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Freedom in the World 2024 - Ethiopia

NOT FREE

20

/ 100

Political Rights 10 / 40

Civil Liberties 10 / 60

LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS

21 / 100 Not Free

Global freedom statuses are calculated on a weighted scale. [See the methodology.](#)

Overview

The 2018 appointment of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed set off a transitional period in Ethiopia. Abiy pledged to reform Ethiopia's authoritarian state and has held elections and implemented some liberalization policies. However, Ethiopia remains beset by internal conflict and intercommunal violence, abuses by security forces and violations of due process are common, and many restrictive laws remain in force. Fighting in the Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray regions in recent years has caused widespread displacement, and credible allegations of atrocity crimes have emerged.

Key Developments in 2023

- In January, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which fought an armed campaign against the federal government beginning in 2020, began surrendering its weapons in line with the 2022 Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA). The TPLF was removed from the government's list of terrorist groups in March.
- In January, members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) in the Oromia region formed a breakaway synod. Lethal clashes between rival groups and security forces followed before a reconciliation was

reached in mid-February. The government curtailed access to social platforms nationwide in early February in response to the split and did not restore access until July.

- Peace talks between the government and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), which has been locked in fighting with government forces since 2018, began in April but failed in May. The federal government launched a new campaign against the OLA after those talks failed. Another round of talks ended without an agreement in November.
- In August, the federal government declared a state of emergency in the Amhara region, after paramilitary groups joined the decentralized Fano militia and began fighting government forces. Authorities cut internet access, arrested large numbers of people—including journalists covering events in Amhara—and engaged in extrajudicial killings. A thousand people had been arrested nationwide by late August according to the United Nations.

Political Rights

A Electoral Process

A1 0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections? 1 / 4

The president is the head of state and is indirectly elected to a six-year term by both chambers of Parliament. Sahle-Work Zewde, a diplomat, became the country's first female president in October 2018.

The prime minister is head of government and is selected by the largest party in Parliament after elections, or in the case of a resignation. Abiy Ahmed was sworn in for a new five-year mandate as prime minister in October 2021, after the Prosperity Party won a parliamentary majority in the June and September elections. The results were contested by political actors who were excluded or who did not participate in the process due to perceived unfairness.

A2 0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections? 1 / 4

The bicameral Parliament includes the 153-seat House of Federation, whose members are elected by state assemblies to five-year terms, and the House of Peoples' Representatives, with 547 members directly elected to five-year terms.

The June and September 2021 parliamentary and regional elections benefited from changes in electoral laws and reform of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) which improved the body's operations

and encouraged more opposition parties to participate. Some 46 political parties participated in the elections, fielding 9,505 candidates. Some 37 million people registered to vote, and 90 percent of registered voters cast a ballot. Final results from the NEBE confirmed a majority for the Prosperity Party, which won 448 constituencies after the September round. Lawmakers from two opposition parties later joined the Prosperity Party, which held 454 seats by January 2022. Elections were indefinitely postponed in Tigray.

Despite improvements, the elections were fraught with insecurity, registration problems, and other challenges that limited widespread acceptance of the outcomes. Numerous political parties raised concerns about the closure of their offices by security agents, harassment, imprisonment, and killings of their members. Key opposition groups ultimately boycotted the election, leaving many seats uncontested. While more competitive than previous elections, the 2021 polls still fell short of conferring broad-based legitimacy to the elected government among significant political factions.

A3 0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies? 2 / 4

Several reforms to the electoral system and its oversight have taken shape under Prime Minister Abiy. Under a law passed in 2019, restrictions that had impeded opposition groups and the voting rights of prisoners, internally displaced persons, and other groups were reduced.

Challenges that arose during the 2021 polls tested the impartiality and credibility of the NEBE and the broader electoral framework, including the participation of imprisoned candidates. One party, the Balderas for True Democracy (BTD), sought legal recourse to ensure imprisoned candidates were registered. The Federal High Court directed the NEBE to allow the jailed candidates to participate but electoral authorities initially resisted, saying ballots had already been printed; they ultimately reprinted ballots to include BTD candidates. The court also ruled in favor of several Oromo political parties that were denied NEBE accreditation, though they did not contest the polls due to the lengthy court proceedings.

The lack of a complete census, which was scheduled to be completed in 2017 but was repeatedly delayed due to security concerns, remains a major impediment to the demarcation of constituencies that ensure fair representation based on accurate population estimates. With the exception of the recently established Sidama regional state, the distribution of electoral constituencies has not changed from the original distribution established in 1995.

B Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, 1 / and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of 4 these competing parties or groupings?

The transition beginning in 2018 initially brought progressive political reforms, but crackdowns in 2020—first after the assassination of Oromo musician Hachalu Hundessa and then after the beginning of the conflict in Tigray later that year—harmed political pluralism. In 2021, the House of Peoples' Representatives designated the TPLF and OLA terrorist organizations, accusing them of carrying out acts of politically motivated violence against government officials and civilian targets based on their ethnic identity. Consequently, thousands of Tigrayans and Oromos accused of being affiliated with the TPLF and OLA faced arrest and other pressure. The government removed TPLF from its list of terrorist groups in March 2023, which eased pressure on Tigrayans. However, Oromo civilians still face pressure over suspected ties to the OLA.

Members of opposition parties have continued to face restrictions on assembly, harassment, and arrest. In March 2023, the NEBE criticized the government for restricting the activities of several opposition parties, including the BTM. Also in March, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) criticized police officers' disruptions of BTM and Enat Party assemblies. The EHRC also criticized the arrest of Gurage Unity and Justice Party leaders and restrictions imposed on other political-party leaders. Several OLF leaders have been held in detention since 2020, in defiance of court orders calling for their release. Human Rights Watch (HRW) criticized their continued detention in July 2023, noting that they were being held without charge.

B2 0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its 1 / support or gain power through elections? 4

The Prosperity Party, which won a landslide victory in 2021, has accused opposition officials and government critics of having links with rebel groups and hindered their political participation. Key opposition groups including the Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC), the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) boycotted the 2021 elections, citing electoral mismanagement and harassment by the ruling party.

B3 0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces 1 / that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that 4 employ extrapolitical means?

The 2021 designation of the TPLF, which had dominated national and Tigrayan politics for decades, and the OLA as terrorist organizations has

been detrimental to their bases of political support. Fighting against the OLA and the crackdown on opposition members and supporters following Hundessa's 2020 assassination further limited Oromo people's political rights. Addis Ababa has also used the 2021 designation of the OLA as a terrorist organization to crack down on nonviolent opposition supporters and members under the pretext of affiliation with terrorists.

Eritrean forces have also wielded influence after the Abiy government sought Eritrean support in the Tigray conflict. While the 2022 CoHA called for the withdrawal of Eritrean forces from Tigray, those forces have remained and have been accused of engaging in violence after the CoHA was reached. In May 2023, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said that Eritrean personnel stopped their staff from entering a village in Tigray.

B4 0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities? 1 / 4

Women hold 41.3 percent of seats in the House of Peoples' Representatives and 30.6 percent in the House of Federation, but the percentage of lower-house women candidates was just below 16 percent in the 2021 polls. Women remain significantly underrepresented in elected and appointed positions.

Ethiopia criminalizes LGBT+ activity, and LGBT+ people do not identify themselves openly due to discrimination and persecution.

Since 1991, political parties in Ethiopia have primarily been based on ethnicity. However, upon coming to office, Abiy has advocated a message of national unity and expressed disagreement with the enduring legacies of ethnic politics. In recent years, alliances between major political factions have realigned, with Tigrayan and Oromo parties urging for more decentralized power to ethnically defined regions, and other political parties generally favoring nonethnically defined federalism and a greater unifying role for the federal government. Ethnic groups like the Gurage and Wolaita have been denied their demand for regional statehood, despite the constitution allowing for such a designation.

C Functioning of Government

C1 0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government? 1 / 4

The shortcomings of the 2021 elections, including a climate of insecurity and growing repression of some opposition groups, presaged a stall in political reform. Many Ethiopians do not enjoy representative rule in

practice because of ongoing instability and because the government has imposed restrictive measures in response to that instability.

The escalation of violence in Tigray, which was further worsened by the deployment of Eritrean troops, prevented the 2021 elections from occurring in the region, leaving people there without elected representatives.

The federal government does not wield control over areas plagued by insecurity, such as parts of Amhara and Oromia. Other areas have been under prolonged states of emergency with heightened military presence and control, including parts of Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella, and Oromia.

C2 0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective? 2 / 4

Corruption and unequal resource distribution are significant problems that have contributed to civil unrest. However, the Prosperity Party has accused public servants or opposition politicians of corruption as a political weapon to punish dissent. Petty bribery and corruption, often involving local officials and police, are widespread. Corruption within the justice system remains a significant challenge, and judges caught accepting bribes are rarely punished.

In October 2023, authorities arrested 41 officials within the Immigration, Nationality, and Vital Events Agency over accusations that the passport-issuance process was affected by corruption. In December, the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission accused federal and regional officials of dismissing anticorruption personnel in their offices for exposing misconduct carried out by those officials.

Food-aid distribution has been impacted by official corruption. In June 2023, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) suspended food deliveries throughout Ethiopia amid reports of a government-initiated "diversion scheme" that partially benefited the military. USAID had already suspended deliveries in northern Tigray in May. The World Food Programme (WFP) did the same throughout Tigray that same month and initiated a nationwide halt in June. USAID restored deliveries in October, while the WFP announced a new food-aid delivery scheme in November.

C3 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency? 1 / 4

Very little information is available about counterinsurgency operations and ethnic conflicts in Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, and Oromia. The extent of the human rights abuses and war crimes committed in these areas remains difficult to verify. State media and government statements

have bolstered an official narrative that has been challenged by reports of alleged atrocities, sexual violence, and the scale of insecurity.

Amid widespread impunity for security forces, efforts to ensure accountability for abuses committed by those forces lack transparency.

Add Q

Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a -2 culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

Since the war in northern Ethiopia began in 2020, Amhara regional forces have taken control of and attempted to annex areas in Western Tigray, with the support of Ethiopian and Eritrean forces. Regional officials and Amhara security forces reportedly ordered the removal of thousands of Tigrayans, while Amhara forces were implicated in an ethnic-cleansing campaign against Tigrayans. Ethnic displacement has continued to occur in Tigray after the CoHA was reached in 2022. In April 2023, the Associated Press reported that Amhara forces had displaced some 47,000 Tigrayans from the Mai Tsebri area, citing UN data. In June, HRW reported that regional authorities and Amhara security forces were engaged in ethnic cleansing, targeting Tigrayans in the Western Tigray Zone. Members of the Fano militia, an ethnic Amhara group, were also accused of forcibly expelling civilians.

In Oromia, Amhara militants have been implicated in the killings of Oromo civilians and displacement of tens of thousands of people in areas bordering Amhara. Fano militants were also accused of attacking ethnic Oromo residents within Oromia during the 2020–22 Tigray conflict.

Civil Liberties

D Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media? 1 / 4

Journalists in Ethiopia are constrained by security concerns that limit their ability to work and travel, government pressure, arrest, and the threat of expulsion. International and Ethiopian journalists and outlets often come under government pressure over their coverage of internal conflict and other political dynamics. Ethiopian journalists, who risk arrest without charge or violent attack, are known to use pseudonyms or self-censor. Most private media outlets are established with a goal of satisfying distinct political or ethnic groups' interests. Reports from state media agencies must follow the ruling party's narrative; content that contradicts that narrative is removed.

The board of the Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA) is supposed to be selected in an open and transparent process. But in 2022, Parliament

violated a 2021 media law, which provided a more liberal media framework, to appoint Prosperity Party members to the EMA board.

Journalists faced arrest and violence in 2023. Over a period of several days in April, eight journalists were arrested, several of whom reported on matters facing ethnic Amhara people. At least three journalists who reported on events in Amhara were arrested in separate incidents in Addis Ababa in August, after a state of emergency had been declared in the Amhara region. One of those individuals had been arrested in April. In September, security officers in the Tigrayan regional capital of Mekelle physically assaulted three journalists who covered a protest there.

Regulatory pressure was also brought to bear against outlets in 2023. In January, authorities in the Somali region suspended 15 foreign media outlets over licensing concerns, citing an EMA directive. The Somali Region Journalists Association, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that had its own license to operate revoked in January, said that authorities were using licensing issues as a pretext to target the outlets. In May, the EMA temporarily suspended the license of Mahibere Kidusan TV, an EOC-affiliated outlet. The EMA said that the outlet was provoking conflict with its output.

D2 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private? 1 / 4

The Ethiopian constitution guarantees religious freedom, and different faith groups have coexisted in the country for centuries. However, religion has increasingly become a divisive factor in Ethiopian politics, and local conflicts have featured violence along religious lines.

The government has been accused of involving itself in religious matters, especially as the EOC faced a split in 2023. In January, members in Oromia formed a new synod; lethal clashes between rival groups and security forces followed before a reconciliation was reached in February. The EOC had criticized Abiy in early February amid accusations that the government was backing the Oromia synod. In August, authorities detained seven bishops from the breakaway synod who did not support reconciliation.

D3 0-4 pts

Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination? 1 / 4

Academic freedom remains restricted in Ethiopia, though academics have become more vocal on political and economic matters in lectures, at conferences, in media columns, and online since the lifting of a 2018 state of emergency. However, self-censorship remains common in the context of ongoing conflicts and political tensions.

Most institutions of higher education are funded and administered by the federal government, which also sets admission standards and student quotas. The Ministry of Education still monitors and regulates official curriculums. In May 2023, the government enacted a bill to grant autonomy to public universities aimed at ensuring operational freedom and self-governance.

D4 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or 1 / other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution? 4

The government's crackdown on opposing views has pushed individuals to refrain from commenting on sensitive topics, including political issues. Ethiopians fear expressing personal views due to ongoing civil conflict and the government's conduct; authorities have engaged in extrajudicial executions, mass killings, nationwide sweeps, raids, and arrests. Public figures, meanwhile, have used hate speech and incited violence, particularly against Amhara and Oromo people.

Government security agencies surveil individuals and politicians through wire-tapping. Digital surveillance is widespread. Ethiopian authorities are able to hack into detainees' mobile phones after purchasing a surveillance system from Cellebrite, an Israeli firm. Security-agency personnel are trained to observe suspicious discussions or statements critical of the government, which also employs informants.

Authorities have restricted access to the internet and social platforms during periods of conflict. In February 2023, the government cut access to platforms including Facebook, Telegram, and YouTube amid tensions in the country's Orthodox community. Many Ethiopians resorted to virtual private networks to use social media. Those social-media restrictions ended in July. Authorities cut mobile connectivity in Amhara in April 2023, when Addis Ababa announced that regional special forces would be integrated into the federally controlled security apparatus. Fixed-line and mobile internet service was cut in Amhara in August with the region's state of emergency.

The government silences critical voices including those of political opponents, members of Parliament, and Prosperity Party members to control the narratives around internal conflict. In December 2023, for example, Taye Dendea, who sharply criticized the government's conduct regarding Oromia, was dismissed as minister of peace. He was then arrested for purported links to the OLA.

E Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly? 0 / 4

Free assembly is restricted by insecurity and associated declarations of states of emergency or martial law. Parts of Amhara and Oromia are under the control of command posts that can restrict local freedoms in the areas under their purview. Government crackdowns on critical and opposing voices have further curtailed freedom of assembly throughout the country.

In August 2023, Addis Ababa declared a six-month state of emergency in Amhara following clashes between government forces and Fano militants. Authorities may ban gatherings and impose curfews under the state of emergency.

Government authorities violently dispersed protests in 2023. In February, security forces reportedly killed six people protesting long-standing water-supply concerns in the city of Wolkite by indiscriminately using live ammunition. In December, the Addis Ababa City Administration reportedly banned a planned antiwar demonstration and threatened the organizers.

Score Change: The score declined from 1 to 0 because the state of emergency in the Amhara region further restricted public gatherings, and security forces used live ammunition to suppress water-related protests in another region.

E2 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights- and governance-related work? 1 / 4

Under a civil society law passed in 2019, the federal Authority for Civil Society Organizations retains broad powers. Human rights- and governance-related NGOs are generally able to legally operate, but many are unable to access large parts of Ethiopia in practice due to security challenges or a lack of official approval. Some discourse is tolerated in civil society but NGOs face threats and warnings for advocating for issues contrary to the government's position, especially in relation to internal conflict.

In January 2023, authorities arrested four staff members of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) who were assessing complaints lodged by individuals affected by a government house-demolition program. In April, two staff members of Catholic Relief Services were killed by unidentified assailants in Amhara. In October, authorities assaulted two staff members of the African Development Bank, which withdrew international staff members from the country in December.

E3 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations? 1 / 4

The constitution recognizes the right of workers to join trade unions, and more than 500,000 workers are organized under the umbrella of the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions. However, independent unions have faced harassment in the past, and there has not been a legal strike in Ethiopia since 1993.

Many chambers of commerce and business associations exist for different industries and locations. The largest and oldest among them, the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce, is a regular critic of economic policy. The federally organized Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce, of which the Addis Ababa-based chamber is a member, aligns to that policy.

F Rule of Law

F1 0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary? 1 / 4

The constitution guarantees judicial independence, but courts face political interference and lack autonomy in practice. Recent reforms have embedded structural flaws and institutional biases, such as granting military courts exclusive jurisdiction over crimes involving military personnel, which contradicts international standards and undermines prosecutorial independence.

Security forces have maintained significant influence over the judicial process, especially in cases against opposition leaders and other political adversaries. Judges who attempt to exercise independence face arrest. Courts remain complicit in ensuring impunity for security forces, especially in relation to the treatment of political prisoners.

F2 0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters? 0 / 4

Due process rights are generally not respected. The right to a fair trial is often not respected, particularly for government critics. In civil matters, due process is hampered by the limited capacity of the judicial system, especially in the peripheral regions where access to government services is weak. As a result, routine matters regularly take years to be resolved. Prosecutors, meanwhile, face pressure from politicians. Human rights abuses and extrajudicial punishments by security forces occur throughout the country, and those who commit such abuses go unpunished.

The attorney general's office was placed under the Ministry of Justice in 2021, giving the ministry considerable powers over investigations and limiting prosecutorial independence. A September 2023 report produced by the UN International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE) warned that the government may further centralize power within the ministry as part of an envisioned justice-sector reform plan.

OLF leaders have been detained since 2020, despite court orders mandating their release. The EHRC has reported numerous instances of arbitrary arrest, detention, and prolonged imprisonment of individuals suspected of ties with armed groups in Oromia. Authorities cite security needs when justifying these actions.

Authorities unlawfully or arbitrarily arrested individuals on a regular basis in 2023. In its June 2022–23 report, the EHRC noted several incidents where authorities arbitrarily arrested people; hundreds were arrested in Addis Ababa in January amid tensions within the Orthodox community, for example. The EHRC also noted that authorities forcibly disappeared individuals in several regions during its reporting period. Authorities engaged in mass arrests after the federal government declared a state of emergency in Amhara in August. In late August, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported that at least 1,000 people were arrested nationwide after the state of emergency was declared.

F3 0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and 0 / freedom from war and insurgencies? 4

Ongoing conflict has contributed to insecurity in several regions of Ethiopia. The TPLF waged an armed campaign against the federal government from 2020 to 2022 before the two sides accepted the CoHA. Addis Ababa removed the TPLF from its list of terrorist groups in March 2023. While violence in Tigray has subsided, the ICHREE reported in September that Eritrean troops continued to engage in violence after the CoHA was reached.

Security worsened in Amhara in 2023 after paramilitary groups that had backed the federal government in the Tigray conflict resisted Addis Ababa's instructions to disband, instead joining the Fano. Major fighting began in Amhara in July, with the militia overrunning major towns in August before federal forces repelled them. The conflict in Amhara has caused significant deaths. At least 26 people in the town of Finote Selam died in an air strike in August. The OHCHR reported that government officials and Prosperity Party members died in two Fano attacks in October.

An ongoing government campaign to suppress armed opposition groups in Oromia has led to repeated clashes. The government launched a new campaign against the OLA after talks failed in May 2023; a November round of talks did not yield an agreement. Incidents of large-scale, ethnically motivated killings have occurred in Oromia, perpetrated by Amhara militias, the OLA, Oromia regional forces, and federal forces.

Extrajudicial executions and other human rights abuses by federal and regional forces occur regularly. In September 2023, the EHRC reported

that government forces extrajudicially executed several people in Amhara within two weeks of the state of emergency being declared there.

F4 0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population? 0 / 4

Ongoing conflict in some regions and political tensions throughout the country have inflamed ethnic divisions, contributing to discriminatory policies and actions.

Conflict in Amhara, Oromia, and other areas has contributed to internal displacement, as has instability in regions like Afar and Tigray. In June 2023, the International Organization for Migration said there were 4.4 million internally displaced persons across Ethiopia, mostly due to conflict.

Same-sex activity is prohibited by law and punishable by up to 15 years' imprisonment. In August 2023, municipal authorities in Addis Ababa announced a crackdown on same-sex activities in the city's hotels and bars.

Women face discrimination in education. A gender gap persists in many aspects of economic life, including pay.

Despite near-universal primary school enrollment, access to quality education and other social services varies widely across regions and is particularly poor in lowland states.

G Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education? 0 / 4

While the constitution establishes freedom of movement, local conflicts impede people's ability to travel freely. Most Ethiopians feel safer in their home region than elsewhere. The intentional destruction of infrastructure such as roads and bridges by armed actors has also undermined civilian and humanitarian movement.

An ICHREE report from September 2023 noted that residents of Oromia faced arbitrary restrictions on movement, sometimes enforced with violence.

G2 0-4 pts

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors? 1 / 4

Private business opportunities are limited by heavy government regulation of key industries and the dominance of state-owned

enterprises in many sectors. State monopolies have persisted in the telecommunication, shipping, and aviation industries, while the financial sector is closed to foreign competition and effectively controlled by state-owned banks.

All land must be leased from the state. A gender gap persists in many aspects of economic life including land and access to finance.

Conflict has hindered people's ability to exercise property rights or engage in businesses. Attacks targeting ethnic groups have resulted in the destruction and looting of property. An ICHREE report from September 2023 noted that federal Ethiopian, Eritrean, regional, and Fano forces had engaged in widespread looting in Tigray before the CoHA was reached, while Tigrayan forces had engaged in looting during a 2021 offensive in Amhara. The report also noted widespread looting of livestock in Afar. Looting has also been observed in Benishangul Gumuz and the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regions.

G3 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance? 1 / 4

Legislation protects women's rights, but these rights are routinely violated in practice. Enforcement of laws against rape and domestic abuse is inconsistent, and cases routinely stall in the courts. Particularly in conflict-affected areas, people have barely any legal protections in practice.

An ICHREE report from September 2023 noted that federal forces, regional forces, and militants engaged in sexual violence during the Tigray conflict. The same report noted that Tigray fighters active in Amhara engaged in rape and other forms of sexual violence against adults and children. Eritrean forces who maintained a presence within Ethiopia after the CoHA was reached have also engaged in rape and sexual violence. In September 2023, Amnesty International reported that Eritrean forces held victims in sexual slavery.

Forced child marriage is illegal but common in Ethiopia, and prosecutions for the crime are rare. Female genital mutilation is also illegal, but the law is inconsistently enforced.

LGBT+ people do not have social freedoms and do not publicly identify themselves for fear of violent retaliation. An ICHREE report from September noted an increase in hate speech directed at LGBT+ people, including from government and opposition politicians.

G4 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation? 1 / 4

The 2019 labor law extended paid maternity leave and raised the working age to 15 years. However, reports from industrial parks suggest that working conditions can be precarious, and child labor is prevalent in many agricultural households. Industrialization efforts have resulted in low wages for workers, with the government hesitant to implement a minimum wage law for fear of deterring investors and businesses.

An antitrafficking law stipulates strict punishments for crimes such as sexual exploitation and human trafficking. People in Ethiopia, particularly women and girls, continue to experience forced labor, debt bondage, and other forms of exploitation.

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