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Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
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Welcome to today's briefing where we will cover four agenda items.

Beforehand, I would like to begin by expressing deepest sentiments of sadness at the recent loss on innocent lives. The barbaric and egregious acts by terrorist organizations against a civilian population is greatly condemned. Such acts against fellow Ethiopians are no less than bestial manifestations in their nature. And sometimes words even fail. No human regardless of the multiple identity groups they belong to should be subjected to such inhumane acts. Yet the very face of terrorism manifests in such ways.

We understand there is anger. We acknowledge there is frustration. Anger has dual features – it can be toxic and destructive. And on the other hand, it can be a catalyst for productivity if channeled appropriately. What Ethiopia needs in this moment as a country of more than 110 million is not arm chair social media warriors fanning the agenda of organized destructive forces. It requires a silent majority to actively demonstrate unity where Ethiopia's enemies actively work for discord. It requires heated temperaments to cool down and calmly connect the dots of the greater operating context. It requires examining the real culprits lurking in the shadows rather than shooting down those most visible and exposed.

I) Current Peace and Security Issues

- On this note, the first agenda item for today's briefing is therefore related to current peace and security issues with the recent attacks by OLF Shene on innocent Ethiopians
- The Ethiopian Federal Police is currently undertaking investigations for further details on what transpired and how it transpired
- As we know pockets of Oromia where OLF Shene is terrorizing civilians have been under heavy government-led operations in the past months
- Particularly following last week's attack, defense forces reinforced a response operation against OLF Shene the very next day
- While I defer to further details to be shared by the security sector in this regard, it's important to highlight that this is not an isolated incident;
- it has been purposely designed to foment deep divisions between ethnic Oromos and ethnic Amharas that in unity topped a TPLF hegemony
- It has been purposely designed and communicated in a manner to anger citizens in the Amhara region while victims comprise ethnic Amharas, Oromos and Gumuz.

- It has been purposely designed to anger citizens at a time the country is leaning straighter towards development
- There is undoubtedly a geopolitical underpinning to security threats within the country that are intensified through errand runners locally
- The architects of ethnic strife colluding with their foreign masters know which strings to pull in the divisive fabric that they were weaving for the past 28 years;
- Hence it is imperative to place all these incidents in the context of who thrives by creating instability in Ethiopia
- While federal and regional forces continue to take measures against OLF Shene, but also their associates propped up through foreign funds to destabilize, the region is also doing work to enable communities to be custodians and drivers of security. Those in need of assistance as a direct outcome of these attacks are currently being supported.
- **It is to be recalled that the National Security Council set a direction two months ago to undertake various rule of law enforcement and terrorism countering measures and therefore the security sector has been working in accordance**
- It is the unwavering unity of Ethiopians across the nation that overturned TPLF's ambitions and it will be the unwavering Unity of Ethiopians that will enable thwarting destabilizing efforts by their associates.
- This is predicated in Ethiopians in the country and abroad seeing difficult situations for what they really are and pushing back in a united manner against the purposeful amplification of ethnic and religious divisions to weaken the nation
- I want to emphasize here that peace and security remain a key agenda and priority of the government. Detailed security operations against terrorism by its very nature is not a daily publicity item hence the security sector needs to be supported and trusted that it is delivering on its mission, despite some challenges, and will continue informing the public at intervals as it has been doing so.

II) Peace Agenda

- The second briefing point today pertains to the Government's announcement of a peace agenda
- One of the agenda items that the Executive Committee and the Central Committee of the Prosperity Party discussed in the recent meetings pertains to the peaceful resolution of the conflict in the northern part of Ethiopia;
- It is not news that the Federal Government has been consistent in promoting peace to any political contestations
- The posture of the government prior to start of the conflict has been one of peace until it was provoked through an attack on the Northern Command of the Defense Forces
- Even throughout the active combat period, the Government has made numerous calls to the TPLF to lay down arms and avoid further bloodshed
- It is with this continued commitment to peace that the ruling Party's Executive Committee had prior established a committee to explore the prospect of the peaceful resolution of the conflict.
- As one of the members of the committee, the Minister for Justice Dr. Gedion during his briefing on Monday underlined factors and considerations behind the peace process decision as:
 - We have always preferred peace and have been forced in to the conflict. This is a conflict that has been imposed on us.
 - Peace is essential for our political and economic reform initiatives to succeed.

- We want to put an end to this tragic chapter in our history and move forward. We aspire to move towards reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation of communities affected by the conflict. We want to avoid further bloodshed and end the suffering and misery occasioned by the conflict.
- We want to foster national consensus through national dialogue.
- He has also laid out the principles that are to guide the process:
 - Respect for the Constitutional Order
 - Our Fundamental National Interests
 - The African Union as the facilitator of the process in accordance with the principle African Solutions to African Problems.

III) Humanitarian Assistance Update

As it pertains to humanitarian assistance being administrated to affected communities:

- Tigray: Between June 18th 2022 to June 21st 2022 20,336 mt of food; 1,775mt of non-food items; 158,712 liters of fuel; 57 million ETB; 15.48 mt of medicine were dispatched to Mekelle on 488 trucks of which 283 have returned thus far.
- I recognize that His Excellency Legesse Tulu also provided a humanitarian update in his briefing this morning and it's important to note that my update is contained to assistance in the past month. So be cognizant of numerical differences considering scope of time each one of us have briefed on.

In the same period:

- **Afar:** 1798mt of food and 742 non-food item kits
- **Amhara region:** 1979mt of food
- In relation to humanitarian assistance, it is critical to debunk the erroneous information about fuel being a case for closure of Mekelle Airport and to substantiate this, we had requested information on the type of aircraft that is being deployed by humanitarian partners for the Tigray operation and I have data which confirms three types of aircrafts are being utilized:

S.No	Name of Air-Craft	Deployed by	Type	Capacity		Fuel Required	Remark
				Cargo	Passenger		
1	DCH-8-402	WFP	passenger and cargo	5 MT	50 seats	2,500 Litres	The Amount of fuel required for the round trip is filled at Addis Ababa
2	B737-244	WFP	Cargo	13 MT		10,000 Litres	The Amount of fuel required for the round trip is filled at Addis Ababa
3	DASH-8	ICRC	passenger and cargo	2.5 MT	21 Seats	1,800 Litres	The Amount of fuel required for the round trip is filled at Addis Ababa

- So there is no refueling requirement on the other end.

IV) Green Legacy and Agricultural Activities

- Climate change is an enormous global threat, affecting Ethiopia with extreme land degradation, droughts, floods, biodiversity loss and others.
- On June 21st Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in the presence of federal and regional government officials and the diplomatic corps launched the 4th Green Legacy season
- This marks the final of the four-year national challenge to plant 20billion seedlings in four years
- **There seems to be an erroneous perception that by promoting Green Legacy and agricultural endeavors the government is uninterested in addressing security challenges and mourning the loss of lives. Such perceptions are skewed and purposely misleading.**
- Peace and Security continues to be a primary priority of the Government while **destabilizing Ethiopia continues to be a primary priority of enemy forces working in an orchestrated and coordinated manner.** Their ambition and intention is that Ethiopians are always in constant animosity towards each other and therefore will let development efforts slip away. But for Ethiopians this is not an option. With a growing population, the Government is also quite fixed and focused in ensuring development endeavors progress unhindered. And Green Legacy is one of many national development endeavors!
- One of the key successes of the Green Legacy initiative has been instrumental in mobilizing millions and creating public awareness, thereby leading to significant decline in the rate of deforestation over the past couple of years.
- The proliferation of more than 120,000 nursery sites throughout the country has enabled job creation for various sections of society. Resultantly over 183 thousand permanent and temporary jobs have been created as a direct outcome of our greening endeavors. This has generated around **1.3 Bn ETB** in income in wages. You can imagine the impact of these jobs at the household level
- In addition, an annually improving survival rate of around 80% is contributing to the creation of new forests.
- Of this year's seedlings prepared for planting 52% account for agroforestry trees. Forestry trees on the other hand account for 47% of seedlings prepared and the remaining are ornamental trees.
- So, this data is to reiterate that Green Legacy need not be viewed simply as a mere tree planting exercise. It has to be understood in the context of what it means currently and for coming generations.
- Focus on high value plants like avocado, papaya and bamboo contributes towards economic gain and increased commercialization
- Avocado exports have been made over the past year and exports expected to boost as the Green Legacy initiative matures hence the foreign currency earning potential of Green Legacy is also another attribute to note
- We should also be cognizant that full efforts by all stakeholders in this current rainy season will yield greater results towards national productivity endeavors, particularly with global supply chain disruptions and related increase in cost of basic commodities

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