

# AMHARA CONFLICT

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Amhara is a region located in the northern part of Ethiopia. It is one of the country's regional states, known for its historical significance, culture, and geographic features. The region is named after the Amhara people, an ethnic group who predominantly speak the Amharic language, which is also the official language of Ethiopia.

## Key Facts about Amhara:

- **Capital:** Bahir Dar is the capital city of the Amhara region.
- **Geography:** The region includes the Ethiopian highlands, known for their rugged terrain, and is home to Lake Tana, the largest lake in Ethiopia.
- **Historical Significance:** Amhara has been the heart of Ethiopia's historical and cultural development. The region was the center of the ancient Ethiopian Empire, and its rulers, including the famous Emperor Haile Selassie, have played a crucial role in the country's history.
- **Religion:** The majority of the population in Amhara practices Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, which is deeply woven into the region's culture and identity.
- **Conflict:** Recently, Amhara has been involved in ongoing conflicts, particularly due to ethnic tensions, political struggles, and the impact of the Tigray War (2020–2022). These conflicts have led to significant displacement, humanitarian crises, and challenges to regional stability.

The Amhara region faces challenges related to political instability, humanitarian needs, and human rights violations, particularly during periods of conflict. Sanitation and access to basic services such as clean water, healthcare, and education are crucial issues in the region, especially for those affected by the ongoing crises.

## Background of the Amhara Conflict:-

1. **Historical Context:** The Amhara region has a long history in Ethiopia, once being at the heart of the Ethiopian Empire. However, over time, ethnic federalism introduced in the 1990s by the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) led to the fragmentation of Ethiopia into ethnic-based regions, including the Amhara region. The EPRDF system, which dominated Ethiopia's politics for several decades, was based on promoting ethnic identity and regional autonomy.
2. **Ethnic Federalism and Tensions:** While the system of ethnic federalism aimed to give more power to regions, it also exacerbated ethnic tensions across the country. In the case of the Amhara people, there were disputes over land and political representation, and they have often found themselves in conflict with neighboring ethnic groups such as the Tigray and Oromo populations.

## Key Events Leading to the Conflict:-

1. **The Tigray Conflict (2020–Present):** The Amhara region became deeply involved in the broader conflict between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Ethiopian federal government. The Tigray conflict started in November 2020, when tensions escalated between the TPLF and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government. The Ethiopian government accused the TPLF of attacking military bases, leading to a military response. The Amhara region, as a neighboring state, has been drawn into the conflict, with Amhara militias supporting federal government forces in the battle against Tigray fighters.
2. **Territorial Disputes:** One of the significant issues fueling the conflict in Amhara is the territorial disputes, especially over areas such as Western Tigray, which is claimed by both the Tigray and Amhara regions. This has led to violent confrontations and the displacement of thousands of people. The Amhara militias have taken control of Western Tigray, further aggravating tensions between the two ethnic groups.
3. **Internal Political Struggles:** The political landscape of Ethiopia has also contributed to the conflict. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government, which initially started with reforms aimed at unifying Ethiopia, has faced resistance from various ethnic groups. This resistance includes the Amhara, who feel marginalized despite their historical importance in Ethiopian politics. The complexity of Ethiopia's multi-ethnic society has resulted in growing discontent and occasional violent clashes.
4. **Militarization and Militia Involvement:** The rise of militias in the Amhara region has contributed to the escalation of violence. These militias, known for their loyalty to the federal government, have been accused of engaging in widespread violence against civilians, particularly in Tigray, where both sides have been accused of committing atrocities.

## Impact of the Conflict

1. **Humanitarian Crisis:** The Amhara Conflict, as part of the broader Ethiopian crisis, has caused immense suffering. Thousands of civilians have been killed or displaced. The conflict has led to a significant refugee crisis, with people fleeing to neighboring countries or internal displacement.

within Ethiopia. The humanitarian situation has been worsened by the destruction of infrastructure and disruptions to essential services like healthcare and education.

2. **Famine and Food Insecurity:** The conflict has disrupted farming, leading to food shortages and widespread famine in affected areas. The Amhara region, as well as Tigray and other parts of northern Ethiopia, has experienced high levels of food insecurity due to the ongoing fighting.
3. **Economic Devastation:** The fighting has severely impacted the economy, particularly in the Amhara region, which was previously an agricultural hub. Destruction of crops, infrastructure, and trade routes has left many people without access to livelihoods.
4. **Displacement and Refugee Crisis:** According to the United Nations, the conflict has forced millions of people to flee their homes, with many seeking refuge in neighboring countries like Sudan. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Ethiopia have also been affected by inadequate shelter, food, and medical assistance.
5. **Human Rights Violations:** All parties involved in the Amhara Conflict have been accused of committing serious human rights violations, including atrocities such as massacres, sexual violence, and attacks on civilians. Both the Ethiopian federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front have been implicated in violations, creating a complex human rights crisis.

## ORIGIN OF TPLF AND ETHIOPIAN'S FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONFLICT-

### 1. Background: The Rise of TPLF in Ethiopian Politics

The **Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)** was a dominant force in Ethiopian politics for decades. It was founded in the 1970s as a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla group fighting against the military dictatorship of **Mengistu Haile Mariam** (the Derg regime).

After overthrowing the Derg in 1991, the **TPLF became the leading party** in the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (**EPRDF**), a coalition that ruled Ethiopia from 1991 to 2018.

#### Key Aspects of TPLF's Rule (1991–2018):

1. **Ethnic Federalism:** The TPLF established a system of ethnic-based federalism, dividing Ethiopia into regions based on ethnicity. While it gave some autonomy to regions, it also led to ethnic rivalries.
2. **Centralized Power:** Though the EPRDF was a coalition, the TPLF dominated political and military affairs, despite Tigray comprising only about 6% of Ethiopia's population.
3. **Economic Growth and Allegations of Corruption:** Ethiopia saw significant economic growth under TPLF rule, but allegations of **corruption, political repression, and human rights violations** increased dissatisfaction, especially among the larger ethnic groups like the Oromo and Amhara.

By the 2010s, opposition to the TPLF's dominance grew, leading to widespread **anti-government protests**, particularly in the **Oromo and Amhara regions**.

### 2. Abiy Ahmed's Rise to Power and TPLF's Decline (2018–2020)

#### Abiy Ahmed Becomes Prime Minister (2018)

- In response to mass protests, the EPRDF removed **Hailemariam Desalegn** as Prime Minister and replaced him with **Abiy Ahmed, an Oromo politician who promised reforms**.
- **Abiy dissolved the EPRDF** in 2019 and replaced it with the **Prosperity Party (PP)**, which aimed to unify Ethiopia beyond ethnic lines.
- The **TPLF refused to join the Prosperity Party**, seeing it as a move to sideline their influence.

#### Deterioration of Relations Between TPLF and Abiy's Government

- Abiy's government **removed many TPLF officials from top positions** in the military and intelligence agencies, which angered the TPLF.
- Several former TPLF leaders were **accused of corruption and human rights violations** and were either arrested or went into exile in Tigray.
- The TPLF **retreated to Tigray** and governed it independently, increasingly acting as a separate entity from the federal government.

### 3. Triggers of the War (2020)

#### September 2020: TPLF Holds Its Own Regional Elections

- Due to COVID-19, Abiy postponed Ethiopia's **national elections** (originally scheduled for August 2020).
- The **TPLF rejected the postponement** and held its **own regional elections in Tigray in September 2020**, defying the federal government.
- In response, Abiy's government **cut federal funding** to Tigray, which further escalated tensions.

#### November 2020: Outbreak of War

- On **November 3, 2020**, the **TPLF attacked Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) bases** in Tigray, claiming it was a **preemptive strike** to defend themselves from an imminent federal military action.
- The **Ethiopian federal government declared war** and launched a military offensive against the TPLF, marking the beginning of the **Tigray War**.

### 4. Impact of the Tigray War and Escalation

#### Key Phases of the War (2020–2022):

- **November 2020:** **Ethiopian federal forces, supported by Eritrean troops and Amhara militias, captured the Tigray capital, Mekelle.**
- **2021:** The TPLF regrouped and launched a **counteroffensive**, briefly capturing parts of the Amhara and Afar regions.
- **2022:** After intense fighting, both sides agreed to peace talks.

#### Key Consequences of the Conflict:

1. **Humanitarian Crisis:**

- Over **600,000 people were killed** (according to estimates).
- Millions were **displaced**, and famine-like conditions emerged in Tigray.
- Reports of **massacres, war crimes, and sexual violence** from both sides.

**2. Economic Devastation:**

- Ethiopia's economy suffered **severe damage**, with infrastructure destroyed and trade disrupted.

**3. International Response:**

- The **United Nations, U.S., and European Union** condemned human rights abuses and imposed **sanctions** on Ethiopian leaders.
- The **African Union (AU)** attempted to mediate peace talks.

**5. Ceasefire and Peace Agreement (2022–Present)**

- On **November 2, 2022**, the **federal government and TPLF signed a peace agreement in Pretoria, South Africa** under AU mediation.
- **Key Terms of the Agreement:**
  - The TPLF agreed to **disarm** and recognize the Ethiopian federal government.
  - The federal government promised to **restore services** to Tigray and provide humanitarian aid.

**Current Situation (2023–2024)**

- Despite the peace agreement, **tensions remain high**.
- The Amhara region and other parts of Ethiopia continue to experience **ethnic violence**, with new conflicts emerging.
- Eritrea, which fought alongside Ethiopia, has refused to withdraw from occupied parts of Tigray.
- The humanitarian situation remains dire, with slow aid distribution.

## Addressing the Impact of Armed conflict on women and children in Amhara

*A child clutching an empty notebook, not because they forgot to do their homework, but because their school no longer stands. A mother whispering lullabies, not to put her baby to sleep, but to drown out the echoes of explosions outside.*

- The **Amhara conflict** has left women and children in **unimaginable suffering**—forced displacement, sexual violence, starvation, and the loss of education.
- Over **1 million people** have been displaced, with children wandering through refugee camps, starving and alone.
- Women have been **targets of sexual violence**, used as weapons of war.
- Schools have been destroyed, leaving **millions of children** without education.
- Malnutrition is rising—**over 600,000 children** are at risk of severe acute malnutrition, many facing **imminent death** without intervention.
- **UNICEF** is on the ground, delivering **emergency food, vaccines, clean water, and trauma support** to survivors.
- We are restoring education through **temporary learning centers** and protecting displaced children.

Honorable Chair, Esteemed Delegates,

Imagine waking up not to the sound of your alarm, but to gunfire. A mother forced to flee, not out of choice, but out of fear for her child's life. This is not fiction; this is the reality of Amhara today.

Since April 2023, when Ethiopia's federal government attempted to dissolve regional special forces, tensions exploded into full-scale violence between the Ethiopian military and the Fano militia.

By August, a state of emergency had been declared, leading to mass displacement, violence, and atrocities.

Over 1.5 million people—mostly women and children—have been forced from their homes, many facing hunger, sexual violence, and even forced recruitment into armed groups.

But we have seen hope before. In South Sudan, the IGAD-led (Intergovernmental Authority on Development) peace process brought warring factions to the table, proving that even deep conflicts can be resolved with dialogue. Ethiopia must learn from this.

We urge the African Union and IGAD to step in as mediators between Fano and the government—because without dialogue, this cycle of violence will only continue.

As the delegate of UNICEF, we refuse to let children become the forgotten victims of war. We have deployed emergency response teams, provided psychosocial support, and set up temporary learning centers to restore education.

It's rightly said:-

"A future stolen today can never be rebuilt tomorrow."

If we do not act now, the consequences for children in Amhara will be irreversible.

Thank you.

Effective dialogue can involve:

- **Mediation by neutral third parties** (e.g., the African Union, IGAD, or the United Nations).
- **Peace talks** to establish ceasefires and long-term agreements.
- **Inclusion of affected communities**, ensuring that civilians—especially women and children—have a voice in the peace process.

## Case Study

Saturday, February 8, 2025

6:12 AM

Honorable Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

For nearly 30 years, Northern Ireland suffered from violent conflict known as **The Troubles**, ( also called the **Belfast Agreement** because it was signed in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on **April 10, 1998**.) where two groups—**the Protestant Unionists and Catholic Nationalists**—fought over political and religious differences.

More than 3,500 lives were lost. Peace seemed impossible. But on April 10, 1998, something incredible happened—the **Good Friday Agreement** was signed.

This agreement was made possible because all sides—political leaders, militias, and the British and Irish governments—came together for real dialogue.

With help from U.S. Senator **George Mitchell**, they agreed on three key things: **sharing power, respecting each other's rights, and laying down arms**.

On **May 22, 1998**, people voted for peace, and by **December 2, 1999**, a new government was formed, and violence began to end.

Here, in a similar situation, Amhara is caught in a deadly conflict fueled by ethnic divisions and historical grievances.

The only way forward is **inclusive talks**—where all groups, including **Fano militias and the Ethiopian government**, have a **voice**.

A fair power-sharing system, international mediation, and gradual disarmament under UN supervision could help bring peace, just as it did in Northern Ireland.

The Good Friday Agreement proved one thing: peace happens when enemies sit together and listen, not when they fight. If Northern Ireland could do it, Amhara can too.

Thank you.

The **Good Friday Agreement** was signed on **April 10, 1998**, marking a major milestone in the Northern Ireland peace process. The agreement aimed to end **The Troubles**, a violent conflict that lasted from the late 1960s, involving nationalist/republican groups (mostly Catholic, seeking Irish reunification) and unionist/loyalist groups (mostly Protestant, wanting to remain part of the UK). The **Good Friday Agreement** is also called the **Belfast Agreement** because it was signed in **Belfast, Northern Ireland**, on **April 10, 1998**. The negotiations and finalization of the agreement took place at **Castle Buildings**, a government complex in Stormont, Belfast.

## Why is it called the Good Friday Agreement?

The agreement was reached on **April 10, 1998**, which was **Good Friday**, the Christian holiday commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Since the peace deal was finalized on this day, it was popularly referred to as the **Good Friday Agreement**.

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## History & Background

The conflict known as *The Troubles* involved paramilitary violence, political disputes, and civil rights issues. Several peace efforts were attempted, but real progress was made in the **1990s**. The Irish Republican Army (IRA), the main armed nationalist group, declared a ceasefire in **1994**, followed by another in **1997** to facilitate negotiations. Finally, the agreement was brokered by the British and Irish governments, along with political parties from both communities in Northern Ireland.

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The agreement was approved through referendums in **Northern Ireland (71% voted in favor)** and the **Republic of Ireland (94% in favor)** on **May 22, 1998**. It officially came into effect on **December 2, 1999**.

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## Key Provisions

The Good Friday Agreement is structured into **three strands**:

1. **Power-sharing Government** – Established the **Northern Ireland Assembly**, ensuring participation from both unionist and nationalist parties.
2. **North-South Relations** – Created a **North/South Ministerial Council** to improve cooperation between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
3. **British-Irish Relations** – Formed the **British-Irish Council**, involving the UK, Ireland, and devolved governments in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

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## Impact on Northern Ireland

- **Political**: The agreement introduced **power-sharing**, meaning both communities had to work together in government, reducing political tensions.
- **Economic**: Stability led to **increased investment, economic growth, and tourism**, helping Northern Ireland recover from decades of instability.
- **Social**: It promoted **reconciliation** and **reduced violence**, though sectarian tensions still persist in some areas.

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## Challenges

- **Legacy Issues**: Many past violent incidents remain unresolved, causing tensions.

- **Brexit:** The UK's exit from the EU raised concerns about a **hard border** between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, potentially undermining the agreement  
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# DELIBERATION ON HUMANITARIAN CRISES DUE TO AMHARA CONFLICT

Saturday, February 8, 2025 7:46 AM

## Events and Dates in the Humanitarian Crisis of the Amhara Conflict:

- **April 2023** – The Ethiopian government and the Fano militia clashed over administrative and security control in the Amhara region, leading to widespread displacement of civilians.
- **August 2023** – A state of emergency was declared in Amhara due to escalating violence between the Fano militia and Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), severely impacting humanitarian operations.
- **October 2023** – Reports emerged of thousands of civilians being displaced, with women and children particularly vulnerable to malnutrition, lack of medical care, and displacement.
- **December 2023** – The Ethiopian government imposed restrictions on humanitarian aid access, worsening conditions in overcrowded displacement camps. Women and children faced food shortages, inadequate healthcare, and an increased risk of exploitation and gender-based violence.
- **March 2024** – The United Nations and international NGOs expressed concern over the worsening humanitarian situation, calling for immediate access to aid. However, government restrictions and ongoing conflict hindered relief efforts.
- **June 2024** – The World Food Programme (WFP) reported alarming levels of malnutrition among children in Amhara due to supply chain disruptions and restricted aid movement.
- **On August 10, 2024**

In late 2024, successful humanitarian missions reached conflict-affected areas such as Gondar, Metema, and Gojjam, where negotiations with local stakeholders allowed some access to essential supplies. However, security threats remain a significant concern, with at least 10 aid workers killed in 2024, including eight in Amhara

Malnutrition rates remain high, with only 69,000 severely malnourished children receiving treatment—far below the target of the 2024 Humanitarian Response Plan. Additionally, cholera and malaria outbreaks continue to spread, with over 4,400 cholera cases (including 60 deaths) and nearly one million malaria cases reported between July and November 2024.

## Strongest Event for a Stance:

- **December 2024 Crisis**: This event saw the peak of the humanitarian disaster, with severe food

shortages, an overwhelmed medical system, and restricted humanitarian aid. The Ethiopian government faced international criticism for limiting aid access, worsening conditions for displaced women and children.