



Impact of Military Support Provided to Ethiopian Government on Violations of IHL Principles

Background:

Irresponsible arms exports to Ethiopian government have contributed to ongoing human rights violations committed by Ethiopian Armed Forces during armed conflicts in the country. These violations include war crimes and crimes against humanity. Armed forces have carried out numerous indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks on civilians, resulting in a high number of casualties. Additionally, a significant number of women in Tigray region have been subjected to sexual violence, including use of traditional weapons such as drones. In January 2023, Ethiopian security forces unlawfully killed 23 civilians in the Oromia region. The government also imposed a state of emergency in August 2023, leading to over 200 killings by government forces in nine towns in the Amhara region. In January 2024, Ethiopian security forces killed at least 45 civilians in a massacre in Amhara state. These attacks demonstrate Ethiopia's disregard for principles of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and its involvement in crimes against humanity that amount to war crimes.

Although many principles of IHL establish legal obligations related to arms transfer to areas of armed conflict, explicitly prohibiting states from exporting weapons if they know they will be used to commit violations of IHL, several countries, including Germany, Russia, China, the United States of America, France, Turkey, Iran, Israeli occupation forces, Ukraine, Poland, and Britain, provided weapons to Ethiopian armed forces.

Reports from human rights organizations indicate that weapons imported by Ethiopia from abroad, such as the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 plane, Iranian Migrant 6 plane, and various American, Chinese, and Russian weapons, were used in violations of IHL.

This panel discussion aims to address **impact of military support provided to Ethiopian government on escalating violations of IHL**. It aims to examine irresponsible transfer of weapons to Ethiopian government and its implications on IHL rules.

Event Significance

Significance of this event is heightened by increasing non-compliance with Arms Trade Treaty, as weapons continue to flow into conflict areas where violations of IHL persist. Despite documentation and reporting of genocide crimes committed by enforcement agencies in Ethiopia and their threat to basic human rights, this panel discussion focuses on four main axes:

- **Axis I: Legal frameworks preventing weapons transfer to Ethiopia.**
- **Axis II: Military support provided to Ethiopia by countries and oversight thereof.**
- **Axis III: War crimes resulting from weapons transfer to Ethiopia, specifically in Tigray and Amhara regions.**
- **Axis IV: Role of African Union in limiting weapons transfer to conflict-affected countries in continent (using Ethiopia as a case study).**

Event Agenda



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Axis	Duration
Event Introduction and Opening Statement	5 mins.
Legal Frameworks Preventing Weapons Transfer to Ethiopia	15 mins.
Military Support Provided to Ethiopia by Countries and Oversight Over It	15 mins.
War Crimes Resulting from Weapons Transfer to Ethiopia (Tigray Region, Amhara Region)	15 mins.
Role of African Union in Limiting Weapons Transfer to Countries of Disputes and Conflicts in the Continent (Ethiopia Model)	15 mins.
Interactive Questions	10 mins.
Recommendations	5 mins.

Event Details

Event Location: Virtually via Zoom
Event Duration: 80 minutes
Event date: May 16, 2024, at 1 pm (Geneva Time)
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