

Thousands of Black Women Sexually Brutalized, But No Public Outrage



The United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations held a hearing on May 27, 2021 to discuss the crisis in Ethiopia. The region of Tigray, home to approximately 6 million people, has been under attack by a coalition comprised of the Ethiopian military, Eritrean forces, and Amhara militias since November 4, 2020.

The range of atrocities committed against innocent civilians defy human understanding. The systematic attack includes the plundering of personal property and businesses, destruction of Churches and Mosques, decimation of healthcare facilities, looting of ambulances and critical medication, annihilation of advanced water systems and the devastation of schools and universities. While property and buildings can be replaced or rebuilt, the most horrific attacks are unfortunately reserved for the people themselves. The obliteration of families is occurring through targeted massacres and the intentional starvation of, at a minimum, **ONE MILLION PEOPLE**. The government has embarked upon a multi-pronged strategy of physically extinguishing the people of Tigray and wrecking the survivors psychologically, in the hopes of forcing them into subjugation.

However, some of the most vile attacks are being waged against

women and girls; several as young as 8 years old. Ethiopian and Eritrean forces are raping Tigrayan women and girls on a scale previously unseen. Many are being gang-raped; **repeatedly**. In too many cases, victims cannot receive medical attention as they are prevented from seeking or accessing it. The sexual violence is so brutal that career humanitarians are expressing disbelief at the level of cruelty exacted against these vulnerable victims. During the hearing, USAID Assistant to the Administrator, Sarah Charles, provided testimony to Senators regarding the violence carried out against women and girls, saying, *"Some perpetrators are targeting the wives of priests, abusing women in front of their families or using a level of violence so brutal that women are left with organ damage. The severity of abuse is amongst the absolute worst I have seen in my nearly two decades of humanitarian work."*

https://www.thedopewriterchic.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Video_1.mov

In response to Senator Menendez's (D-NJ) question regarding the scope and scale of the sexual and gender-based violence in Tigray, Charles stated, *"The UN estimates that 22,000 women could seek treatment for gender-based violence this year in Tigray. We anticipate that this is a significant underestimate of the number of women who have suffered from gender-based violence."*

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According to the United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, conflict can result in higher levels of gender-based violence against women and girls, including arbitrary killings, torture, sexual violence and forced marriage. Women and girls are primarily and increasingly targeted by the use of

sexual violence, including as a tactic of war. While women and girls are in general, more predominantly subject of sexual violence, men and boys have also been victims of sexual violence, especially in contexts of detention. Trafficking is also exacerbated during and after conflict owing to the breakdown of political, economic and social structures, high levels of violence and increased militarism.

In addition, access to essential services such as health care, including sexual and reproductive health services are disrupted, with women and girls being at a greater risk of unplanned pregnancy, maternal mortality and morbidity, severe sexual and reproductive injuries and contracting sexually transmitted infections, resulting from conflict-related sexual violence.

If you would like to help the women of Tigray, **UTILIZE YOUR VOICE** to speak up for them, as they are unable to do so for themselves. Share this article, search the #TigrayGenocide hashtag, donate to our fundraiser, and/or contact your Senator, or Congressional representative to demand an IMMEDIATE END to the #TigrayGenocide.