Resolution urging the United States Congress to introduce and pass a Resolution calling for peace and respect for human rights in Tigray; condemning human rights violations and violence against the people of Tigray; urging the Ethiopian government to immediately restore all forms of communication, critical services, and allow unimpeded, sustained, and secured access for humanitarian aid; and urging the United Nations to undertake a full and independent investigation into the atrocities in Tigray and to employ all preventative and diplomatic efforts to protect civilians in the region and address the humanitarian crisis.

WHEREAS, Ethiopia, located in east Africa, is a landlocked country bordered by Eritrea to the north, Sudan to the west, Kenya to the south, and Somalia to the east; and

WHEREAS, There are 10 regional states with over 80 different languages within Ethiopia, the second most populous country in Africa; and

WHEREAS, Tigray regional state, located in the northern part of Ethiopia, bordered by Eritrea to the north, Sudan to the west, the Amhara regional state to the south, and the Afar regional state to the east, represent nearly 7 million people with half of the population less than 18 years of age and approximately 13 percent of the population representing children less than 5 years of age; and

WHEREAS, The Regional Refugee Preparedness and Response plan for the Ethiopia Situation (Tigray) report, the Tigray region of Ethiopia included 96,000 registered Eritrean refugees, approximately 100,000 Ethiopian internally displaced persons, 500,000 people dependent on food relief assistance, and 1 million people received safety net assistance prior to the start of the war; and
WHEREAS, After the resignation of the former elected Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn, Abiy Ahmed became the transitional Prime Minister of Ethiopia on April 2, 2018; and

WHEREAS, On June 5, 2018, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia agreed to sign and implement the peace accord between Ethiopia and Eritrea as specified in the Algiers Agreement; and

WHEREAS, In late 2019, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed denounced the ruling coalition of Ethiopia, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front and created a new political party, Prosperity Party, of which Tigray regional state was not a part; and

WHEREAS, In early 2020, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed postponed national elections to unknown future date and the Tigray regional government rejected the postponement of elections and considered the extension of the term of the Federal Government to be unconstitutional; and

WHEREAS, Under the ruling of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Ethiopia has been troubled by multiple human rights and humanitarian challenges, including targeted ethnic violence, natural disasters, and political unrest, leading to the internal displacement of more than 1.8 million Ethiopians in 2020 alone; and

WHEREAS, In accordance with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia constitution, the Tigray region held an election on September 9, 2020, and 2.7 million registered voters elected their regional state government and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed subsequently deemed the Tigray region elections illegitimate and denied Tigray federal budget subsidies totaling $281 million unconstitutional; and

WHEREAS, On November 4, 2020, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed declared war on the Tigray region and ordered military offensive by Ethiopian National Defense Force, military and militia forces from regions of Ethiopia including Amhara and Afar regions, foreign forces...
including Eritrean Defense Force and Somalian Army, and utilized precision guided drones
operated by United Arab Emirates; and

WHEREAS, On November 4, 2020, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed declared a 6-month
state of emergency in the region of Tigray and ordered a complete shutdown of travel to and
from Tigray, electricity, banking, internet, telephone service, waterline, food supply, and
journalists and independent external organizations have not been allowed to enter and report
from Tigray region; and

WHEREAS, Amnesty International confirmed that from November 9 - 10, 2020, brutal
massacres took place in a small town, Mai Kadra, on innocent civilians, “who appeared to be
day laborers in no way involved in the ongoing military offensive,” causing a mass civilian
migration to neighboring Sudan; and

WHEREAS, As of February 15, 2020, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
has recorded over 61,000 refugees at the border entry points in Eastern Sudan from Tigray,
Ethiopia and listed 31% as children, 64% as adults and 5% as elderly; and

WHEREAS, Despite the Ethiopian government declaring victory without any civilian
harm and complete control of Tigray region on November 28, 2020, the war continues, and
three Ethiopian opposition political parties have reported over 52,000 civilian death to date;
and

WHEREAS, According to the Tigray Emergency Coordination Center meeting held on
January 8, 2020, United Nations staff and local federally elected officials report nearly 4.5
million people, including 2.2 million internally displaced people need emergency food aid and
are endanger of extreme hunger and famine; and

WHEREAS, On December 2, 2020, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed reached an agreement
with the United Nations to allow unimpeded access for aid organizations in Tigray, however,
on December 8, 2020, AP News reported that “Ethiopian security forces shot at and detained
United Nations staffers as they tried to reach part of the embattled Tigray region” and the Federal Government has continued to significantly constrained access to Tigray region since; and

WHEREAS, The United States Agency for International Development Famine Early Warning System Network has classified most of Tigray as in “crisis” and parts as in “emergency” which is one step away from “famine” levels, due to limited access to food and income; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Right report receiving allegations concerning violations of international humanitarian law and human right law, including artillery strikes on populated areas, the deliberate targeting of civilians, extrajudicial killings and widespread looting; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect and the Acting Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide have expressed deep concern over “reports of incidents of ethnically and religiously motivated hate speech, incitement of violence and serious human rights violations including arbitrary arrests, killings, displacement of populations and destruction of property in various parts of the country,” stressing that the ethnically motivated attacks and reported ethnic profiling of citizens constitute “a dangerous trajectory” that heightens the risk of atrocity crimes; and

WHEREAS, According to international human rights organizations, Tigrayans living in Ethiopia outside of Tigray have been suspended from their jobs and prevented from leaving the country, and there are reports of surveillance and mass arrests of citizens of Ethiopia based on their ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, The historic Al Nejashi Mosque, one of the world’s earliest and the first mosque in Africa built in the fourth century by the companions of Prophet Mohammed, was bombed and looted by Ethiopian Defense Force and Eritrean Defense Force; and
WHEREAS, Those who fled the town of Aksum to Mekelle, Tigray report the historic cathedral complex where The Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion reputedly houses the Ark of the Covenant, was the scene of a recent massacre of 750 people after Ethiopian Federal troops and Amhara Region Militia approached The Church of Our lady Mary of Zion; and

WHEREAS, The majority of the population of Tigray has little access to running water or electricity and in places like Adigrat, a city of 140,000 persons, there are only two wells left out of 21; and

WHEREAS, According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “the health system in Tigray is reportedly collapsing” and the Ethiopian Health Minister Lia Tadesse confirmed “so many health facilities have been looted” and the assessment carried out by international aid agencies report conclude out of “Tigray’s 40 hospitals, 11 were fully functional, 9 were partly functioning, 14 were not working at all, and 6 were not assessed” and only 30 out of 280 ambulances were available; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Special Representative Pramila Patten expressed great concern over the “serious allegations of sexual violence and accounts of individuals being forced to rape family members or to have sex with members of the military in exchange for basic goods” and doctors at Mekelle’s main hospital, Ayder Referral Hospital, report rape survivors as young as 12 years old are turning up injured and in tears as they seek counseling, treatment, and safety from Ethiopian and Eritrean troops and Amhara Region militias; and

WHEREAS, On February 11, 2021, the International Crisis Group reports that west Tigray is now patrolled by Amhara security forces, while some towns in both the west and south are being run by Amhara administrators and Amhara nationalists claim these parts of Tigray as rightly belonging to their region; and
WHEREAS, On December 8, 2020, Reuters reported that the “United States government source and five regional diplomats” told them that the United States believes Eritrean Soldiers have crossed into Ethiopia to help Prime minister Abiy Ahmed’s government battle the Tigray Defense Force; and

WHEREAS, On January 7, 2021, Reuters reported senior Ethiopian general confirmed Eritrean troops had entered the country uninvited while the Ethiopian Defense Force were battling the Tigray Defense Force in the northern region of Tigray; and

WHEREAS, The United States State Department received credible reports of Eritrean forces launching artillery attacks, looting, sexual violence, and assaults in refugee camps and other human rights abuses and has urged the Eritrean troops to leave Tigray immediately, however, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the Eritrean government have denied all accusations and have refused to leave Tigray, Ethiopia; and

WHEREAS, According to the Joint Statement released on February 8, 2021, the European Union joined the United States’ call for the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from Ethiopia and expressed deep concerns for the tragic humanitarian crisis unfolding in Tigray, Ethiopia; and

WHEREAS, According to The New Humanitarian, the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and several other international organizations and human rights groups have repeatedly called for unimpeded, unfettered, or unhindered access for aid agencies to make assessments and deliver food and other humanitarian aid, however, agreements with the Federal Government of Ethiopia have not delivered as hoped, leading to a state of paralysis in the relief effort and access remains a challenge to more than 80 percent of Tigray region; and
WHEREAS, Leaders from various nations, including Chancellor Angela Merkel from Germany, President Emmanuel Macron from France, President Paul Kagame from Rwanda have made statements condemning the violence in Tigray; and

WHEREAS, United States Congress members including Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Michael Bennet, Senator Cory Booker, Congressman Jason Crow, Senator Ben Cardin, Senator Ed Markey, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, Director of Domestic Policy Council Susan Rice, Secretary of State Antony Blinken among others have all made statements condemning the violence on the people of Tigray; and

WHEREAS, The European Union has suspended nearly $110 million in budgetary aid to Ethiopia due to concerns of the Federal Government of Ethiopia handling of the war in Tigray, Ethiopia; and

WHEREAS, The Tigray humanitarian crisis has received relatively little attention from the international community despite the extensive human suffering, sexual violence and displacement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors acknowledges and expresses its grave concern for the human suffering, sexual violence, and displacement impacting the people of Tigray; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors condemns the ongoing violence and human rights abuses in Tigray; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors stands in solidarity with the people of Tigray and with the Ethiopian immigrant and refugee community around the world and in particular here in San Francisco; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front to cease all hostilities, protect the human rights of all Ethiopians, and pursue a peaceful resolution of the
conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, and to immediately and fully restore electricity, banking, telephone, and internet service in the Tigray region; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the United States Congress to introduce and pass a Resolution, similar to the now defunct S. Res. 798, calling for peace and respect for human rights in Tigray; restoration of internet, phone and other critical services to the region; and immediate diplomatic steps to prevent further mass atrocities in Ethiopia; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors calls upon the United Nations to undertake a full and independent investigation into the atrocities in Tigray and to employ all preventative and diplomatic efforts to protect civilians in the region and address the humanitarian crisis; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Board is directed to transmit this Resolution to the Office of Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the Office of U.S Senator Diane Feinstein, the Office of U.S. Senator Alex Padilla, and the United Nations special adviser on the prevention of genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees spokesperson Filippo Grandi.
Resolution urging the United States Congress to introduce and pass a Resolution calling for peace and respect for human rights in Tigray; condemning human rights violations and violence against the people of Tigray; urging the Ethiopian government to immediately restore all forms of communication, critical services, and allow unimpeded, sustained, and secured access for humanitarian aid; and urging the United Nations to undertake a full and independent investigation into the atrocities in Tigray and to employ all preventative and diplomatic efforts to protect civilians in the region and address the humanitarian crisis.

March 02, 2021 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 11 - Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was ADOPTED on 3/2/2021 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board