Twitter Thread by Biruk Haregu



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THREAD – 1/20: Unfortunate that @ForeignAffairs chose to run a dubious piece full of speculation & uncorroborated claims. At its core, the piece & its authors (@Fromagehomme & Yohannes) are misguided in their assumption that @AbiyAhmedAli is experiencing a crisis of legitimacy...

> @Fromagehomme and Yohannes Woldemariam argue that the war in Tigray could exacerbate Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed\u2019s crisis of legitimacy.https://t.co/SByxw8yS7S
>
> — Foreign Affairs (@ForeignAffairs) January 1, 2021

2/20: The reality is that Ethiopians have rallied around the flag as they always do. Ethiopians have rallied around the flag b/c #Ethiopia was brazenly attacked by belligerents attempting to return to power by overthrowing the constitutional order @ForeignAffairs @Fromagehomme

3/20: In addition to the misguided & out of touch headline, the piece makes 4 baseless claims regarding: 1) myth of an insurgency/insurrection; 2) false equivalence b/w TPLF & Tigrayans; 3) ongoing reform agenda; and 4) prospects of democratization in #Ethiopia. @ForeignAffairs

4/20: First, the piece is rife with unsubstantiated speculation regarding a “sustained, bloody insurgency & insurrection” in #Tigray. Although analysts propagated this baseless & highly inflammatory narrative from the onset of the conflict, this prognosis has not materialized...

5/20: In fact, rather than "insurgency & insurrection", the evidence suggests 3 developments: 1) the federal govt of #Ethiopia conducted a highly contained, efficient & effective operation against the treasonous TPLF leadership that committed an act of war...

6/20: 2) Far from conducting an "insurgency/insurrection" campaign, the TPLF leadership is desperately on the run & hiding from the law. According to Reuters, “we haven’t heard from the TPLF leadership in weeks”...

7/20: 3) The regional consensus on the law enforcement operation has held, i.e., regional partners, HoA & @_AfricanUnion, have stood in solidarity with the gov’t of #Ethiopia. In sum, these are not the markings of a “regional war or a bloody insurgency” that the authors advance.

8/20: Second, the piece advances an unfounded & highly inflammatory false equivalence b/w the treasonous TPLF & the people of Tigray. In this regard, the piece claims: “Abiy’s attempts to subdue Tigray militarily & bring its govt under his control have engendered deep antipathy”

9/20: Such a claim is utter nonsense for 2 reasons: 1) The #Ethiopia|n govt is not “subduing Tigray militarily”, in fact the federal govt didn’t choose this conflict. The fed govt was attacked & had to defend the sovereignty, integrity and constitutional order of #Ethiopia...

10/20: In so doing, the law enforcement operation has a specifically & targeted mission of bringing to justice the TPLF leadership, perpetrators of the attack on ENDF, and orchestrators of the massacre in Mai-Kadra…

11/20: 2) The operation is not aimed at Tigrayans. In fact, the people of Tigray cooperated with fed govt in a concerted effort to move-on from the maleficence & authoritarianism of the TPLF regime. To this end, Tigrayans handed back weapons given to them by TPLF to attack ENDF

12/20: @ForeignAffairs, this type of lazy false equivalence is ill-advised & only serves to muddy the waters. There is no equivalence b/w the people of Tigray & TPLF nor is there equivalence b/w the fed govt of #Ethiopia & the treasonous TPLF... https://t.co/KoLDw9wkuF

13/20: For instance, claims in the piece such as the “Tigrayan uprising could prove contagious, invigorating or even fusing with rebellions in other parts of the country” is completely baseless & borders on incitement. There is no "uprising" in Tigray or other parts of Ethiopia.

14/20: Third, ethnic discrimination is the legacy of the ethnic federalist system that TPLF implemented— for which TPLF should be unequivocally condemned. Ethnic discrimination is not a feature of the @AbiyAhmedAli Administration, but rather the flawed ethnic federalism of TPLF

15/20: In fact, @AbiyAhmedAli is attempting to remedy the ethnic discrimination & atrocities that were hallmarks of the TPLF regime. As the reform agenda illustrates, Abiy Administration is progressive & inclusive on issues of ethnicity, gender, religion & political affiliation

16/20: We have ample evidence from their 27 yrs in power that TPLF championed a politics of ethnic strife, discrimination, fear & division. Any claims to the contrary, irrespective of where it emanates, is callous & devoid of the history & context of #Ethiopia @ForeignAffairs

17/20: Lastly, in this piece, "scholars of democracy", gloss over the criminality & authoritarianism of the old regime. Key features of democracy are rule of law, robust independent institutions, & free & fair elections. On all three dimensions, TPLF was resolutely undemocratic

18/20: Prospects of reform & democracy under the old authoritarian regime was unthinkable. On the other hand, @AbiyAhmedAli has consistently championed democracy, inclusion & reform. To this end, his administration has assiduously advanced a political & economic reform agenda...

19/20: @foreignaffairs @Fromagehomme, what int'l analysts neglect is that Ethiopians have stood by @AbiyAhmedAli b/c: 1) #Ethiopia was attacked; 2) we realize that the best hope for democracy in Ethiopia is to earnestly pursue the economic & political reform agenda Abiy has begun

20/20: Rather than defend the defunct TPLF, well-intentioned partners should productively engage Abiy to: 1) hold free & fair elections; 2) implement reforms; & 3) continue the path of democratization. This is the sensible win-win approach, both for #Ethiopia & int'l partners.