



**MINISTER  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Dear Archbishop Makgoba,

**Humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia**

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of concern, which you wrote on behalf of the Synod of Bishops of the Anglican Church over the humanitarian crisis unfolding in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia.

We share your concerns over the reported atrocities involving mass killings, gender-based violence, abductions of civilians, looting and destruction perpetrated by all parties to the conflict, including foreign forces from neighbouring Eritrea.

The Government has called on the Federal government of Ethiopia to grant greater access to the Tigray Region for provision of humanitarian relief to the 4.5 million people requiring food and non-food assistance.

I wish to assure you, Archbishop, that in close liaison with the African Union (AU) and through the Special Envoys of the AU, South Africa is working towards the de-escalation of the conflict in Tigray and in bringing about an end to the conflict.

Archbishop, arrangements are being made for me to have a telephonic conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, H.E. Mr Demele Mekonnen, and I intend to convey Government's concern on the humanitarian crisis unfolding in the Tigray Region and call for a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G.N.M. Pandor'.

**Dr GNM Pandor, MP**  
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation  
Date: 17-4-2021

The Most Reverend Dr Thabo Makgoba  
Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town  
Cape Town



FROM THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN  
The Most Reverend Dr Thabo Cecil Makgoba DD (hc) PhD (UCT)

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2nd March 2021

**The Honourable Naledi Pandor**  
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation  
TSHWANE

Dear Minister Pandor,

I hope this finds you and your family well and keeping safe.

I write to you on behalf of the Synod of Bishops of the Anglican Church, with whom I shared the following last week.

Recently a delegation advocating the interests of the Tigrayan people visited me in Cape Town. What they told me, and what I have read since from multiple sources, tears at my heart. As you will be aware tens of thousands of people in the region have been forced from their homes and millions need humanitarian aid. The Ethiopian Red Cross has reported that more than half of the region's six million people need humanitarian assistance, but it doesn't have the capacity or resources to reach 80 percent of them.

In more recent days, Amnesty International has reported that hundreds of civilians were massacred last November in the holy city of Axum, one of the sites of Ethiopia's ancient civilization. In response to the Amnesty report, the official Ethiopian Human Rights Commission in Addis Ababa has said that it is still investigating but that "preliminary findings indicate the killing of an, as yet, unknown number of civilians by Eritrean soldiers in the city of Axum in retaliation for an earlier attack..." And AFP has reported that an official of the Addis Ababa-appointed regional government in Tigray has blamed troops from a "neighbouring country" for destroying factories and universities in Tigray.

I know that there are bitter feelings on both sides over the war in northern Ethiopia - I have been shocked by the level of ethnic hostility evident on social media arising from the conflict. But 26 years ago, the genocide in Rwanda occurred under our noses, with the world failing to stop it. What is happening in Tigray must not be allowed to deteriorate even further.

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I am aware that former President Motlanthe was in a delegation that visited Addis in November, and I don't want to engage in a blame game around the role of the African Union secretariat. But I would strongly urge you and the Government to bring to bear as much pressure as you can on the African Union to act decisively.

Apart from the desperate humanitarian needs, it seems to me that Ethiopians of all views and parties need to be pressured to have an indaba, to sit around a table, facilitated by the AU, to find an African solution to this political and humanitarian crisis - more specifically, to work out a broadly acceptable resolution which balances regional autonomy and federal power.

I cannot sit by silently while such events occur on our own continent.

Thank you for your attention.

God bless,  
Your sincerely,

+ Mabo Cape Town