



The Statement on the Human Rights Situation in the Horn of Africa

Oral Statement by the Africans for the Horn of Africa (AF4HA) a member of the Center for Citizen's Participation on the African Union (CCPAU) to the 79th Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

14 May – 3 June 2024

Honorable Chairperson, Honorable Commissioners, all distinguished participants, and guests;

We welcome this opportunity to address you on the Human Rights Situation in the Horn of Africa.

Africans for the Horn of Africa is particularly concerned by the statistics emerging from the Horn region, as we address you today nearly 64 million people are in need of humanitarian and protection assistance across the Horn of Africa, the region accounts for close to 22 per of the global humanitarian caseload in 2024, Sudan and Ethiopia alone, are two of the world's five largest humanitarian crises. The Sudan crisis accounts for almost 40 per cent (25 million people) of the regional total, followed by Ethiopia (21 million), South Sudan (9 million) and Somalia (8.3 million).





The deterioration of the security, human rights and humanitarian situation in Sudan is disturbing. The unfolding catastrophe in El Fasher, continues to attract condemnation but has not deterred the closing in by RSF on the civilian population and the commission of heinous atrocities. Human rights defenders have not been spared by the warring parties, we have witnessed increased reporting on direct attacks on HRDs offering emergency response and support to the population affected by conflict.

In South Sudan and Somalia, over 1.65 million and 1.45 million children under five, respectively are acutely malnourished and urgent response is needed alongside addressing immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition. In Somalia, continued incidents of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence and insecurity remain a significant threat for human rights defenders and journalists.





Ethiopia's conflict has been characterized by gender-based violence with an estimate of at least 40 to 50 % of women and girls in the Tigray, Amhara, Afar, and Oromia regions of Ethiopia affected[1]. About 3.5 million people in Tigray are in urgent need of food assistance with one million people facing acute hunger and food shortages are at critical level and according to reports from the UN and human rights groups, there have been allegations of mass killings, sexual violence, and other atrocities committed against civilians in Tigray.

[1]<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/gender-based-violence-and-tigray-conflict-ethiopia-path-accountability-and-resolution>





In light of this dire situation facing the Horn of Africa, we call on the African Commission to:

1. Urge all parties involved in the conflicts in Sudan and Ethiopia to immediately cease attacks and violations of fundamental human rights of civilians, HRDs and support efforts for mediation and reconciliation to achieve sustainable peace and stability in the Horn of Africa.
2. Urge the African Union to operationalize the African Humanitarian Agency, with its immediate task being the rolling out of a robust humanitarian response to avert large-scale humanitarian catastrophes ongoing and projected to worsen in the Horn of Africa and support multi-sectoral assistance and interventions in conflict and drought-affected areas in the region.
3. Call for the States to scale up and enhance GBV response services through case management service provision, psycho-social support interventions, creation of women and girls' safe spaces with strengthened information management.
4. Call on the international community to urgently increase funding for the humanitarian response in the Horn of Africa and to consider the comprehensive impact of the hunger crisis.

