



Council of the
European Union

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COHAFA 46**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Ethiopia
- Council Conclusions (24 April 2023)

Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on Ethiopia as approved at the 3944th meeting of the Council on 24 April 2023.

Ethiopia

Council Conclusions

1. Ethiopia is a key strategic partner for the European Union in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea region, and more broadly on the African continent. The EU appreciates the longstanding close cooperation and dialogue with the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) on a wide range of issues. With the resolution of the conflict in northern Ethiopia, the EU looks forward to a normalisation of relations with Ethiopia and stands ready to support further progress on its path towards lasting peace.
2. The EU reiterates its full support for the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities (CoHA) concluded between the GoE and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) on 2 November 2022. The EU commends the continued commitment demonstrated by both sides and welcomes the significant progress in the implementation of the CoHA, notably in terms of silencing the guns, facilitating improved humanitarian access, launching the National Rehabilitation Commission to address Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), establishing the African Union Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission (AU MVCM), the delisting of TPLF as a terrorist organisation, the advancement in restoration of public services and the appointment of an interim administration in Tigray, as well as the ongoing development of a national policy on transitional justice.

3. The complete cessation of hostilities, unimpeded humanitarian access and accountability for violations and abuses of human rights are core elements of the CoHA. These have also been and remain the EU's key priorities. Subject to a sustained implementation of the CoHA, the EU will progressively return to a full and strengthened Strategic Engagement¹ with Ethiopia. The EU looks forward to reinvigorating political dialogue at all appropriate levels with the GoE and relaunching sectoral dialogues. More direct and regular engagement and cooperation will enable a stronger partnership.

4. The EU stands ready to relaunch its regular multi-annual indicative programme (MIP) to accompany further progress on the consolidation of peaceful conflict resolution, reconciliation, stabilisation and recovery and macroeconomic stability across Ethiopia. It also strongly encourages the International Financial Institutions to assist the GoE in addressing the critical economic situation in the country through its economic reform agenda, and creditor countries to work towards a swift conclusion of the debt restructuring process through the Common Framework.

¹ *A Joint Declaration towards an EU-Ethiopia Strategic Engagement* signed by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and the President of the European Commission on 14 June 2016.

5. Accountability and transitional justice are the backbone of lasting peace and reconciliation. The EU welcomes the Green Paper on transitional justice² and encourages the GoE to continue taking concrete steps in advancing options contained therein, in line with international human rights' norms and standards and supported by an international component, such as the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR). Independent, transparent and impartial investigations into all allegations of violations and abuses of human rights, as well as violations of international humanitarian law and international refugee law, committed by all parties, are both urgent and essential. In particular, the EU deplores the appalling level of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence. As a priority, the EU stresses the importance of ensuring immediate engagement of judicial procedures on the most pressing cases and to ensure the safeguarding of evidence for future prosecution. It welcomes and stands ready to support the existing co-operation between the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and OHCHR and, as appropriate, with other relevant bodies. The EU calls upon the TPLF and the Interim Administration of Tigray to engage openly and actively with all relevant stakeholders. It looks forward to the final report to be presented by the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE) at the 54th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. Finally, the EU stands ready to support the process of achieving transitional justice and accountability.
6. The EU expresses its solidarity with the Ethiopian people, the victims and their families who have suffered from the dramatic humanitarian, economic and social impacts of the conflict in northern Ethiopia. The EU welcomes the recently improved humanitarian access to the majority of the conflict-affected areas in northern Ethiopia. However, the widespread humanitarian needs, including in other parts of the country affected by severe drought and other crises, require an adequate and well-coordinated response. Scaling up, delivery and funding of aid to those in need, including those in hard to reach areas, remains an immediate and urgent priority. The EU will continue supporting delivery and funding of humanitarian aid. Continued efforts towards ensuring a conducive environment for humanitarian workers to operate safely are essential.

² [Ethiopia Policy Options for Transitional Justice](#), submitted for the stakeholders consultation in January 2023.

7. Ethiopia's overall stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as peaceful development, are key for the country, the region and for the EU. To ensure the enduring peace, the EU welcomes the agreed withdrawal of foreign forces from Ethiopian territory. The EU is encouraged by the establishment of the National Rehabilitation Commission and is ready to offer its expertise and support to an inclusive and transparent DDR process. The EU also stands ready to assist the AU in expanding and consolidating the MVCM.
8. The EU welcomes further efforts to swiftly bring tangible peace dividends to all affected populations, including through the organisation of inclusive, credible, free and fair regional elections in Tigray, to establish a regional government which succeeds the period of the Interim Administration.
9. The EU expresses serious concern regarding escalating tensions, alleged violations and abuses of human rights, and violence in various parts of the country, including in Oromia and Amhara. The EU encourages an urgent de-escalation and dialogue to achieve durable peace and stability through political, democratic means. The EU encourages the GoE to continue to work towards a transparent, inclusive, comprehensive and people-centred national dialogue process. The EU supports the creation of conditions that ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation of all key stakeholders, including women and youth, notably through freedom of expression, media freedom, and civil society.
10. The EU reaffirms its commitments made under the EU Strategy for the Horn of Africa (2021) and recognises Ethiopia's strategic role in matters of peace, security and economic integration in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea region. In light of intensifying global challenges, be it on respect for the principles of the UN Charter, the promotion of multilateralism, climate change, environmental degradation, economic recovery, reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, and energy and food security crises, collaborative and coordinated responses are necessary. In this context, the EU highlights the opportunities of the EU's Global Gateway and the Horn of Africa Initiative as means to support smart and sustainable green and digital transitions, connectivity, and economic growth for mutual benefit and in the spirit of true partnership.

11. The EU encourages continued and coordinated support of all international partners to the peace process. The EU, including through the engagement of the EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, and together with its Member States, will remain in close contact with the GoE and with like-minded regional and international partners, to ensure a common approach in support of Ethiopia's lasting peace.
