

ROUGH ESTIMATE

(/)

MARCH 25, 2020 (/ROUGHESTIMATE/THE-CRIMES-OF-TEDROS-ADHANOM)

The Crimes of Tedros Adhanom (/roughestimate/the- crimes-of-tedros- adhanom)

JOHN MARTIN (?AUTHOR=5CED816E5859F0000116FC64)

WHO's Tedros Adhanom Should be put on Trial for Crimes
Against Humanity



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, as well as being the first WHO director without a medical degree, also has a somewhat political background compared to his predecessors. On his online biography, the WHO lays out his qualifications as Ethiopian Minister of Health from 2002 to 2012, impressive stuff.

Aside from his medical credentials, Tedros happens to be a member of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) which is an organisation about as peaceful as its name suggests. Founded as a communist revolutionary party that came to power in 1991, it led a guerrilla campaign against the Mengistu dictatorship and formed a coalition with two other ethnic parties after his exile.

Over time, the TPLF began to exert more and more influence over the other two parties. Most military generals and key leaders within the government are Tigray, including the Prime Minister who ruled the country for 21 years before his death. The Tigray represent

only 6% of the population of Ethiopia, one of the major ethnic groups are the Amhara who mostly made up the Mengistu regime.

Favourable treatment under Megistu created a lot of resentment towards the Amhara from other ethnic groups like for example the Oromo. Tedros himself hails from the Tigray region and was a senior member of the party and became involved with the TPLF after the removal of Mengistu. The same party that in its 1968 manifesto (<https://www.zehabesha.com/tplf-manifesto-amhara-was-labeled-as-1-enemy-of-tigray/>) called the Amhrara people its 'eternal enemy'. Just how senior was Tedros? Well this Ethiopian newspaper (<http://www.tigraionline.com/cctplf.html>) listed him as the 3rd most important member of the politbureau standing committee, which gives the impression he was more important than a simple medical administrator.

The TPLF was listed as a terrorist organisation by the US government in the 1990s, and is still listed as one (<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=2127>) by the Global Terror Database because of its unfortunate habit of carrying out armed assaults in rural areas.

The Amhara people have reported systematic discrimination and human rights abuses by the current government. Humans Rights Watch in 2010 wrote a report (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2010/10/19/ethiopia-donor-aid-supports-repression>) on how aid in the form of food and fertiliser was withheld from local Amhara villagers because of their affiliations with the opposition party. Other forms of aid denial involved the refusal of emergency healthcare by ministry of health workers; the same ministry which was at the time being led by one Tedros Adhanom.

The Amhara People's Union, an activist group based in Washington, has issued (https://ecadforum.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/APU_opposes_candidacy_of_Dr_TAG.pdf?x35370) many other accusations of human rights abuses against the TPLF led government, including noting that the birth rates in the Amhara region was far lower than those experienced in other regions. They noted at a session in Ethiopian parliament that, around 2 million Amhara were found to have "disappeared" from the population census.

Not content with denying aid to political dissidents, Tedros was also health minister at a time when the regime was accused of covering up epidemics. A cholera outbreak spread the region in 2007, infecting thousands in neighbouring countries. When it spread to

Ethiopia, the government simply renamed the outbreak and called it Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD). International organisations were pressured (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/05/18/ethiopias-candidate-for-the-world-health-organization-doesnt-like-mentioning-a-certain-disease/>) not to call it Cholera (despite the UN testing the infected and finding Cholera), and were pressured by government employees not to reveal the number of infected. Another stunning victory for the health minister.

The deadly famine which struck Ethiopia in the 1980s forever associated the country with the word, but it's not entirely a thing of the past. The WHO itself after pages of gushing reports on how well Ethiopia's health sector was doing, admitted in 2016 that at least 8.6 million people still needed food aid to survive, and that the situation had not improved at all for at least four years. So at the end of Tedros' illustrious term in office he could boast a mere remaining 8% of the population who would be left to starve to death without foreign aid.

But after his shining accomplishments in health, Tedros had bigger fish to fry. In 2012 he was appointed foreign minister and there quickly followed a crackdown on journalists and government opponents in the country, and an attempt to extradite those who had fled to Yemen in exile. The two countries entered negotiations to track down and deport dissidents from Yemen and imprison them in Ethiopia. Tedros himself (<https://ecadforum.com/2017/05/05/tedros-adhanom-played-a-key-role-in-kidnapping-of-prominent-dissident/>) led these negotiations, there's even a nice picture of the medical man during the talks with the Yemeni foreign minister.

One such case was a British citizen Andy Tsege who was arrested at Sana'a airport and twice given a death sentence in Ethiopia. This led to the involvement (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-concerned-over-detention-of-andargachew-tsege--2>) of the British government who threatened denial of aid to Ethiopia unless he be granted asylum. Tedros responded that Tsege was "being treated very well. He even has a laptop, have you ever heard of a political prisoner with a laptop?" Andy of course, after his return to the UK told a somewhat different story of being tortured for days (<https://www.untoldstoriesonline.com/prisons-and-human-dignity-in-ethiopia/>) on end, alongside dozens of other prisoners.

One of the reasons perhaps that Tedros' qualifications as foreign minister is absent from some of his online CVs, may be because of the mass protests that engulfed the country in 2016. The Ethiopian government a few years earlier had unveiled a plan (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/21/ethiopia-centre-global-farmland-rush>) to seize 1000 square miles of land to be requisitioned for investment. This also involved the forced relocation of 15000 people in the Oromia region, which the government said was good because where they lived they currently "lacked infrastructure".

But the ingrates somehow didn't appreciate this massive favour that the government was doing them, and mass protests broke out during a cultural celebration in 2016. The police responded at first with tear gas, and then later, with mass shootings. The violence and resulting stampede killed an estimated 500 people according to Human Rights Watch. The government then issued a state of emergency, arresting an estimated 70,000 people, and forced dozens of opposition journalists into exile.

Tedros himself got into a public spat (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/04/open-letter-government-ethiopia>) with Human Rights Watch after their presentation, firstly denying that the numbers were as high as they were, and then claiming that the police were unarmed, here's a video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2k8XE4GY4a4>) of the police at the event. Being no expert myself I assume that Ethiopia must have found a way to develop assault-rifle shaped crowd control devices that are entirely non-lethal, truly miraculous stuff from the Foreign Ministry.

And so this is the noble figure that ascended to the role of director of the WHO in 2017. Not one to miss a chance to defend mass murderers, he previously argued (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-icc-idUSBRE99A0YT20131011>) against the ICC trial of Uhuru Kenyatta under whose government 1,300 had been killed after rigged elections. Not surprising then, that one of the first things Tedros did after taking the job, was to nominate (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/22/robert-mugabe-removed-as-who-goodwill-ambassador-after-outcry>) Robert Mugabe – thankfully now dead - as goodwill ambassador to the WHO; A man who ordered the killings of 20,000 people (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/19/mugabe-zimbabwe-gukurahundi-massacre-matabeleland>) in Zimbabwe during the 1980s.

Tedros of course takes every chance he can to praise the good governance of China, and given the human rights record of the People's Republic, it's no wonder he likes them so much. From projects like media propaganda centres, mass relocations, and social credit style score cards, Ethiopia's governance in many ways resembles a carbon copy of the Chinese authoritarian model. Complete with a one party state and focus on profit over human rights.

Ethiopia , until very recently, remained one of the world's worst human rights violators, receiving a score of 19 out of 100 on the human freedom index for 2018, and a score of 150 out of 180 for freedom of the press. The government has remained in power since the takeover in 1991, and was seemingly so popular that it won more than one election by 100% of the vote.

So how did a man with a record like Tedros become director of the WHO? It's quite simple really, the WHO has been riddled with scandal after scandal for some time now. Facing almost no rise in budgets during the 1990s, the WHO turned towards the corporate sector for additional funding, and by 2008, corporate donations made up 80% of the organisation's budget.

According to (62.

<http://www.truthaboutpsychiatry.net/PrivateCompaniesTransformingWHO.pdf>) health researcher Soniah Shah, the role that large drug companies played in shaping global health policy created a serious conflict of interest on the one hand to improve the companies' public image, but on the other to protect their financial interests. This led to cases like lobbying to weaken patent laws for new drugs in India, and blocking laws in South Africa that attempted to make HIV treatment more accessible.

The serious misallocation of funds by the organization was made most apparent in 2016 when it was found that the WHO spent \$200 million a year (<https://apnews.com/1cf4791dc5c14b9299e0f532c75f63b2/AP-Exclusive:-Health-agency-spends-more-on-travel-than-AIDS>) on travel expenses, not even including those paid for by the host country. Another absolutely damning report issued by the Associated Press, reported that WHO employees working to relieve the Cholera epidemic in Yemen had actually siphoned off the funds (64.

<https://apnews.com/dcf8914d99af49ef902c56c84823e30c>) for officials. Some of these workers were later not even removed from their jobs.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation played a large role in promoting Tedros (<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/magazine/home/20000416mag-foundation.html>). After their large investments into healthcare programs in Ethiopia which Tedros had facilitated, the foundation was keen to promote similar programs on a global level and donated billions to the WHO towards this end.

The appointment of someone as deeply unqualified as Tedros owes much to the labyrinthine structure of the WHO's appointment process. The director is selected by the executive board, who are in turn appointed by a rotating minority of the World Health Assembly who are made up of health ministers appointed by world governments. The WHO therefore has the same problem as many other global institutions, that its director is an appointee of an appointee of an appointee of someone who may have been elected legitimately. So by the time you get to the director, the democratic mandate has been so thinly stretched as to be almost meaningless.

The media of course portrayed Tedros as a saintly figure on a moral mission to cure the world of deadly diseases. A twitter campaign slogan ran with "it's time for an African to lead the WHO". Indeed, one only wishes it hadn't been an African in a regime that had spent the last few years killing and resettling more Africans than almost any other.

Some outlets have pointed out that the director general has little power over actual policy in the WHO, this misses the point that the organization is accepted as a global authority on matters of health, and advises world governments. The mismanagement of the WHO through people like Tedros has totally exacerbated the global coronavirus pandemic. Not only did Tedros find every opportunity to praise the CCP's handling of the crisis even as doctors were being arrested and people welded inside their homes; he also gave completely contradictory advice. First saying that countries should not restrict travel to and from China so as not to be discriminatory, and then chiding them for not doing enough to prepare. The virus was only named a pandemic a few days ago at the time of writing, after infecting 140 countries which is 70 more than it took for Swine flu to be declared a pandemic.

If there was ever an example of the failure of globalised institutions, the WHO is it. I'm not here to say that the organisation has not done any good in the world, but the sheer scale of its mismanagement means that it's advice should not carry anywhere near the

weight that it does. Instead of advising tech companies on how to censor information, it should be radically reformed or simply disbanded.

In a sane world, instead of leading a global organisation, Tedros and his cronies would be put on trial at the International Criminal Court, tried for his crimes, and if found guilty, should spend the rest of his life in prison.



John Martin

Sources:

1. Tigray Online, list of members of Tigray People's Liberation Front
2. <http://www.tigraionline.com/cctplf.html> (<http://www.tigraionline.com/cctplf.html>)
3. Tedros' WHO biography
4. <https://www.who.int/dg/biography> (<https://www.who.int/dg/biography>)
5. The Amhara People's Union case against Tedros Adhanom and alleged crimes
6. https://ecadforum.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/APU_opposes_candidacy_of_Dr_TAG.pdf?x35370 (https://ecadforum.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/APU_opposes_candidacy_of_Dr_TAG.pdf?x35370)
7. Quartz article on ethnic clashes in Ethiopia
8. <https://qz.com/africa/1411519/ethiopias-ethnic-violence-history-with-oromos-amharas-somalis-tigray/>

(<https://qz.com/africa/1411519/ethiopias-ethnic-violence-history-with-oromos-amharas-somalis-tigray/>)

9. Tedros born in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia

10. https://web.archive.org/web/20131012105949/http://www.capitalethiopia.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=185:listening-to-health&catid=37:interview&Itemid=61
(https://web.archive.org/web/20131012105949/http://www.capitalethiopia.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=185:listening-to-health&catid=37:interview&Itemid=61)

11. TPLF named the Amhara as the number 1 enemy

12. <https://www.zehabesha.com/tplf-manifesto-amhara-was-labeled-as-1-enemy-of-tigray/> (<https://www.zehabesha.com/tplf-manifesto-amhara-was-labeled-as-1-enemy-of-tigray/>)

14. The Demographic health survey

15.
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Demographic%20Health%20Survey%202011%20Ethiopia%20Final%20Report.pdf>
(<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Demographic%20Health%20Survey%202011%20Ethiopia%20Final%20Report.pdf>)

16. Ethiopian government denies aid as part of political repression campaign.

17. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2010/10/19/ethiopia-donor-aid-supports-repression> (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2010/10/19/ethiopia-donor-aid-supports-repression>)

19. Human Rights Watch Response to Tedros

20. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/04/open-letter-government-ethiopia> (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/04/open-letter-government-ethiopia>)

21. Video showing Oromia Festival

22. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hACcWbi6pMg> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hACcWbi6pMg>)

23. Human Rights Watch Video Report on Oromia Massacre.

24. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2k8XE4GY4a4> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2k8XE4GY4a4>)

25. World Bank 2006 report on corruption in Ethiopia, Health Sector chapter 2

26. <https://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821395318> (<https://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821395318>)

27. Overview of corruption in Ethiopia

28. <https://www.u4.no/publications/overview-of-corruption-and-anti-corruption-in-ethiopi> (<https://www.u4.no/publications/overview-of-corruption-and-anti-corruption-in-ethiopi>)

of-corruption-and-anti-corruption-in-ethiopia)a

29. Government seizes land and relocates 15000 people

30. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/21/ethiopia-centre-global-farmland-rush>
(<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/21/ethiopia-centre-global-farmland-rush>)

31. Washington Post report on covering up of cholera epidemic

32. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/05/18/ethiopias-candidate-for-the-world-health-organization-doesnt-like-mentioning-a-certain-disease/> (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/05/18/ethiopias-candidate-for-the-world-health-organization-doesnt-like-mentioning-a-certain-disease/>)

33. TPLF listed as terrorist organisation

34. <https://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/tigray-peoples-liberation-front-tplf> (<https://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/tigray-peoples-liberation-front-tplf>)

35. TPLF terrorist incidents

36. <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=2127> (<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=2127>)

37. Prisoners tortured and denied healthcare in Ethiopia 2015

38. <https://www.untoldstoriesonline.com/prisons-and-human-dignity-in-ethiopia/> (<https://www.untoldstoriesonline.com/prisons-and-human-dignity-in-ethiopia/>)

41. Tedros criticised ICU for putting Kenyans on trial

42. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-icc-idUSBRE99A0YT20131011> (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-icc-idUSBRE99A0YT20131011>)

43. Bill Gates donations

44. <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/magazine/home/20000416mag-foundation.html>
(<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/magazine/home/20000416mag-foundation.html>)

45. Kidnapping of Andargachew tsege

46. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/10/26/joint-letter-uk-should-negotiate-return-andargachew-tsege>
(<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/10/26/joint-letter-uk-should-negotiate-return-andargachew-tsege>)

47. Uk government letter of warning to Ethiopia

48. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-concerned-over-detention-of-andargachew-tsege--2>

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-concerned-over-detention-of-andargachew-tsege--2>)

49. Tedros played key role in kidnapping

50. <https://ecadforum.com/2017/05/05/tedros-adhanom-played-a-key-role-in-kidnapping-of-prominent-dissident/>
(<https://ecadforum.com/2017/05/05/tedros-adhanom-played-a-key-role-in-kidnapping-of-prominent-dissident/>)

51. Ethiopian dissident being tortured

52. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/22/un-investigates-briton-death-row-ethiopia-andargachew-tsige>
(<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/22/un-investigates-briton-death-row-ethiopia-andargachew-tsige>)

53. Cholera Coverup NYT report

54. [https://myaccount.nytimes.com/auth/login?](https://myaccount.nytimes.com/auth/login?response_type=cookie&client_id=mpc&redirect_uri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2017%2F05%2F13%2Fhealth%2Fcandidate-who-director-general-ethiopia-cholera-outbreaks.html)
response_type=cookie&client_id=mpc&redirect_uri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2017%2F05%2F13%2Fhealth%2Fcandidate-who-director-general-ethiopia-cholera-outbreaks.html ([https://myaccount.nytimes.com/auth/login?](https://myaccount.nytimes.com/auth/login?response_type=cookie&client_id=mpc&redirect_uri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2017%2F05%2F13%2Fhealth%2Fcandidate-who-director-general-ethiopia-cholera-outbreaks.html)
response_type=cookie&client_id=mpc&redirect_uri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2017%2F05%2F13%2Fhealth%2Fcandidate-who-director-general-ethiopia-cholera-outbreaks.html)

55. Robert Mugabe ordered the killings of 20,000 in the 1980s

56. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/19/mugabe-zimbabwe-gukurahundi-massacre-matabeleland>
(<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/19/mugabe-zimbabwe-gukurahundi-massacre-matabeleland>)

57. Tedros appointed Mugabe goodwill ambassador in 2017

58. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/22/robert-mugabe-removed-as-who-goodwill-ambassador-after-outcry>
(<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/22/robert-mugabe-removed-as-who-goodwill-ambassador-after-outcry>)

59. WHO spending scandal

60. <https://apnews.com/1cf4791dc5c14b9299e0f532c75f63b2/AP-Exclusive:-Health-agency-spends-more-on-travel-than-AIDS>
(<https://apnews.com/1cf4791dc5c14b9299e0f532c75f63b2/AP-Exclusive:-Health-agency-spends-more-on-travel-than-AIDS>)

61. Bill gates work in Ethiopia

62. <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/Where-We-Work/Africa-Office/Focus-Countries/Ethiopia>
(<https://www.gatesfoundation.org/Where-We-Work/Africa-Office/Focus-Countries/Ethiopia>)

TAGGED: ROUGH ESTIMATE (/ROUGHESTIMATE/TAG/ROUGH+ESTIMATE), LON...