



[The Tigray Conflict Intensifies Over a Year After Fighting Initially Broke Out](#)

The Tigray conflict just recently passed its one-year anniversary, with no signs of de-escalation but rather growing intensity amid countless findings of major human rights abuses and war crimes committed by both the Ethiopian government and rebel forces. Advocacy groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have reported violations such as extrajudicial killings, the weaponization of aid, and violence against civilians. In the preceding days, at least 16 United Nations staff members and dozens of individuals hired to bring much-needed aid into the Tigrayan region were detained by Ethiopian forces. The unlawful arrest of United Nations employees and aid workers comes as Tigrayan forces continue their advance towards the Ethiopian capital city of Addis Ababa. The international community has called on both sides to reach a ceasefire and find a diplomatic solution, with the level of urgency for this particularly heightened due to fear that the conflict may spill over into the capital city.

Accounts of various human rights violations committed by both sides in the conflict have continually shown a growing intensity and worried observers about the possibility of reaching a peaceful diplomatic settlement. Aid groups and humanitarian workers on the ground attempting to help alleviate the crisis brought about by the ongoing conflict have experienced significant roadblocks, with reports of both sides harassing aid envoys, detaining workers, and creating bureaucratic blockades hindering their ability to operate and provide critically-needed aid. Crimes against humanity including sexual violence, extrajudicial killings, and mass executions involving civilians have been widely described, further escalating tensions and making the chances for a peaceful diplomatic solution increasingly more difficult.

Currently, Tigrayan forces have moved swiftly across Ethiopia, closing in on the capital city of Addis Ababa. Major world actors like the United Nations and the United States are scrambling to try and encourage a lasting ceasefire before rebel forces reach the capital in a predicted few-days-to-weeks, at which point there would be a serious risk of large-scale escalation. The United States' Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa, Jeffrey Feltman, has entered Ethiopia in an attempt to help negotiate a ceasefire. Of notable concern is the fact that the conflict has plunged more than 7 million Tigrayans and Ethiopians into a humanitarian crisis, with many suffering from famine-like conditions. For this reason, advocates and rights groups have pleaded with both sides to cease their hostilities and allow for aid from the international community to come into Ethiopia and be received without interruption.

Over a year into the Tigrayan conflict, the situation has only become more dire. Ethiopia as a whole, and the Tigray region specifically, have witnessed the materializing of a major humanitarian crisis. This has had not only a nationwide impact, but also a negative effect on the entire region, as neighboring countries are left to deal with the substantial refugee crisis brought about by the conflict. As aid workers are detained in violation of international law and Tigrayan forces continue their advancement on the Ethiopian capital, the desperate need for a cessation of hostilities only grows in importance.