

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PEACE AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA

WHEREAS, the war in Ethiopia's Amhara region is claiming countless lives, endangering civilians, and challenging peace, pluralism, and human rights; and

WHEREAS, the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide have issued an Active Genocide Alert for Ethiopia's Amhara Region due to ongoing killings of civilians by federal forces, the Oromo Liberation Army, and Oromia Region security forces; and

WHEREAS, the Amhara people are indigenous to Ethiopia, are one of the largest ethnic groups in the country, and have a rich culture and history that is intertwined into the fabric of Ethiopia; and

WHEREAS, Since June 2021, Ethiopian authorities have effectively besieged the Tigray region, blocking food, medical supplies, and fuel from entering the region, while maintaining a blanket shutdown of basic services.

WHEREAS, a large number of civilians, many of whom were unarmed women, children, and elderly people, were killed, or injured through the use of drone strikes, heavy artillery shelling, and other weapons of war by government security forces since April 2023; and

WHEREAS, government security forces and other violent armed groups have perpetrated acts of sexual and gender-based violence on Amhara women and girls; and

WHEREAS, the European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ) also reported that the human rights violations range from forced displacement and mass arrests to systematic massacres and ethnic cleansings; and The Economist reported that abductions and killings are rampant across the nation; and

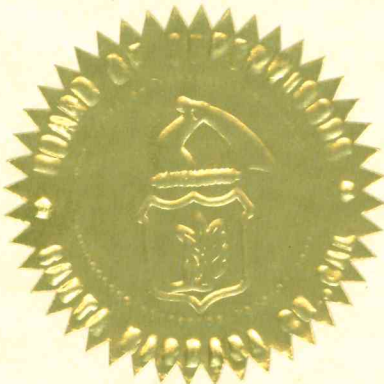
WHEREAS, since Spring of 2022 Ethiopia's ruling Oromo Prosperity Party has arrested thousands of civilians including parliamentarians, opposition figures, journalists, civil society leaders, and other citizens who have faced torture, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, lack of due process, inordinate legal fees; and

WHEREAS, freedom of press and freedom of expression in Ethiopia has been under threat following the arrest of independent journalists, internet disruptions, the suspension of over a dozen media outlets; and

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Barbara encourages continued efforts of the Biden Administration to respond to ethnic violence and tensions in Ethiopia, including declining to reinstate Ethiopia's participation as a beneficiary in the AGOA until progress is made towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict, and conditions allow for the smooth flow of humanitarian aid.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AND RESOLVED, that this Board of Supervisors affirms its support for peace and respect for human rights in Ethiopia.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of Santa Barbara County, State of California, this 13th day of February 2024, by unanimous vote of all members present.



ATTEST: Monika Reyesato
Clerk of the Board

Das Williams
Supervisor - 1st District

Lawrence Cappo
Supervisor - 2nd District

Joan Hartman
Supervisor - 3rd District

Bob Weber
Supervisor - 4th District

Stacy
Supervisor - 5th District