



To: Pramila Patten

Office of the Under Secretary General Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict ( USG SRSG/SVC)

**Re: Service Provision for Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Tigray**

Your Excellency,

We the undersigned are writing to you at this time in accordance with the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (S/RES/1325) on Women, Security, and Peace, adopted in 2000 that calls on “all parties to the conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protections of women and girls, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Convention of 1949 and the additional protocols” to request for a response to the ongoing siege imposed by the federal government on the Tigray region of Ethiopia.

This siege, characterized by a total blockade of essential services and life-saving humanitarian supplies, has been predictably devastating to the civilian population of Tigray and even more particularly so to the survivors of brutal weaponized rape ([Amnesty International, 2021](#)) who have been denied urgent post-rape care as a result ([Human Rights Watch, 2021](#)). Even more alarming, domestic ability to provide support for survivors is curtailed completely as a result of the [deliberate devastation](#) of the Tigrayan health care system by Ethiopian and allied forces

during [active conflict](#) and because even the most basic healthcare supplies are no longer available in Tigray ([A. Mark Clarfield et al, 2022](#)).

In spite of extensive documentation of both the extent to which rape has been deployed as a weapon of war in Tigray and the double victimization of survivors through deliberate denial of critical medical and mental health support, there is yet to be a concerted effort by the international community to adopt appropriate steps as per UNSC Resolution 1820 (SCR 1820). The United Nations organizations that have the most significant networks on the ground have also, thus far, failed to establish mechanisms to appropriately monitor, document, and address conflict-related sexual violence in Tigray leaving survivors of brutal rape with no services.

Tens of thousands of survivors of well-documented weaponized rape and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) remain unseen, unheard, and the extreme violence done to them is erased, as if it does not matter. This cannot be allowed.

It is with this in mind that we are asking you to join our call for:

- The UNSC to put into effect Resolutions 1325 and 1820 to ensure unfettered humanitarian access and protection for the women and girls of Tigray from egregious human rights violations and sexual violence still ongoing in the Tigrayan territories that remain occupied by Amhara and Eritrean Forces
- Concerted commitment by the international community to end the devastating siege and humanitarian blockade imposed by the Ethiopian government and ensure the restoration of services including health care and psychosocial support for survivors of CRSV
- Urgent and unfettered humanitarian access to all parts of Tigray to reach the civilian population of Tigray, 83% of whom are currently facing acute food insecurity with more than 1 million people in active famine
- Prioritization of Tigray in the enactment of the recommendations listed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations ([United Nations, 2022](#)) specifically in regard to ensuring adequate funding for comprehensive and quality multisectoral assistance and protection for survivors of CRSV and children.
- Urge respect for International Humanitarian Law by all parties to the conflict and support efforts toward ceasefire

Your Excellency,

We plead with you today to recognize, listen to, and help the women and girls of Tigray who have thus far been rendered invisible and inaccessible and who have been denied all basic services. It is imperative for the international community to come together to promote human dignity, human rights, and best practices to ensure sustainable and enduring peace by acknowledging and addressing the victims of conflict.

We aver our commitment to support all efforts to support the goals outlined herein and would appreciate the opportunity to engage directly to discuss these issues further.

## **Signatories**

African Women's Rights Advocates

Black Women Radicals

Choose Yourself

Global Justice Center

Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

Global Society of Tigrayan Scholars- Gender Task Team

Mukwege Foundation

Nadia's Initiative

Raising Voices

Rescue Tigray Rape Victims

Tigray's Women Association of UK

Voice Amplified

Women of Tigray

Women's International Peace Center

Women's Rights Watch

Yalla Feminists