

Surf City XIX

Huntington Beach High School

African Union

Topic A: *Technological Redevelopment for War-Torn African Nations*

Topic B: *Tigray War*



Welcome Letter

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of the Huntington Beach High School Model United Nations Program, we would like to welcome you to our Surf City XIX advanced conference!

Our annual Surf City conference upholds the principles and intended purpose of the United Nations. Delegates can expect to partake in a professional, well-run debate that simulates the very issues that those at the United Nations discuss every day. Both novel and traditional ideas will be shared, challenged, and improved.

It is our hope that all delegates will receive the opportunity to enhance their research, public speaking, and communication skills as they explore the intricacies of global concerns through various perspectives, some of which may be very different from their own. We hope their experiences here give them new insight and values that they can apply outside of the realm of Model UN for the betterment of the world community.

Please do not hesitate to approach our Secretariat or Staff Members with any questions or concerns that you may have throughout the day. We wish the best to all our participants and hope that they may share a fulfilling experience with us!

Enjoy the conference!

Sincerely,



Zach Bernstein
Secretary General



Vivian Bui
Secretary General



Lauren Le
Secretary General



Alison Miu-Martinez
Secretary General

Meet The Dais

Sofia Bammer

Hi everyone!! My name is Sofia Bammer and I have been a part of the MUN program here at HBHS for four years now, and I have loved every second of it. Outside of MUN I am a part of Company in the dance department of Academy of the Performing Arts as well as the vice president of APA Student Council. I also am a member of National Honors Society, volunteer at my church, and love spending time with both my family and friends. In MUN, I love focusing on topics and solutions regarding developing nations, climate change, and equality most, which is why AU is one of my favorites committees to be in. I cannot wait to finally chair an in-person conference, as it will be my first one, and am looking forward to seeing all of you guys there!

Taylor Jackson

Welcome to Surf City delegates! My name is Taylor Jackson and I'm a senior here at Huntington Beach High School. I have been involved in MUN since my freshman year at HBHS and am extremely excited to chair for the second time. Outside of MUN I love going to the beach, playing softball, and hanging out with friends. I have been playing softball for 10 years and am currently playing at HBHS. On campus I'm involved in Link Crew, on the board for the National Honor Society, and the President of the California Scholarship Federation. I can't wait to see you all at Surf City, and wish you the best in committee!

Emily Fennell

Hi delegates! My name is Emily Fennell and I am a Senior at Huntington Beach High School. I have been in Model United Nations all four years of high school and it is my favorite class. I love learning about new topics and finding valuable ways I can help others. Outside of MUN, and on top of my AP classes I am a member of several on-campus clubs and have my own jewelry business where I donate profits to various charities I care deeply about. I wish you the best in committee and cannot wait to see you there!

All Papers are due on **JANUARY 30, 2022** by 11:59 pm to
surfcitymun.au@gmail.com

Topic A: Technological Redevelopment for War-Torn African Nations

Background

Conflict, violence, and war are the largest problems in Africa at this point in time and have been for the past several years. In 2019 alone, 15 Sub-Saharan African countries have been in various active armed conflicts.¹ Several conflicts have been civil disagreements between citizens, armed rebel groups, and governments themselves can be attributed to ethnic conflicts. The goal of many rebel groups is to achieve Islamic states—and these groups are intolerant to native religions and practices of the regions. The hotspots for conflict include DR Congo, Somalia, Nigeria, Central African Republic, South Sudan, and Libya.² The unstabilized government structures and religious intolerance of the groups has led to the continuation of these wars which has led to subverted governmental ability to dismantle conflict, competition for natural resources, marginalization, and lack of humanitarian needs, such as water scarcity. In the Sahel and Lake Chad region of Africa, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria are faced with disposition due to terrorist attacks from armed rebel groups such as Boko Haram.

Through the constant and recurring state of war and conflict, many communities have been set back due to the destruction of homes, hospitals, and entire cities and towns. There is currently an unspoken rule of “winner takes all” for rebel groups when they conquer the area. They then take over the whole area in which they invaded and implement violent measures and restrictions on the current government as well as citizens. This has diminished the privacy and accuracy of elections in African nations. Such as not allowing people to vote as well as the rebel groups threatening those to vote for them in various elections. These conflicts have also expanded illicit arms trade in African nations due to the governments inability to regulate rebel and terrorists groups, as well as the nations where governments participate in the spread of illegal distribution of guns, this trend has worsened. The crimes committed with illegal arms range from small petty crimes to large scale terrorist attacks. Groups have blocked trading ports, exploited workers, and intercepted trade, instilling violence at all levels.³ Additionally, the displacement of many Africans is a large problem as 2021 has had the most dramatic influx of African displacement reaching 32 million, as the year prior reached 29 million. The rapidly growing rates of refugees in the continent began in 2011 and has continued presently due to the vast amounts of conflict and lack of mobilization.⁴ Ten of all African countries hold 88%, or 28 million of all forcibly displaced persons (IDPs) on the continent. For example, in Burkina Faso 750,000 people were displaced due to war in 2019, and that number has expanded to 1.2 million today.⁵ The Democratic Republic of Congo had 6 million IDPs, which accounts for 1/3 more than any other African nation. Out of South Sudan’s entire population of 11 million, 4 million have been displaced, creating the largest margin of displaced persons. Most of these IDPs and refugees seek asylum in Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda.

Africa is home to the youngest population in the world, and over the next few decades it is promised that it will most likely become a major consumption market. However, in the past couple years, growth in Africa has slowed down, and the World Bank predicts that if this continues, then the continent could have 90% of the world’s impoverished individuals by 2030. This corresponds to technological development because it shows how much the spread and use of technology can impact a nation. When nations have high rates of poverty, it is less likely for

them to gain new and advanced technology which has the power to inevitably save lives. For example, Ethiopia has had many positive developments in numerous areas around the nation that have enabled growth and prosperity. However even though the nation is slowly improving, still only 15% of its population is online, and the spread/use of technology is sparse.

Furthermore, in 15 years, only 12% of the population received a payment digitally in 2016. Ethiopia's infrastructure is weak and needs to become stabilized quickly, or else these numbers will remain constant⁶. Regarding the prevention of technology development, there are five main factors that affect it: physical infrastructure, skills, financing, technology, and supply clusters. These five factors are the main roots and the reasons as to why so many African nations have a difficult time in rebuilding after conflicts. The industrial development in Africa is also linked to post-war and conflict areas, as it has been proven that after conflicts, trade has declined, nations undergo debt, suffering infrastructures, and more. Businesses and companies within this region also suffer post-war, as it is difficult to rebuild without money and even if they have money, there are limited resources they can buy with the money. Inevitably, this makes it hard for nations to effectively rebuild after areas of conflict and war and is mostly why Africa as a whole has failed to establish a level to compete with global markets.

A study completed about technology standards within African nations has shown that mostly every African nation has very low levels of technological capability in relation to the international standards. Local technological capabilities are very weak as well, as full exposure is at the forefront of enterprises to remove themselves rather than upgrade. In 1997, Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa) paid \$84 million for imported technology, in comparison, nations like Thailand paid \$813 million for technology. This shows the complete lack of infrastructure in Africa and also indicates that measures must be taken to make African nations more stable and developed.

United Nations Involvement

In September of 1978, United Nations Security Council Resolution 435 was passed to enact a cease-fire in South West Africa. This resolution removed South African forces from Namibia and gave power to the people.⁷ The UN held independent elections in what was soon to be developed in Namibia. Resolution 435 also established the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG). UNTAG monitors elections in Namibia and ensures the results are not tampered with. This operation lasted from 1989-1990 and they enlisted UN Peacekeepers, police, and military officials to ensure the preservation of power. When the November of 1989 election occurred UNTAG declared it to be sovereign and secure and the results were upheld in Namibia. The elections continue to be closely monitored by the United Nations to protect marginalized persons. These are digitally monitored to ensure one person votes and to uncover any discrepancies in votes cast. Although this has been successful in Namibia, many other African Nations such as Ethiopia have cyber security issues with elections that need to be addressed by the African Union.

In 2020 the African Union launched the Silencing the Guns Campaign to reduce violence within the continent. The main objectives include reducing genocide, war, human rights violations, and overall conflict in the African Union. The goal of this program was to reduce and end all violence within Africa by 2020, yet the African Union and other organizations working closely with the campaign realized their goals were unattainable by 2020 and extended the program to 2030. In regards to technology, The Flagship Projects of Agenda 2063 focuses on enacting transformative electronic applications to ensure cyber security and nanotechnology

industries. Furthermore, The African Union is currently focusing on establishing a high-tech speed train network under their Flagship Projects of Agenda 2063. In 2019 Security Council Resolution 2457 was unanimously adopted and recognized that it was up to the 54 African nations to instill peace and conflict-resolving strategies, but also acknowledged that help from the international community is available and ready to help. This resolution also calls for the increase of women's roles in politics and governmental duties.

Beginning in November of 2018 the General Assembly passed 8 resolutions in relation to technological development to ensure the Sustainable Development Goals are met by 2030.¹⁰ The target of the technological advancements is to ensure international cooperation between nations to optimize support and unity for conflicts and researching innovative solutions for such. Through greater development of technology elections can be secured, finances can be accurately accounted for, and cyber security will be strengthened. In order to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations General Assembly additionally passed GA/12353 in August of 2021. This resolution outlined the importance of technological advancement and how it can play a pivotal role in providing healthcare to rural as well as war-torn, and hard to reach regions. Through these efforts the United Nations has made great strides, but the African Nations must continue to work diligently to expand conflict-relief efforts.

In order to increase the amount of technology provided to impoverished and war torn regions of Africa the idea of trickle-down technology has been used by African governments. This is the concept of nations and regions who are financially stable and thriving pushing technology into regions where technology is not available for the majority of people. This was achieved by increasing direct imports of technology into Africa and increasing capital goods. The trick-down technology trial was aimed at helping the least developed countries (LDC)- some of these countries include Burundi, Central African Republic, D.R. Congo, Djibouti, and Ethiopia. The idea of trickle-down technology was aimed to ensure safe money transfers, better educational learning environments for children, increase educational opportunities and jobs for adults, a greater ability for research and overall development, and government regulation of the market. Yet a study conducted in 2013 found that only 7 technological journals were published for 1 million people. Essentially, only 1 million low-income individuals were impacted by these technological developments, as millions still do not have access to technology in a meaningful way. This is due to the lack of high-speed connectivity in impoverished areas—they had the technology, but it was unable to be used.

Understanding the current strategy of providing technology to war-torn and impoverished African regions was not working, the United Nations and African countries together established The Technology Bank. The Technology Bank or Tech Bank works in 46 impoverished countries to provide sustainable technology innovation. The Tech Bank works to provide technological resources, facilitate the online market, and establish intellectual property rights to enhance economics, decrease poverty levels, and boost sustainable technology use in Africa. This organization has been able to push 180 international publishers from educational and scientific journals, universities, acclaimed authors and more to ensure that the public has access to educational learning and resources online. Furthermore, they have better access to healthcare through an operation in Malawi. This operation provided online access to maternal, infant, and child health information in all languages to ensure expecting and new mothers had online resources to look up any questions they had concerning their child. The Technology bank marks the first organization to complete the Sustainable Developments Goals. Tech Bank achieved the target of Sustainable Developments Goal 17.8 which is to make the Technology Bank fully operable by 2030- as it has been completed in 2017. Through this program, Tech Bank, millions of African citizens in low-economic areas have been able to thrive due to the online market. The

focus countries of Tech Bank include Rwanda, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Uganda. Yet it is up to the African Union and United Nations as a whole to continue achieving technological advancements to ensure that all people can benefit from technological growth.

Case Study: Rwandan Blood Drones

In 1994, the genocide in Rwanda destroyed health centers, the economy, as well as their infrastructure. After the genocide and during the reconstruction of the nation, the Rwandan government realized that it was necessary to prioritize blood transfusion and donation services, as having access to blood in such a war torn nation was necessary to saving lives. Because of this, the government has enacted different measures throughout the country to improve the availability of blood and the safety of obtaining it. Through this, the nation was able to further protect its citizens, as just in a span of 15 years between 2000 and 2015, child mortality rates dropped $\frac{2}{3}$ and maternal mortality rates by $\frac{3}{4}$ ¹¹.

The National Center for Blood Transfusion (NCBT) gives safe and generous amounts of blood to those in need. In Rwanda, this is done through the use of over 540 mobile collection sites, five regional distribution centers which contain around 65 transfusion facilities. Through the implementation of these, the Rwandan government has tripled its blood donation rates between 2000 and 2018. While these methods of blood transfusion and donations were successful, there were some challenges that needed to be addressed. One of the most prominent issues that occurred was that Rwanda has a very diverse terrain—many of the roads are unpaved, there are numerous mountains and hills that separate towns, as well as numerous rural areas that are hard to reach¹². This made it difficult for those living in these places to obtain or donate blood quickly, and was a problem for those who needed it for an emergency. To solve this, Rwanda implemented the use of drone technology called “Zipline”. This drone delivers blood to those who were having problems accessing blood before, as the drones are able to deliver blood to individuals in as little as 15 minutes to four hours. The Rwandan Minister of Health, Dr. Diane Gashumba has mentioned, “every second you gain in saving a life is critical. When we saw that Zipline was a solution, we didn’t hesitate.” The drones supply blood to over 21 remote blood clinics within the country and have saved thousands of lives over the years. Outside of the capital, the drones now carry over 35% of the nation’s entire blood supply, showing just how effective and important it was for their implementation¹³. These drones can also carry up to four pounds of blood in one trip, and as of 2019, the drones have saved over 25,000 lives. They were also designed to withstand almost every type of weather, which further ensures individuals and healthcare companies that this advanced use of technology is beneficial and almost necessary to be implemented within any nation. The system works like this- the clinic requests a blood delivery from the main storage facility via text, then the type and amount of blood is sealed and loaded onto one of the Zipline drones. From here, the drones are catapulted into the air and reach 70 miles per hour in just 0.25 seconds. In the air, the drone can last around a total of 160 kilometers or around 100 miles. When the drones arrive at their destination, the blood is brought to the ground safely through parachutes, where a healthcare worker would grab the blood outside, bring it in and save hundreds of lives.

A woman living in Rwanda, Claudine Ndayishime was a patient who had only survived from the help of the drone. Upon giving birth, Claudine experienced a complication during her C-section, where she fell into a coma and the hospital she was in was not carrying her type of blood¹⁴. Within just a couple of minutes, the drone was able to drop off Claudine’s blood type to the hospital which ended up saving her life. Healthcare workers in Rwanda have also come out

and said that in order to obtain blood in an emergency prior to the use of drones, it would take about a minimum of three hours for blood to arrive at a location. Regarding how the project is funded, the Zipline company receives money from the government to ensure that hospitals in rural and less-developed places are able to pay for the service. Before the drones were used, Rwanda would lose approximately 7% of their annual blood supply each year, as after transportation for many hours the blood expired. This caused the nation to lose around \$1 million in blood donations annually and for a developing nation, that money could be used towards many other projects. The Zipline company has also been introduced into other regions within the world such as the Philippines, Nigeria, India, and Ghana, indicating that it is in fact being successfully implemented within nations, especially nations in Africa that are in need of desperate assistance. These drones have not only brought back the money that was lost before the drones were implemented, but they also have saved thousands of lives. Using drones that transport blood from one place to another shows the extent to which the nation has gone in order to create a society that is healthier and more functionable, which is due to the use of advanced technology.

Rwanda also faces another challenge in terms of keeping a cold chain for blood banks. In 2016, Rwanda developed an electronic cold chain monitoring system that tracked temperatures of blood. If the temperature of blood gets too low or too high, then a text message would be sent to the main individual looking over the system and warn them about the blood. There also have been more implementations regarding blood distribution within the nation. Through the use of apheresis machines, blood is taken out of an individual and the blood collected separates the plasma and blood cells which benefits all patients especially those with cancer. Since 1985, the policy within Rwanda has said that blood is to be donated by unpaid volunteers and given to desperate individuals free of charge. Some may presume that the country does not receive lots of donations by people, however donors are eager to donate their blood, plasma, and red blood cells to help support the cause. Without donors in a nation, there would not be as much blood traveling between places to further help others. When a nation has numerous blood donors, then there is a higher chance for the nation to be more successful in terms of implementing the Zipline technology.

Since the advanced drone technology was introduced into Rwanda, the nation has not looked back. Through the implementation of the Zipline drones, death rates within the country have significantly decreased, which proves how much advanced technology can save a nation. Post-war and especially in war torn nations with little access to hospitals, the drones have brought individuals blood to places where there originally was little to no access to it.

Questions to Consider

1. How can your nation and the international community ensure that elections will be secure in war-torn African Nations?
2. Has your country used technology in conflicts? If so, what technological advancements has your nation used to resolve conflicts?
3. Is there anything your nation has done specifically in regards to the displacement of individuals? If not, what can your country do to help those who are forced out of their homes and have to move somewhere else?
4. Has your country taken strides to help reduce the amount of conflict that occurs within their nation?
5. How can your nation and the international community ensure protection over individuals and their homes during periods of conflict?

6. In your country, have there been any significant conflicts? If so, how has your country solved it, and what was the lasting impact of the conflict on your nation?

Endnotes

1. <https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2020/07#:~:text=There%20were%20at%20least%2015,Somalia%20South%20Sudan%20and%20Sudan>.
2. <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2019-march-2020/work-progress-africa%E2%80%99s-remaining-conflict-hotspots>
3. <https://www.dw.com/en/stemming-the-flow-of-illicit-arms-in-africa/a-49761552>
4. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/32-million-africans-forcibly-displaced-conflict-and-repression#:~:text=Africa%20is%20experiencing%20another%20record,population%20displacement%20are%20highly%20concentrated>.
5. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/conflict-still-africa-s-biggest-challenge-2020>
6. <https://hbr.org/2019/12/research-how-technology-could-promote-growth-in-6-african-countries>
7. <https://peacemaker.un.org/namibia-resolution435>
8. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13721.doc.htm>
9. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Barkhane
10. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/ga12093.doc.htm>
11. <https://www.itu.int/en/myitu/News/2020/04/24/13/44/How-medical-delivery-drones-are-improving-lives-in-Rwa>

Topic B: Tigray War

Background

Although the Tigray War originally began on November 4, 2020, the conflict dates back over four decades. There are over 7 million Tigrayans, located in the northernmost region of Ethiopia. Despite the ethnic group accounting for a mere 6% of the population, Tigrayans have held vast influence in domestic, as well as international affairs. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Ethiopian government was controlled by a junta, a group of military leaders, who held supreme power and acted as the Provisional Military Administrative Council in Ethiopia. However, in 1984 the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) instigated a rebellion against the military junta government.¹⁶ The conflict resulted in dreadful droughts and the forced displacement of over 100,000 people. Ethiopia and surrounding countries were in extreme turmoil, as hundreds of thousands of civilians sought refuge.¹⁷ However, in 1989 the conflict began to settle as the Tigray began to free and liberate refugees, gaining support towards their rebellion. The need for stability in a time of political and economic turmoil resulted in the 1991 succession of the TPLF, as the group took control of the Ethiopian government.¹⁸

As time passed, support for the Tigray People's Liberation Front began to dwindle. The alliance implemented a federal system of government, which divided power between the national and state governments. Although the federal system had seen success in many other nations, the TPLF did not equally distribute power in Ethiopia. Over time the TPLF became extremely repressive and held immense power over the legal and economic spheres. Many younger generations felt the political party solely dominated the Tigrayan political system and often refer to this period of time as the "27 years of darkness".¹⁹ These 27 years were filled with immense public disapproval and in 2018 the prime minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn, stepped down. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) elected Abiy Ahmed, an Ethiopian politician and representative of the Oromo ethnic group, as Desalegn's successor. Ahmed embraced widespread support and popularity from the Ethiopian people, as he exposed TPLF party corruption and removed biased leaders from office. At the end of 2019 Ahmed dissolved the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front and replaced it with the Prosperity Party (PP). The TPLF were infuriated and refused to join the new party, protesting Ahmed actions and advocating for the destruction of the Prosperity Party. In March of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic struck, forcing Prime Minister Ahmed to delay elections until August. The TPLF party disagreed with his decision, claiming that Ahmed went outside of his constitutionally granted powers and rescheduled. Animosity between the PP and TPLF parties rose as the Tigray illegally held their own elections in September of 2020. In response to this unlawful action, the federal government withheld monetary funds from the Tigray.²⁰

On November 4, 2020 the Tigray War began as extremist members from the Tigray People's Liberation Front launched an attack on the Ethiopian National Defense Force's northern command center. The strike occurred in Mekele, the capital of the Tigray region, at the Sero military base. On the 10th day of seizure, the TPLF party brought in reinforcements, which included mortars, guns, tanks, and a multitude of soldiers. Although the exact number of casualties was never published, one soldier reported seeing over 15 limp bodies covered in stab wounds. The TPLF party claimed they were not responsible for the attack, but Prime Minister Ahmed furiously responded with the launch of Operation Law Enforcement and an airstrike on November 6, 2020.²¹ Ethiopian authorities attempted to create a peaceful resolution, but both groups disregarded this solution, unable to cooperate with one another. As a result on November

7th Ethiopia's parliament met under extreme circumstances to declare the illegality of the Tigrayan regional government. Two days later, the TPLF led an attack on Mai Kadra, massacring over 500 innocent civilians and placing hundreds in critical condition. Out of fear, an influx of Ethiopians sought refuge in neighboring countries, including Sudan, Eritrea, and Somalia. Sudanese border officials have claimed that approximately 10,000 to 25,000 refugees crossed over into their borders between November 10th to the 13th.²² Currently, there are over 62,255 adults and children seeking refuge.²³ In addition to the tens of thousands of refugees entering into Sudan, over 2 million civilians, 33% of the population in the Tigray region, have evacuated. The UNHCR has worked alongside the Sudanese government in order to provide 1,000 tents which have provided over 5,000 refugees with temporary shelters. New shelter sites are currently being created to ensure that NGOs and host communities can provide the necessary food, health, and shelter.

Prime Minister Ahmed ordered the National Defense Force to implement the "Final Phase of the Rule of Law Operations", a military strategy, which was enforced on November 26, 2020.²⁴ In 2021, the TPLF fought back against the strategy and took multiple advances, as they fought and traveled into Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. In order to protect their country's capital, the Ethiopian government allied with the United States.²⁵ The US financially supported them with \$4.2 billion in aid, as well as issuing an evacuation notice to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia. When the notice was received, the country entered into a state of emergency and labeled the TPLF as a terrorist organization²⁶. As the Ethiopian government recognizes the TPLF as terrorists, they do not wish to cooperate with one another and oppose peaceful intervention from the United Nations. This ongoing war between the two groups has resulted in over 100,000 Tigrayan casualties, as well as 1,245 Ethiopian soldier deaths. This number will continue to rise until the proper negotiations occur.

In addition to the lack of humanitarian aid and sharp influx of displaced people, a severe absence of media has made it extremely difficult for outside nations to accurately depict situations. Throughout the entirety of the war, journalists have been banned from entering into combat zones. Without proper media coverage, nations lack valuable information in regards to the number of casualties and are oftentimes unaware of the human rights violations occurring. For example, Simon Marks, a reporter for *The New York Times*, moved to Ethiopia in September of 2019. Originally Marks published reports regarding the political turmoil and new presidency of Abiy Ahammed, however on May 20, 2021, he was deported from Ethiopia. The government's tolerance for journalists is very limited, as they frequently arrest and restrict those wishing to report on the war. In early November, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights published the UN-Ethiopian report on the Tigray-Ethiopian War. This report was one of the few first-hand accounts, detailing the violent actions, sexual assault, and massacres committed by the Tigray, Ethiopian government, and the allies of both. In Ethiopia reports show the largest jump of displaced persons, 1.8 million within the past year alone.²⁷

The crisis between the Tigray People's Liberation Front and the Ethiopian National Defense Force is an ongoing issue. The Ethiopian federal government signed a parliamentary resolution recognizing the transition of the TPLF from a legal political party to a terrorist organization on May 1, 2021. Overall, the Tigray War has led to the death of over 52,000 civilians, the displacement of 2 million, and devastation to Ethiopia and surrounding nations.

United Nations Involvement

In July of 2021, The United Nations Human Rights Council passed Resolution 47/13 which called for the withdrawal of Eritreans in the Tigray region of Ethiopia due to escalating tensions. The troops were to be pulled out in a swift and timely manner due to human rights violations within the region.²⁸ Eritreans troops have been accused of sexually assaulting citizens and kidnapping refugees. This action was called upon by UN members, specifically the European Union members. Furthermore, in December of 2020, the UN Central Emergency Response Fund allocated US\$35.6 million to the Tigray conflict. These funds go directly to humanitarian aid through water, medical supplies, and sanitation for civilians in the conflict region. These funds will go directly to help children receive immediate medical attention and will boost medical supplies in facilities by providing gloves, masks, and other necessary medications and tools.²⁹ This is due to the 50,000 Ethiopians in the Tigray region who have fled to Sudan in the past year—with almost half of this number being children. In addition, the UN humanitarian chief has administered \$13 million to specifically help people in Ethiopia under the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). As a result of the high influx of displaced Ethiopians fleeing to Sudan, \$5 million was allocated to refugee safety and aid in the region. The UN Central Emergency Response Fund is supported by various nations, with top donors of this program including Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark amongst various others.³⁰ In the past year CERF has provided life-saving and necessary relief to 52 different countries, aiding 65 million individuals. Demonstrating their ability to be further used in reducing the humanitarian crisis in the Tigray region.

In Ethiopia specifically, the UN Humanitarian Fund in Ethiopia distributed \$12 million to help de-escalate the conflict and provide humanitarian assistance. These funds will directly go to help marginalized groups in the conflict such as women, children, and people with disabilities. This is crucial as it is reported that in October of 2020, 364 medical aid trucks were waiting for UN approval to enter the region for over a month instead of rapidly providing assistance. Eighty percent of the medical facilities currently in the region are unusable as they have been destroyed by the war. Prior to this, only 19 out of the 59 health teams and officials that were established in August of 2020 were operating in November of 2020. Another organization to highlight is The Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund which has been productive since its establishment in 2006. Since the Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund has been established they have provided \$703 million for 1,186 projects including Tigray War relief efforts.

More recently in May of 2021, The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs released \$65 million as a humanitarian response to the growing crisis in the region.³¹ These funds are to aid approximately 4.5 million civilians in the Tigray region. In particular, it focuses on hard-to-reach zones such as the South-Eastern zone that was previously inaccessible to aid efforts. They have provided water due to the severe drought in the region, healthcare, medical aid such as gloves and sterilized tools, and food.

In conjunction with the rapid spread of disease in the region, A/HRC/47 was passed to draw attention and aid to decrease the high transmission rates of HIV/AIDS. This resolution aims to provide “prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care and support” to those living with the diagnosis of HIV. The destruction of hospitals and lack of funding specifically to HIV has led to the increasing rates of transmission, along with deaths due to patients not receiving treatment. As this was just passed in July 2021 it has not yet been enacted but could potentially help the 1 million people living with HIV in Ethiopia. Another resolution added to help minority and marginalized groups in the Tigray region is Resolution A/HRC/47. This aims to accelerate efforts to provide gender equality to women and children who have been subjected to violence within

the Tigray region. Overall this aims to eliminate violence against women, and adds an emphasis on women and children with disabilities currently reading or fleeing the area. These resolutions have shed light upon some of the most vulnerable communities in the Tigray region, yet more support from the African Union is needed desperately.

Case Study: Recruitment of Child Soldiers by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)

Under the Defense Force Proclamation No. 27/1996: Article 4, the Ethiopian government laid out the requirements and criteria to be drafted into the Ethiopian military. Recruits must be willing and fit, as well as over the age of 18. However, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has reportedly gone against Article 36 (1) of their Constitution, drafting child soldiers.³² Consequently, throughout the Tigray-Ethiopian war, various children under the age of 18 have been sent into hazardous and dangerous environments. These kids have been placed in extremely vulnerable conditions as their constitutional rights have been denied. The Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) reported in December of 2020, that the TPLF party has actively recruited children, as well as placing them on the front line. For example, in a report from the *New York Times*, Declan Walsh, a photographer and publisher, submitted an article describing his experience. Walshed witnessed a child soldier drop his gun, and swiftly run to a nearby village in search of safety.³³ He wrongfully noted the child's independence and confidence, completely ignoring the disgusting recruitment of children in times of war.

The Tigray People Liberation Front party has consistently denied the claims of recruiting children to fight on their behalf, stating that they merely utilize children to perform daily tasks, such as collecting and organizing weapons, providing basic necessities for the active forces, and tracking essential information/media coverage. However, various civilians across Ethiopia have submitted video and photographic evidence of children acting as soldiers in the TPLF army. Moreover, the Tigray People Liberation Front is a traditionally centralized party that frequently recruits Somalis and Oromos children between 9th through 12th grade. This occurred to Dowit Admas, a 17 year old boy, who was recruited and grouped together with 60 other boys. They were immediately sent to the Bershelk Military Training Camp, located in Gojam, Ethiopia. The majority of students within the grades were under the age of 18 and were easily manipulated by the recruiting officers. Military officials frequently offered their recruits security, food, and aid in hopes of gaining support from the children.³⁴

Furthermore, various media outlets, NGO's, and highly educated individuals have produced an abundance of research papers that outline child soldiers' roles, designating them as "sacrificial lambs". Ann Fitz-Gerald, a professor at Wilfrid Laurier University and director at Balsillie School, frequently advocates for the protection of children's rights, speaking out against countries that utilize child soldiers in times of war. She stated that it was of the utmost importance for the national and international communities to address this crisis, as it was a reflection of their commitment to the protection of children's rights.³⁵ In addition, The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers recognized the value of Fitz-Gerald's statement, as they created a special appeal to the governments of both Ethiopia and its neighboring country, Eritrea. The appeal essentially aimed to ensure that future children could not be recruited, as well as releasing the thousands of kids serving in the Tigray War. The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers called upon the national community, UN Secretary General, and the Organization of African Unity. Finally, Fin Barro Reilly, a photographer, recently published a gory photo of multiple children in the Tigray region, holding guns and various other weapons. Many children captured

in the picture look as though they are in elementary school. When this photo was originally published, it terrified and inevitably motivated the international community to become involved. Countless people began to speak out against the TPLF including Bekele, a 35 year old United States citizen that descended from Ethiopia. Bekele had begun to work in Addis Ababa when he first witnessed the horrific acts the Tigray conducted. He felt frightened, sharing disturbing details to his family members over the phone. Bekele contacted various media outlets, reporting his encounters with the Tigray People Liberation Front party.

In order to properly ensure the protection of children that have been recruited as TPLF soldiers, the Ethiopian National Defense Force recognizes the precedent set by countries that have dealt with this issue in the past. Ethiopia's main goal is to gain recognition of the crimes committed by the TPLF, ensuring they are charged for their actions. In 2014, a crime similar to that of the Tigray People Liberation Front was committed when Joseph Kony used over 60,000 child sex slaves and soldiers for over 23 years from 1986 to 2009. Kony was a leader in the Lord's Resistance Army and displaced millions of people due to his actions. The Ugandan government along with the United States Osprey, a special forces aircraft, hunted down Kony and his partners. The International Criminal Court was granted the case and decided on the proper punishment for a man who committed such heinous acts. Unlike Kony, the Tigray People Liberation Front has yet to be punished for their crimes. Photos and videos taken by witnesses, along with the 54,000 facing forced displacement, provide logical and realistic evidence that can prove a conviction. If the TPLF case was taken to the International Crime Court, Ethiopia has the opportunity to charge the Tigray rebels for disregarding Article 4 of the Defense Force Proclamation No. 27/1996. The exquisite idea of bringing the case to a higher court is recognized in the Convention on the Use of Child Soldiers. Canada led the debate, taking initiative and recognizing that Ethiopia lacks the proper resources to enforce Article 36 (1) of their Constitution. General Romeo Dallaire, a member of the Canadian Senate, advocated for his passion towards the protection of child soldiers, referencing the ICC's ruling in regards to Uganda.

Essentially, the Tigray People's Liberation Front has wrongfully taken advantage of easily manipulated children and sent them to their death. Although various constitutional laws and committees have been set in place by the Ethiopian government, national action and punishment for federal crimes has yet to be completed. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, along with Article 36 and No. 27/1996, set specific guidelines in place in May of 1991 and although these laws have been in place for over 30 years, they lack support from Ethiopian regions. The recent outbreak of war between the TPLF and Ethiopian National Defense Force has placed immense value on the international community, as countries and various NGOs can advocate for the protection of children's rights.

Questions to Consider

1. What is your nation's emergency response policy and how have they helped other war-torn African regions in the past? Has your nation provided medical aid, monetary funds, or military support?
2. How has your nation ensured that minorities such as women and children have been protected in high conflict zones?
3. How does your country plan to cooperate or properly engage with the Ethiopian government? Amnesty International claimed that various countries have aimed to help

Ethiopia, but realistically instigated more violence. Has your country's involvement been beneficial in the past?

4. As Ethiopia's current government and economic stability is lacking, what are the implications for surrounding regions? Specifically, in regards to the Horn of Africa.
5. How can your country eliminate tensions between the Tigray People's Liberation Front and the Ethiopian federal government? Has your country taken steps in the past, and if so, were they successful?
6. How can the rights of journalists be protected? How does your country wish to ensure media coverage in Ethiopia?

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