

Mr. António Guterres

Secretary General of the United Nations

760 United Nations Plaza,

Manhattan, New York City, 10017-6818

[Antonio.guterres@un.org](mailto:Antonio.guterres@un.org)

March 7, 2021

Urgent Appeal to the UN Security Council

Dear Your Excellency

We, representatives of the undersigned civil society organizations have the pleasure and honor to bring to your attention our deepest concern regarding the recent unwarranted military aggression against Ethiopia and the occupation of vast tracts of Ethiopian sovereign territory by Sudanese military forces.

It has been more than two months since the Sudanese army violated the UN Charter Article 2(3) which provides that " All members shall settle their international dispute by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered" and Article 2 (4) that strengthens this principle clearly states " All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of or political of any state."

You will agree with us that the Sudanese Government failed to live up to its commitments and obligations as a member of the United Nations. Equally, Sudan neglected to respect Article 3 Section (b) of the Charter of the African Union that obligates member nations to "defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States."

Sudanese mechanized forces violated Ethiopia's borders, occupied its sovereign territory, and annexed a large fertile land mass that includes Bereket Legudi in Humera proper, Senar, Bahire-Selam, Abotir and Koredem Hor in Western Humera, land that is designated as One to Five in Metema as well as Quara Nefse Gebeya, all in Gondar, Ethiopia. Sudan Arabized this annexed region of Ethiopia and calls it Al-fashaka. These are farmlands where thousands of Ethiopian farmers have lived and supported their livelihood for generations.

The border issue between Ethiopia and the Sudan has been a contentious subject and a source of numerous disputes and skirmishes for quite a long time. Previous attempts by Sudan to realize its territorial aggrandizement were not successful. Fortunately for both countries, disputes and skirmishes were settled routinely through peaceful bilateral negotiations.

This time Sudan invaded Ethiopia and deployed a large garrison of its mechanized army deep into Ethiopian sovereign territory. This forcible occupation and annexation compelled Ethiopian farmers to flee the area; and to abandon their investments. Sudanese forces burnt and ransacked private property that belongs to indigenous Ethiopian farmers.

There is a plethora of evidence to support that Sudan took advantage of Ethiopia's peace keeping operations in Tigray, Ethiopia. This procedure required the diversion of Ethiopia's defense resources to this region thereby creating a defense vacuum.

It is also our considered opinion that Sudan 's unprovoked attack envisaged a two-pronged objective. The first is that the Khartoum administration aspires to fulfil its long-standing ambition of fertile farmland annexation from Ethiopia based on unfounded territorial claims. This brazen act undermines good relations with Ethiopia. The second objective is for the military dominated Government of Sudan to divert internal public opinion and to defuse the political turmoil within the country following the overthrow and imprisonment of President Omar Hassan Al-Bahir.

Your Excellency

The UN and the African Union would recall that it was Ethiopia that took the initiative to reach-out to Sudanese stakeholders and rescue the present military government in Khartoum. The Sudanese people recognize and appreciate that Ethiopia defended peace and stability in their country. Despite this contribution, the Sudanese military carried-out a naked aggression against Ethiopia. This has shocked ordinary Ethiopians and no doubt the people of Sudan.

We tend to believe, however, that Sudan may not be acting alone in its military aggression against Ethiopia. Egypt and other external powers inimical to Ethiopia have encouraged and supported Sudan to invade Ethiopia. The two countries share a lengthy border stretching almost 1,000 miles (1600km.) Ethiopia and Sudan share geopolitical, security, cultural, socioeconomic and trade ties. These commonalities make it imperative that they resolve conflicts peacefully through direct negotiations.

The colonial demarcation by Great Britain and the current Arabization of the matter is not in the mutual interests of the two peoples. We are also convinced that the current unholy alliance between the Sudan and Egypt is causally linked to the construction and filling of the Great Renaissance Dam of Ethiopia (GERD)

Against the above and the impasse in the negotiations, Egypt is inflaming the issue. The provocative and confrontational nature of this African matter is best illustrated by the most recent joint military pact that Egypt and Sudan signed. This agreement is directed at Ethiopia.

The Government of Sudan has responsibility to make the Horn of African a region of peace, security and free of war. To its credit, Ethiopia has refrained from the use of military force in resolving conflicts with its neighbors including Sudan. We believe Sudan has an obligation to reciprocate. These two countries can and must solve their border dispute and demarcate their border through dialogue and negotiation. They must also respect the territorial integrity of neighboring countries.

Accordingly, and in the light of the above, the undersigned ask the Security Council to -

1. Consider a special emergency session on the matter and chart out an acceptable formula for both parties to arrive at a peaceful and negotiated solution.
2. Demand that Sudan withdraw its military forces from Ethiopia unconditionally and immediately.
3. Urge the Egyptian Government to cease promoting proxy wars; and interfering in the internal affairs of Ethiopia immediately and unconditionally.
4. Urge the Government of Sudan to compensate Ethiopian farmers for looted, burnt and destroyed private properties.

Finally, we are pleased to report to the Security Council that the Government of Ethiopia is ready and willing to demarcate the border as soon as conditions become favorable for a peaceful resolution of this crisis.

Signatories:

Ethiopian Dialogue Forum (EDF)

Ethiopian Borders Affairs Committee (EBAC)

Ethiopiawinet-Council for the Defense of Citizens Rights

Vision Ethiopia

CC: --

The African Union (AU) Secretariat

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

Embassy of Sudan, Washington DC

Embassy of Ethiopia, Washington DC

Ethiopia's Permanent Mission to the UN, NYC