



Mr Chairperson, Commissioners, colleagues

I thank the Commissioners for their report, on behalf of Legal Action Worldwide, and the victims and survivors of the conflict in Tigray and northern Ethiopia that we represent.

I deliver one request on their behalf today: the mandate of ICHREE must be renewed.

Failure to renew the mandate would send a clear message to victims and survivors of this brutal conflict, and to those who continue to suffer in Ethiopia today: your suffering is no longer of concern.

The international community appears to have been persuaded to accept, and to celebrate, the steps taken by the Ethiopian Government since the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed in November 2022.

But our own clients, as well as recent reports from PHR, OJAH, and Amnesty International, confirm that extrajudicial execution of civilians, gang rape, and sexual slavery have continued, perpetrated by Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers.

Similar patterns of violence are now being reported in Amhara.

The Government, well versed in speaking the language of human rights, may have expressed commitment to transitional justice. But Ethiopia has refused to engage with the case against it, before the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights, filed by LAW and partners on behalf of victims of the conflict. These are not the actions of a Government committed to subjecting itself to accountability.

It is therefore essential that ICHREE is empowered to investigate and preserve evidence of the crimes that have been committed – and which continue.

This is an indispensable next step for future accountability and justice, and thus for any prospect of sustainable peace in the country.

Thank you.