



African Women for Peace in the Horn of Africa Initiative

We, women of Africa, call on leaders to act in the tragic situation of hostilities amongst all of our people in the Horn.

On November 4, violence erupted in the Horn region. This is affecting all of us: mothers, sisters and grandmothers on the continent. We know the suffering of weapons turning brothers and sisters against each other and this must stop.

As women, we recognise the pain of our sisters.

Mothers, waiting to hear from their children, who are fighting in battles they did not choose, required to put on uniforms which are not theirs, forced to kill their own in a war, that they did not desire. We demand peace.

Mothers, looking for their children, lost in a sudden flight with no safe heaven to turn to, abducted and moved to places where they are not safe, hungry and fighting for food and survival, wounded on foreign fields, alone. We want our children back.

Mothers, crying for their children, who have dreams of their own and require support, who need school and work to support themselves and all of us. Their resilience is our resilience. Their future is our future. We need the children of our great continent. All violence must stop.

The Horn is the birthplace of humanity. Its treasures are our common heritage. It is the pride of Africa. We need its peace for prosperity and for the future of our great continent.

Therefore, we announce today that we are launching:

the African Women for Peace in the Horn Africa Initiative



We, African women, stand in solidarity with the mothers, sisters and grandmothers in the Horn, and we ask:

- All leaders in the Horn to stop the violence;
- All churches and faith communities to call on our leaders to stop the violence;
- IGAD and the AU to support a women's led peace force to monitor the peace;
- The international community to support a women's led peace force to enforce the peace;
- The UN to establish a humanitarian corridor to impartially reach all affected areas;
- An immediate opening of all communications to the affected areas;
- The international community to ensure the safety of all PoWs, refugees and IDPs and these to be placed under international protection.

Signed,

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Zaminah Malole, Commissioner for Equal Opportunities, Uganda

Reem Abbas, Researcher at Andariya, Sudan

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Organisation Mahber Selam Ethiopia-Eritrea

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Organisation, Bright Future for Eritrea

Halima Salisu Mohammed, Interpreter, Niger



Sakinat Folorunso, Professor, Computer Science lecturer and machine learning researcher Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria

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Background

On 4th of November 2020 hostilities broke out in the Northern Ethiopia Horn region, bordering Somalia, Sudan and Eritrea, with severe consequences. The current situation is:

- One million out of six million people in the North have fled their homes
- Over two million people need assistance for food, which is not available
- Thousands of people have been killed in the violence
- Massacres have been committed
- 100.000 refugees in camps under international protection have been abandoned
- 50.000 refugees have arrived in neighbouring country, Sudan
- Properties have been looted
- Violence has erupted in other regions
- Ethnic profiling
- All communication channels to certain regions are closed

International leaders, church leaders and others have called for an immediate ceasefire and end to all hostilities, access to all areas to humanitarian organisations, stop to all ethnic profiling and restoration of peace.

These demands have not been realised.

The hostilities follow the 2018 peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Women of the region long for peace.

The AU President Cyril Ramaphosa has appointed three envoys to mediate in the conflict and these have the full support of the international community. Regrettably, today the envoys have not been able to meet with all parties. A perspective on inclusive peace-talks is still lacking.

Recognising the important mission of the AU envoys, African women ask for an immediate dialogue involving all parties. Such a dialogue can be led by female leaders. Such a dialogue will require that conditions are available for peaceful talks.

Therefore, a women-led peace force should be installed in the region, under auspices of the AU and IGAD with support of the international community.

This appeal was launched on the 10th of December 2020

The appeal was issued on the 14th of December 2020