

**Statement by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and
Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, on Ethiopia**

(New York, 17 November 2020) I am increasingly concerned about the evolving humanitarian situation in northern Ethiopia and neighbouring areas.

Even before the current hostilities, nearly a million people in Tigray, and millions more who live in close proximity to its regional and national boundaries, were in need of humanitarian assistance. Many humanitarian organizations, working closely with national, regional and local authorities, have been deeply involved in helping meet those needs for many years.

The current situation is heightening the needs and the vulnerability of local people. It is disrupting the work of UN and other humanitarian organizations. I call for full access to reach people in need wherever they are; safe passage for civilians seeking assistance; and the security of aid workers. Humanitarian workers must be able to deliver assistance without fear of attack.

Our humanitarian priorities in the region are the protection of civilians, including children; preventing gender-based violence; and getting food, clean water and health care to those who need it, including civilians displaced by ongoing hostilities.

The UN is engaging with the Government and relevant authorities to facilitate immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access. We are committed to staying and delivering humanitarian assistance.

All parties must respect international humanitarian law.

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For more information, please contact:
Zoe Paxton, OCHA New York, +1 917 297 1542, paxton@un.org
Jens Laerke, OCHA Geneva, +41 79 472 9750, laerke@un.org