Input for peacebuilding in the context of internal displacement

Ethiopia has been experiencing severe human rights violations and abuses, especially in the Tigray, Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, and Oromia regions. The conflict in these regions has led to widespread atrocities, including massacres, sexual violence, and forced displacement https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/ethiopia/. Mass burials and violence against the Amhara Community are common in Ethiopia. https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/04/ethiopia-military-executes-dozens-amhara-region.

Eyewitness reports and human rights organizations indicated that the bodies of the Amhara deceased were buried in mass graves using bulldozers in the Metekel Zone in 20202. https://amhcouk.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/84-AMHARA-GENOCIDE-240426-SAG-REPORT.pdf However, the violent conflict and spiraling human rights violations, the mass killings, and genocide have received little attention from the concerned bodies, including human rights organizations.

Of course, Ethiopia has several legal and policy frameworks related to the rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to the extent of establishing a Ministry of Peace (2018). Some legal frameworks include the 1995 Constitution, the 2018 Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission, the 2019 Kampala Convention, and the National Dialogue Commission (Proclamation No.1265/2021. While these frameworks can provide a foundation for addressing the rights of IDPs, they are not implemented to support the rights of the IDPs on the ground.

The challenges to implementing these legal frameworks for the plight of IDPs include divergent political interests and priorities, fragmented funding and resources, lack of a unified strategy, political and security challenges, lack of accountability, and gaps between policy and practice.

Specific measures are needed to harness political commitment to the rights and needs of IDPs, including international pressure, accountability, reinforcing institutional capacity, and establishing complaint mechanisms. The UN should monitor human rights violations and promote accountability through mechanisms like the Human Rights Council. Organizations, like UNHCR, OCHA, ICRC, MSF, etc., should advocate for the rights of displaced persons and work to raise global awareness about the situation in Ethiopia.

END

Tarekegn Ayalew Yehuala