

# International Development Committee

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

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From Sarah Champion MP, Chair

The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP  
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Secretary  
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office  
*By email*

25 October 2021

## Escalation of conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia

Dear Foreign Secretary,

I have read with increasing concern reports of an escalation in the conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia.

As you will be aware, earlier this year my select committee published a report on the humanitarian situation in Tigray, calling on the UK Government to use its diplomatic means to work with partners in ending the conflict, and to ensure that humanitarian agencies have unimpeded access to the region to undertake their crucial work. The Committee also called for the FCDO to work with appropriate authorities to enable access for independent monitors to the region to collect evidence of human rights abuses, including systematic sexual violence.

The Committee welcomed the Government's constructive response to the report, prioritising an improvement in humanitarian access, reducing conflict and seeking a political solution.

Since the Committee's report was published, the situation in the region has deteriorated, with an escalation in the conflict and reports of widespread hunger. UN OCHA's latest assessment notes that humanitarian supplies reaching the region are insufficient to meet the needs of communities, with many programmes reduced or paused due to a lack of cash, supplies and fuel.

I would be grateful if you could provide an update on the FCDO's assessment of the situation in the region and actions being taken by the FCDO in response, namely:

- How the FCDO is using its diplomatic relationships with partners at both bilateral and multilateral level to work towards a peaceful resolution to the conflict
- What steps the FCDO is taking to ensure independent, transparent and impartial investigation of human rights violations in the region, including an update on the deployment of PSVI experts
- How the FCDO is embedding early warning mechanisms for atrocities into its work
- The level of funding allocated through bilateral and multilateral channels to respond to the humanitarian crisis over (i) the past six months and (ii) planned to be allocated over the next six months

I would be grateful if I could receive your response by Monday 15 November. The Committee intends to publish your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S', on a light blue background.

**Sarah Champion MP**  
**Chair of the Committee**