed	On the nature of war	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReZ3A-2Ozjs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReZ3A-2Ozjs</a>
	Getachew Reda	Continuation of conflict	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1325481837578350592">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1325481837578350592</a>
	Getachew Reda	Explanation on the conflict	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNjZ88tHueI&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNjZ88tHueI&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1</a>

			<a href="#">NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=108</a>
10 Nov, 2020	Debretsion G/michael	Press release	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aboA7XKbrbM&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=104">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aboA7XKbrbM&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=104</a>
12 Nov, 2020	Amnesty International	Massacre in Mai-Kadra	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/11/ethiopia-investigation-reveals-evidence-that-scores-of-civilians-were-killed-in-massacre-in-tigray-state/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/11/ethiopia-investigation-reveals-evidence-that-scores-of-civilians-were-killed-in-massacre-in-tigray-state/</a>
	GoE (PMO)	Call for halt of disinformation	<a href="https://twitter.com/pmethiopia/status/1326787725568172035">https://twitter.com/pmethiopia/status/1326787725568172035</a>
	CNN	Massacre in Mai-Kadra	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/12/africa/ethiopia-tigray-killings-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/12/africa/ethiopia-tigray-killings-intl/index.html</a>
13 Nov, 2020	Debretsion G/michael	Press release (TTV)	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLlvu_zOCY&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=100">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLlvu_zOCY&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=100</a>
	Bureau of African Affairs	Condemnation of Mikadra crimes	<a href="https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1327278066666770435">https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1327278066666770435</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1327302194350190594">https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1327302194350190594</a>
15 Nov, 2020	Bureau of African Affairs	TPLF Strike on Eritrea	<a href="https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1328015362999414786">https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1328015362999414786</a>
18 Nov, 2020	CNN	HR Concern	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/18/us/five-things-november-18-trnd/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/18/us/five-things-november-18-trnd/index.html</a>
19 Nov, 2020	Tibor Nagy	Situation in Tigray	<a href="https://2017-2021.state.gov/briefing-with-assistant-secretary-for-african-affairs-tibor-p-nagy-and-u-s-ambassador-to-ethiopia-michael-a-raynor-on-the-situation-in-ethiopia-tigray-region/index.html">https://2017-2021.state.gov/briefing-with-assistant-secretary-for-african-affairs-tibor-p-nagy-and-u-s-ambassador-to-ethiopia-michael-a-raynor-on-the-situation-in-ethiopia-tigray-region/index.html</a>

20 Nov, 2020	Gebre G/Tsadik	Press release	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfxvVlHnojA&amp;list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bg7Fu_yt4OyVy8ra&amp;index=15">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfxvVlHnojA&amp;list=PLK0JF-atAr1cFG9U6Bg7Fu_yt4OyVy8ra&amp;index=15</a>
23 Nov, 2020	Amnesty International	HR Concern	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/11/ethiopia-protect-civilians-in-mekelle-offensive-2/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/11/ethiopia-protect-civilians-in-mekelle-offensive-2/</a>
	Redwan Hussein & Gedion Timotios	Dev't on ops and legal aspects	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqdrNWJTw3A">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqdrNWJTw3A</a>
26 Nov, 2020	Fox News	Advance to Mekelle ordered	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopian-pm-says-army-troops-ordered-to-march-on-tigray-capital">https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopian-pm-says-army-troops-ordered-to-march-on-tigray-capital</a>
27 Nov, 2020	Fox News	Rejection of talks about Tigray in AU meetings	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopian-pm-tigray-conflict-african-union-meeting">https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopian-pm-tigray-conflict-african-union-meeting</a>
28 Nov, 2020	Fox News	Capture of Mekelle	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopia-declares-victory-tigray-capital">https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopia-declares-victory-tigray-capital</a>
	PM Abiy Ahmed	Capture of Mekelle	<a href="https://twitter.com/AbiyAhmedAli/status/1332740110039846914">https://twitter.com/AbiyAhmedAli/status/1332740110039846914</a>
	Bureau of African Affairs	Concerns on Mekelle	<a href="https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1332727329689399296">https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1332727329689399296</a>
30 Nov, 2020	Mike Pompeo	Talk with Abiy	<a href="https://twitter.com/SecPompeo/status/1333457228624519170">https://twitter.com/SecPompeo/status/1333457228624519170</a>
8 Dec, 2020	CNN	Violence against civilians	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/08/africa/ethiopia-tigray-refugees-sudan-border-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/08/africa/ethiopia-tigray-refugees-sudan-border-intl/index.html</a>
11 Dec, 2020	Amnesty International	HR Concern	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/12/ethiopia-international-humanitarian-">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/12/ethiopia-international-humanitarian-</a>

			<a href="#">aid-must-be-allowed-into-tigray-refugee-camps-amid-food-shortage-warning-2/</a>
16 Dec, 2020	CNN	HR concern	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/16/africa/ethiopia-tigray-un-children-humanitarian-aid-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/16/africa/ethiopia-tigray-un-children-humanitarian-aid-intl/index.html</a>
4 Feb, 2021	Antony Blinken	Discussion on war	<a href="https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-2/">https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-2/</a>
14 Feb, 2021	Fox News	HR issue	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopias-secret-war-in-tigray-region-ethnic-killings-rapes-near-starvation-reported">https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopias-secret-war-in-tigray-region-ethnic-killings-rapes-near-starvation-reported</a>
	GoE (PMO)	Humanitarian access	<a href="https://twitter.com/pmethiopia/status/1365282724337119240">https://twitter.com/pmethiopia/status/1365282724337119240</a>
26 Feb, 2021	Amnesty International	Axum Massacre	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/02/ethiopia-eritrean-troops-massacre-of-hundreds-of-axum-civilians-may-amount-to-crime-against-humanity/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/02/ethiopia-eritrean-troops-massacre-of-hundreds-of-axum-civilians-may-amount-to-crime-against-humanity/</a>
27 Feb, 2021	Antony Blinken	HR concern and condemnation of atrocities	<a href="https://www.state.gov/atrocities-in-ethiopias-tigray-region/">https://www.state.gov/atrocities-in-ethiopias-tigray-region/</a>
3 Mar, 2021	Ned Price	Press Briefing (concern and response)	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/departments-press-briefing-march-3-2021/#post-223581-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/departments-press-briefing-march-3-2021/#post-223581-ETHIOPIA</a>
4 Mar, 2021	Amnesty International	HR Issue	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/03/ethiopia-un-human-rights-chief-underscores-urgency-of-impartial-international-investigation-into-tigray-atrocities-2/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/03/ethiopia-un-human-rights-chief-underscores-urgency-of-impartial-international-investigation-into-tigray-atrocities-2/</a>
11 Mar, 2021	Fox News	US views on Tigray	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/world/top-us-diplomat-blinken-demands-change-in-">https://www.foxnews.com/world/top-us-diplomat-blinken-demands-change-in-</a>

			<a href="https://www.ethiopia.gov.et/en/ethiopia-tigray">ethiopia-tigray</a>
	Getachew Reda	TPLF statement on US positions	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1369881854803857412">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1369881854803857412</a>
	PM Abiy Ahmed	False Propaganda	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jc7u9Q7wAAI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jc7u9Q7wAAI</a>
26 Mar, 2021	Tibor Nagy	Perspective on the war	<a href="https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200596161146881">https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200596161146881</a> , <a href="https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200597054525440">https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200597054525440</a> & <a href="https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200597901783040">https://twitter.com/TiborPNagyJr/status/1375200597901783040</a>
26 Apr, 2021	Ned Price	Phone call Between Blinken and Abiy	<a href="https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinken-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-ahmed/">https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinken-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-ahmed/</a>
4 May, 2021	Amnesty International	HR Violations	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/05/ethiopia-tepid-international-response-to-tigray-conflict-fuels-horrific-violations-over-past-six-months-2/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/05/ethiopia-tepid-international-response-to-tigray-conflict-fuels-horrific-violations-over-past-six-months-2/</a>
6 May, 2021	GoE (HPR)	Designation of TPLF as Terrorist	<a href="https://twitter.com/FDREHOPR/status/1390254652923469826">https://twitter.com/FDREHOPR/status/1390254652923469826</a>
8 May, 2021	GoE (PMO)	Situation Report	<a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1390977205157695490">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1390977205157695490</a>
10 May 2021	Getachew Reda	Report of Gov. countering AI	<a href="https://twitter.com/KjetilTronvoll/status/1391758166388531200">https://twitter.com/KjetilTronvoll/status/1391758166388531200</a>
13 May, 2021	CNN	Sanctions	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/13/politics/mccaul-pushes-biden-administrations-sanctions-tigray/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/13/politics/mccaul-pushes-biden-administrations-sanctions-tigray/index.html</a>
14 May,	DoS (media Note)	Feltman's visits	<a href="https://www.state.gov/travel-by-u-s-special-">https://www.state.gov/travel-by-u-s-special-</a>

2021			<a href="https://www.state.gov/continuing-atrocities-and-denial-of-humanitarian-access-in-ethiopias-tigray-region/">envoy-for-the-horn-of-africa-jeffrey-feltman/</a>
15 May, 2021	Antony Blinken	HR Concern	<a href="https://www.state.gov/continuing-atrocities-and-denial-of-humanitarian-access-in-ethiopias-tigray-region/">https://www.state.gov/continuing-atrocities-and-denial-of-humanitarian-access-in-ethiopias-tigray-region/</a>
17 May, 2021	MFA	External Response	<a href="https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1394329859011354626">https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1394329859011354626</a>
23 May, 2021	Antony Blinken	US response	<a href="https://www.state.gov/united-states-actions-to-press-for-the-resolution-of-the-crisis-in-the-tigray-region-of-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/united-states-actions-to-press-for-the-resolution-of-the-crisis-in-the-tigray-region-of-ethiopia/</a>
25 May, 2021	CNN	HR concern	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2021/05/25/opinions/abiy-ahmed-ethiopia-human-rights-gulino-jamal/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2021/05/25/opinions/abiy-ahmed-ethiopia-human-rights-gulino-jamal/index.html</a>
	Fox News	HR concern	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/politics/ethiopias-war-the-administration-will-not-mention">https://www.foxnews.com/politics/ethiopias-war-the-administration-will-not-mention</a>
4 Jun, 2021	Jalina Porter	Call for End of Hostilities	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-june-4-2021/#post-249509-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-june-4-2021/#post-249509-ETHIOPIA</a>
27 Jun, 2021	Getachew Reda	TPLF making gains	<a href="https://twitter.com/redda_getachew/status/1409182560006049801">https://twitter.com/redda_getachew/status/1409182560006049801</a>
29 Jun, 2021	Ned Price	Ceasefire	<a href="https://www.state.gov/ceasefire-in-ethiopias-tigray-region/">https://www.state.gov/ceasefire-in-ethiopias-tigray-region/</a>
30 Jun, 2021	PM Abiy Ahmed	Situation Report	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xvv-YSRy3Y">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xvv-YSRy3Y</a>
6 Jul, 2021	DoS (Read out)	Blinken's call	<a href="https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-3/">https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-abiy-3/</a>
7 Jul, 2021	PM Abiy Ahmed	Briefing on Tigray	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rveRbo2n2o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rveRbo2n2o</a>

			<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9KfpWnrP3A">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9KfpWnrP3A</a>
12 Jul, 2021	Ned Price	HR concern and ending of hostilities	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-july-12-2021/#post-258592-ETHIOPIATIGRAY">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-july-12-2021/#post-258592-ETHIOPIATIGRAY</a>
16 Jul, 2021	Amnesty International	Arbitrary detention	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/07/ethiopia-end-arbitrary-detentions-of-tigrayans-activists-and-journalists-in-addis-ababa-and-reveal-whereabouts-of-unaccounted-detainees-2/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/07/ethiopia-end-arbitrary-detentions-of-tigrayans-activists-and-journalists-in-addis-ababa-and-reveal-whereabouts-of-unaccounted-detainees-2/</a>
3 Aug, 2021	Ned Price	Press Briefing	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-august-3-2021/#post-265365-ETHIOPIA1">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-august-3-2021/#post-265365-ETHIOPIA1</a> <a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-august-3-2021/#post-265365-ETHIOPIA2">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-august-3-2021/#post-265365-ETHIOPIA2</a>
5 Aug, 2021	Billene Seyoum	Press Briefing	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG7obceY2DM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG7obceY2DM</a>
	Ned Price	On supporting TPLF	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-august-5-2021/#post-268298-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-august-5-2021/#post-268298-ETHIOPIA</a>
7 Aug, 2021	Debretsion G/michael	Positions on the War	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOzPSyiKswM&amp;t=481s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOzPSyiKswM&amp;t=481s</a>
10 Aug, 2021	Ned Price	On PM Abiy Ahmed Ahmed for calling "national war" efforts	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-august-10-2021/#post-269346-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-august-10-2021/#post-269346-ETHIOPIA</a>
	Amnesty International	HR Violations	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/08/ethiopia-troops-and-militia-rape-abduct-women-and-girls-in-tigray-conflict-">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/08/ethiopia-troops-and-militia-rape-abduct-women-and-girls-in-tigray-conflict-</a>

			<a href="#">new-report/</a>
12 Aug, 2021	Billene Seyoum	Press Briefing	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fitMIVNPAF8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fitMIVNPAF8</a>
24 Aug, 2021	Getachew Reda	Position of TPLF	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1430157643004489734">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1430157643004489734</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1430157652311556104">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1430157652311556104</a>
25 Aug, 2021	Getachew Reda	Update on the conflict	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SjwNSEUZN8&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=90">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SjwNSEUZN8&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=90</a>
9 Sep, 2021	Billene Seyoum	Press Briefing	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUMaRLXZuhc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUMaRLXZuhc</a>
10 Sep, 2021	Ned Price	Humanitarian crisis in Amhara region	<a href="https://www.state.gov/ongoing-conflict-and-human-rights-abuses-in-northern-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/ongoing-conflict-and-human-rights-abuses-in-northern-ethiopia/</a>
	CNN	Humera Massacre	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2021/09/05/africa/ethiopia-tigray-humera-sudan-bodies-cmd-intl/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2021/09/05/africa/ethiopia-tigray-humera-sudan-bodies-cmd-intl/index.html</a>
13 Sep, 2021	Getachew Reda	Explanation of the war	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UOOyYpOhxw&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdJxVbnYZjONFRFRF17G_dMy&amp;index=109">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UOOyYpOhxw&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdJxVbnYZjONFRFRF17G_dMy&amp;index=109</a>
17 Sep, 2021	Antony Blinken	Biden's executive order	<a href="https://www.state.gov/issuance-of-new-executive-order-establishing-sanctions-related-to-the-crisis-in-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/issuance-of-new-executive-order-establishing-sanctions-related-to-the-crisis-in-ethiopia/</a>
	Abiy Ahmed	Open letter to Biden	<a href="https://twitter.com/abiyahmedali/status/1438869469464567808?lang=en">https://twitter.com/abiyahmedali/status/1438869469464567808?lang=en</a>
18 Sep, 2021	Getachew Reda	Statement on Biden's executive order	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1439295084206362625">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1439295084206362625</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/143">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/143</a>

			<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1439295437358444544">9295386083074060</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1439295437358444544">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1439295437358444544</a>
20 Sep, 2021	DoS (Special Briefing)	Press Briefing on Biden's action	<a href="https://www.state.gov/telephonic-press-briefing-on-the-biden-%e2%81%a0harris-administration-actions-in-response-to-the-ongoing-crisis-in-northern-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/telephonic-press-briefing-on-the-biden-%e2%81%a0harris-administration-actions-in-response-to-the-ongoing-crisis-in-northern-ethiopia/</a>
29 Sep, 2021	CNN	Opinion of the CNN on the conflict	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/29/opinions/ti-gray-ethiopia-call-to-action-sesay-ujiri-agbor-tabi-akinnagbe/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/29/opinions/ti-gray-ethiopia-call-to-action-sesay-ujiri-agbor-tabi-akinnagbe/index.html</a>
30 Sep, 2021	GoE (MFA)	Expulsion of UN officials	<a href="https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1443596419068305408?lang=en">https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1443596419068305408?lang=en</a>
	Antony Blinken	Expulsion of UN officials	<a href="https://www.state.gov/condemning-ethiopias-plans-to-expel-un-officials/">https://www.state.gov/condemning-ethiopias-plans-to-expel-un-officials/</a>
	Getachew Reda	Expulsion of UN officials	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1443586361252974596">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1443586361252974596</a>
1 Oct, 2021	Getachew Reda	Response on PNG decision of A.A	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1443945493969649667">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1443945493969649667</a>
2 Oct, 2021	CNN	Expulsion of UN officials	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/30/africa/ethiopia-expels-un-officials-tigray-hunger-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/30/africa/ethiopia-expels-un-officials-tigray-hunger-intl/index.html</a>
	CNN	UN response on PNG of its officials	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2021/10/02/africa/ethiopia-UNSC-tigray-hunger-intl/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2021/10/02/africa/ethiopia-UNSC-tigray-hunger-intl/index.html</a>
4 Oct, 2021	Ned Price	Response on PNG decision of A.A	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-04-2021-2/#post-281453-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-04-2021-2/#post-281453-ETHIOPIA</a>
11 Oct, 2021	Getachew Reda	Response on 'Final offensive' from A.A	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1447496204275916803">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1447496204275916803</a>

12 Oct, 2021	GoE (MFA)	Deliberate destruction of infrastructure by the TPLF	<a href="https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1447840041292767232">https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1447840041292767232</a>
	DoS (Read out)	High level meeting on Ethiopia	<a href="https://www.state.gov/high-level-meetings-on-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/high-level-meetings-on-ethiopia/</a>
13 Oct, 2021	Antony Blinken	ENDF ground offensive and Positions	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-12-2021-2/#post-283304-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-12-2021-2/#post-283304-ETHIOPIA</a> <a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-12-2021-2/#post-283304-ETHIOPIA2">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-12-2021-2/#post-283304-ETHIOPIA2</a>
22 Oct, 2021	Ned Price	Concern of escalating violence and possible measures to be taken	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-22-2021/#post-286094-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-22-2021/#post-286094-ETHIOPIA</a> <a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-22-2021/#post-286094-ETHIOPIA2">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-october-22-2021/#post-286094-ETHIOPIA2</a>
23 Oct, 2021	Fox News	US military intervention and Diaspora response	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/politics/rep-sherman-ethiopian-conflict-naval-forces-us-diaspora-frustrated">https://www.foxnews.com/politics/rep-sherman-ethiopian-conflict-naval-forces-us-diaspora-frustrated</a>
30 Oct, 2021	GoE (GCS)	Blocking TPLF attacks and call for enlistment to combat and protect localities	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1454485384214237197">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1454485384214237197</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1454499395735597061">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1454499395735597061</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1454520896379625477">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1454520896379625477</a>
	Ned Price	Concern for expansion of combat	<a href="https://www.state.gov/expansion-of-combat-operation-in-northern-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/expansion-of-combat-operation-in-northern-ethiopia/</a>
31 Oct, 2021	Getachew Reda	Situation in kombolcha and TPLF intention in the 'war'	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1454833369326493698">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1454833369326493698</a>

			<a href="https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1454833385537421314">https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1454833385537421314</a>
1 Nov, 2021	PM Abiy Ahmed	Recent developments on TPLF's advance	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rxmn4iA0KH0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rxmn4iA0KH0</a>
	GoE (GCS)	Execution by the TPLF	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1455096223141175296">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1455096223141175296</a>
	Tsadkan G/tensae	Discussion on the war	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0znM0zm7nj8&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=72">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0znM0zm7nj8&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=72</a>
	Jeffrey Feltman	Perspectives on US-Ethiopia r/ship	<a href="https://www.state.gov/a-perspective-on-the-ethiopian-u-s-relationship-after-a-year-of-conflict/">https://www.state.gov/a-perspective-on-the-ethiopian-u-s-relationship-after-a-year-of-conflict/</a>
2 Nov, 2021	Getachew Rreda	Condemning the joint investigation	<a href="https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1455557920821755918">https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1455557920821755918</a>
			<a href="https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1455557940656619526">https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1455557940656619526</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1455557947887599622">https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1455557947887599622</a>
3 Nov, 2021	GoE (PMO)	EHRC-OHCHR investigation report	<a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1455814758372941824">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1455814758372941824</a>
	Getachew Reda	Joining force with OLA	<a href="https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1455986406166343683">https://twitter.com/rede_getachew/status/1455986406166343683</a>
	Ned Price	Concern over expansion of the conflict and US Citizens in Ethiopia	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-03-2021/#post-288800-Ethiopia">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-03-2021/#post-288800-Ethiopia</a> <a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-03-2021/#post-288800-Ethiopia2">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-03-2021/#post-288800-Ethiopia2</a>

	CNN	TPLF closing in A.A	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/03/africa/ethiopia-tigray-un-ehrc-investigation-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/03/africa/ethiopia-tigray-un-ehrc-investigation-intl/index.html</a>
4 Nov, 2021	Antony Blinken	Ending conflict	<a href="https://www.state.gov/the-urgent-need-to-end-the-conflict-in-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/the-urgent-need-to-end-the-conflict-in-ethiopia/</a>
	US Congress	S.3199 - Ethiopia Peace and Stabilisation Act of 2022	<a href="https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3199">https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3199</a>
	CNN	Rebels' at the edge of A.A	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/africa/live-news/ethiopia-conflict-updates-11-4-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/africa/live-news/ethiopia-conflict-updates-11-4-intl/index.html</a>
5 Nov, 2021	GoE (GCS)	Nature of the conflict	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1456701239333380108">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1456701239333380108</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1456599492191477761">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1456599492191477761</a>
	Amnesty International	Hate speech	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/ethiopia-sweeping-emergency-powers-and-alarming-rise-in-online-hate-speech-as-tigray-conflict-escalates/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/ethiopia-sweeping-emergency-powers-and-alarming-rise-in-online-hate-speech-as-tigray-conflict-escalates/</a>
	CNN	Anti-government Coalition	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/africa/live-news/ethiopia-conflict-updates-11-5-intl/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/africa/live-news/ethiopia-conflict-updates-11-5-intl/index.html</a>
	CNN	Explanation on the conflict	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2021/06/30/africa/ethiopia-tigray-conflict-explained-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2021/06/30/africa/ethiopia-tigray-conflict-explained-intl/index.html</a>
	Jalina Porter	End conflict without preconditions	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-5-2021/#post-289585-ETHIOPIA2">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-5-2021/#post-289585-ETHIOPIA2</a>
	DoS (Media Note)	Joint statement on the Joint	<a href="https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-">https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-</a>
6 Nov,			

2021		investigation	<a href="#">the-release-of-the-ohchr-ehrc-joint-investigation/</a>
8 Nov, 2021	DoS (media Note)	Feltman's visits	<a href="https://www.state.gov/visit-of-special-envoy-for-the-horn-of-africa-feltman-to-ethiopia-and-kenya/">https://www.state.gov/visit-of-special-envoy-for-the-horn-of-africa-feltman-to-ethiopia-and-kenya/</a>
	Ned Price	Urging citizens to leave	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-8-2021/#post-290324-Ethiopia">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-8-2021/#post-290324-Ethiopia</a>
9 Nov, 2021	Ned Price	Biden Admin on Brokering a deal	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-9-2021/#post-290610-ETHIOPIA2">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-9-2021/#post-290610-ETHIOPIA2</a>
	Amnesty International	HR violations	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/ethiopia-survivors-of-tplf-attack-in-amhara-describe-gang-rape-looting-and-physical-assaults/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/ethiopia-survivors-of-tplf-attack-in-amhara-describe-gang-rape-looting-and-physical-assaults/</a>
10 Nov, 2021	Getachew Reda	Response on AI's Report	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1458480368307380232">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1458480368307380232</a>
	DoS (Read out)	Biden's Call with Deputy PM	<a href="https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-deputy-prime-minister-mekonnen/">https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-ethiopian-deputy-prime-minister-mekonnen/</a>
	CNN	Interview with Billene Seyoum	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2021/11/09/billene-seyoum-ethiopia-abiy-ctw-intl.cnn">https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2021/11/09/billene-seyoum-ethiopia-abiy-ctw-intl.cnn</a>
11 Nov, 2021	GoE (GCS)	On AI's report	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1458760831269748737">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1458760831269748737</a>
12 Nov, 2021	Getachew Reda	Coalition with other parties	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7vI4prVia4&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdJxVbnYZjONFRFRF17G_dMy&amp;index=73">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7vI4prVia4&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdJxVbnYZjONFRFRF17G_dMy&amp;index=73</a>
	Antony Blinken	Imposing sanctions	<a href="https://www.state.gov/imposing-sanctions-">https://www.state.gov/imposing-sanctions-</a>

			<a href="#">in-connection-with-the-conflict-in-ethiopia/</a>
	CNN	Sanctions on Ethiopia	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/12/politics/biden-admin-ethiopia-eritrea-sanctions/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/12/politics/biden-admin-ethiopia-eritrea-sanctions/index.html</a>
	BBC	Interview with Gen. Zana on intervention	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4Kc_xA8nVk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4Kc_xA8nVk</a>
	Amnesty International	Detentions based on 'ethnicity'	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/11/ethiopia-tigrayans-targeted-in-fresh-wave-of-ethnically-motivated-detentions-in-addis-ababa/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/11/ethiopia-tigrayans-targeted-in-fresh-wave-of-ethnically-motivated-detentions-in-addis-ababa/</a>
14 Nov, 2021	Debretsion G/michael	Press Briefing	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYdw9Bh6vZg&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=51">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYdw9Bh6vZg&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=51</a>
15 Nov, 2021	Ned Price	On humanitarian access and GoE actions	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-15-2021/#post-291776-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-november-15-2021/#post-291776-ETHIOPIA</a>
18 Nov 2021	Fox News	US fear over A.A encroachment	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/world/us-warns-pilots-africa-weapon-fire-ethiopias-war">https://www.foxnews.com/world/us-warns-pilots-africa-weapon-fire-ethiopias-war</a>
	DoS (media Note)	Feltman's visits	<a href="https://www.state.gov/u-s-special-envoy-for-the-horn-of-africa-feltman-visits-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/u-s-special-envoy-for-the-horn-of-africa-feltman-visits-ethiopia/</a>
19 Nov, 2021	Antony Blinken	Interview with CNN	<a href="https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-with-stephanie-busari-of-cnn-international/">https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-with-stephanie-busari-of-cnn-international/</a>
22 Nov, 2021	GoE (GCS)	Efforts by the Diaspora population	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1462779110485331970">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1462779110485331970</a>
	DoS (Special Briefing)	On the situation in Ethiopia and departure of citizens	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefing-with-senior-state-department-officials-on-the-situation-in-ethiopia-and-ongoing-efforts-to-">https://www.state.gov/briefing-with-senior-state-department-officials-on-the-situation-in-ethiopia-and-ongoing-efforts-to-</a>

			<a href="#">encourage-the-departure-of-u-s-citizens/</a>
23 Nov, 2021	Jeffrey Feltman	On the situation in Ethiopia	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefing-with-u-s-special-envoy-for-the-horn-of-africa-ambassador-jeffrey-feltman-on-the-ongoing-situation-in-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/briefing-with-u-s-special-envoy-for-the-horn-of-africa-ambassador-jeffrey-feltman-on-the-ongoing-situation-in-ethiopia/</a>
	GoE (GCS)	PM on the frontlines	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1463486738479915019">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1463486738479915019</a>
24 Nov, 2021	Fox News	PM on the frontlines	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopia-prime-minister-front-lines">https://www.foxnews.com/world/ethiopia-prime-minister-front-lines</a>
30 Nov, 2021	Billene Seyoum	Press Briefing	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hzqN8nenP0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hzqN8nenP0</a>
2 Dec, 2021	GoE (GCS)	Deception of international media	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1466401063968329730">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1466401063968329730</a>
5 Dec, 2021	Getachew Reda	Attacks on Mekelle	<a href="https://twitter.com/artssiyad/status/1467513678308257797">https://twitter.com/artssiyad/status/1467513678308257797</a>
6 Dec, 2021	GoE (GCS)	TPLF Atrocities and capture of major cities	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1467786038852608000">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1467786038852608000</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1467886457998221319">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1467886457998221319</a>
	Getachew Reda	Leaving major cities	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1467940316728733703">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1467940316728733703</a>
	DoS (Media Note)	Detentions	<a href="https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-detentions-in-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-detentions-in-ethiopia/</a>
	Fox News	Interview with Billene Seyoum	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jk_lcbRT1Ic">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jk_lcbRT1Ic</a>
	Billene Seyoum	Press Briefing	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHy2Y1CtSBM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHy2Y1CtSBM</a>
10 Dec,	DoS (Media Note)	Feltman's visits	<a href="https://www.state.gov/u-s-special-envoy-for-">https://www.state.gov/u-s-special-envoy-for-</a>

2021			<a href="#">the-horn-of-africa-feltman-visits-uae-and-turkey/</a>
10 Dec, 2021	Getachew Reda	Alleged looting of warehouses	<a href="https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1469375581586341889">https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1469375581586341889</a>
12 Dec, 2021	Ned Price	HR Abuse in Amhara and Afar	<a href="https://www.state.gov/reports-of-human-rights-abuses-atrocities-and-destruction-in-amhara-and-afar-regions/">https://www.state.gov/reports-of-human-rights-abuses-atrocities-and-destruction-in-amhara-and-afar-regions/</a>
15 Dec, 2021	GoE (GCS)	Destruction by TPLF and NoMore movement	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1471018779412996096">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1471018779412996096</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1471108206487384070">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1471108206487384070</a>
16 Dec, 2021	DoS (Report)	Report on terrorism	<a href="https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2020/ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2020/ethiopia/</a>
17 Dec, 2021	Ned Price	Mass detention, killings and forced expulsion	<a href="https://www.state.gov/reports-of-mass-detentions-killings-and-forced-expulsions-in-western-tigray/">https://www.state.gov/reports-of-mass-detentions-killings-and-forced-expulsions-in-western-tigray/</a>
19 Dec, 2021	Fox News	Interview with Fisseha Asgedom	<a href="https://video.foxnews.com/v/6287564187001/#sp=show-clips">https://video.foxnews.com/v/6287564187001/#sp=show-clips</a>
20 Dec, 2021	Getachew Reda	Completion of withdrawal from Amhara and Afar	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1472948817397956616">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1472948817397956616</a>
	Ned Price	Completion of withdrawal from Amhara and Afar	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-december-20-2021/#post-302192-Ethiopia">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-december-20-2021/#post-302192-Ethiopia</a>
23 Dec, 2021	GoE (GCS)	The 'Campaign' for multinational unity' has seen success	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1473936724728467456">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1473936724728467456</a>
	Fox News	Food assistance amid crisis	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/world/un-ethiopians-food-assistance-2022">https://www.foxnews.com/world/un-ethiopians-food-assistance-2022</a>

24 Dec, 2021	PM Abiy Ahmed	Halt of Advance into Tigray	<a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1474409761789644802">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1474409761789644802</a>
	GoE (GCS)	Halt of Advance into Tigray	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1474361954441605122">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1474361954441605122</a>
25 Dec, 2021	Getachew Reda	halt of Advance into Tigray	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1474827156173828112">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1474827156173828112</a>
28 Dec, 2021	Ned Price	Suspension from AGOA amid cessation of advances	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-december-28-2021/#post-303408-ethiopia">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-december-28-2021/#post-303408-ethiopia</a>
4 Jan, 2022	Ned Price	Reiterating the need for cessation of hostilities	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-january-22-2022/#post-304268-ethiopia2">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-january-22-2022/#post-304268-ethiopia2</a>
6 Jan, 2022	Ned Price	Feltman meeting with PM Abiy Ahmed	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-january-6-2022/#post-304742-Ethiopia">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-january-6-2022/#post-304742-Ethiopia</a>
7 Jan, 2022	GoE (GCS)	Release of prisoners on amnesty	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1479532599001460736">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1479532599001460736</a>
9 Jan, 2022	Getachew Reda	Airstrike on IPDs	<a href="https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1480256970330456064">https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1480256970330456064</a>
10 Jan, 2022	GoE (PMO)	PM Abiy Ahmed call with Biden	<a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1480593381449424898">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1480593381449424898</a>
11 Jan, 2022	Ned Price	Airstrike allegation	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-january-11-2022/#post-305823-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-january-11-2022/#post-305823-ETHIOPIA</a>
14 Jan, 2022	GoE (MFA)	TPLF use of citizens	<a href="https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1481899422581760001">https://twitter.com/mfaethiopia/status/1481899422581760001</a>
	Getachew Reda	Response to MFA allegations	<a href="https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1482013574025330693">https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1482013574025330693</a>

21 Jan, 2022	General. Abebaw Tadesse	Stance of the ENDF	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMSLZyjG0qY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMSLZyjG0qY</a>
25 Jan, 2022	Getachew Reda	New developments	<a href="https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1486022051190218758">https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1486022051190218758</a>
4 Feb, 2022	US Congress	H.R.6600 — 117th Congress	<a href="https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/6600">https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/6600</a>
15 Feb, 2022	Ned Price	Lift of State of Emergency	<a href="https://www.state.gov/on-the-lifting-of-the-state-of-emergency-in-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/on-the-lifting-of-the-state-of-emergency-in-ethiopia/</a>
22 Feb, 2022	PM Abiy Ahmed	Negotiations and freed prisoners	<a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496074533593354249">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496074533593354249</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496074537154359298">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496074537154359298</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496074549691138050">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496074549691138050</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496069151235969029">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496069151235969029</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496069162883551236">https://twitter.com/PMEthiopia/status/1496069162883551236</a>
	Ned Price	Atrocities in Amhara	<a href="https://www.state.gov/reports-of-atrocities-in-the-amhara-region/">https://www.state.gov/reports-of-atrocities-in-the-amhara-region/</a>
28 Feb, 2022	Getachew Reda	Possibility for peace and its obstacles	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mhKdfRwbJ4&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=1&amp;t=323s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mhKdfRwbJ4&amp;list=PLDpMt3PIsYdKub5GjgPpC1NZLwV3fkzit&amp;index=1&amp;t=323s</a>
18 Mar, 2022	Jalina Porter	Comparison of US action on the case of Ethiopia and Ukraine	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-march-18-2022/#post-325957-Ethiopia">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-march-18-2022/#post-325957-Ethiopia</a>
24 Mar, 2022	GoE (GCS)	Humanitarian Truce	<a href="https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1507001573586595848">https://twitter.com/FdreService/status/1507001573586595848</a>

	Getachew Reda	Cessation of Hostilities	<a href="https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1507108987107430407">https://twitter.com/TigrayEAO/status/1507108987107430407</a>
	Antony Blinken	Humanitarian Truce	<a href="https://www.state.gov/declaration-of-a-humanitarian-truce-by-the-government-of-ethiopia/">https://www.state.gov/declaration-of-a-humanitarian-truce-by-the-government-of-ethiopia/</a>
25 Mar, 2022	Jalina Porter	Humanitarian Truce and atrocities	<a href="https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-march-25-2022/#post-328238-ETHIOPIA">https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-march-25-2022/#post-328238-ETHIOPIA</a>
	Amnesty International	Humanitarian Truce	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/03/ethiopia-federal-government-humanitarian-truce-in-tigray-is-a-positive-step-forward-and-must-lead-to-humanitarian-access/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/03/ethiopia-federal-government-humanitarian-truce-in-tigray-is-a-positive-step-forward-and-must-lead-to-humanitarian-access/</a>
	CNN	Humanitarian Ceasefire	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/25/africa/ethiopia-tigray-region-humanitarian-ceasefire-intl/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/25/africa/ethiopia-tigray-region-humanitarian-ceasefire-intl/index.html</a>
28 Mar, 2022	Getachew Reda	Update on 'humanitarian truce'	<a href="https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1508536526812192781">https://twitter.com/reda_getachew/status/1508536526812192781</a>

## **Declaration**

The undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree at any other University, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

**Nathan Tibebu**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This thesis is submitted for examination with my approval as an advisor of the candidate

**Fana Gebresenbet (PhD)**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_