

AGENDA
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

meeting held
Thursday, September 24, 2020
10:00 o'clock a.m. via Zoom video conference

1. Call to Order

2. Declaration of Conflict

3. Minutes

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held June 18, 2020 – ***attached.***

4. Business Items

4.1 Mayor's Summit Mannheim

Councillor Francis participated in this initiative on behalf of Mayor Dilkens and the City of Windsor. A copy of the Declarations, the Councillor's Speaking Notes and a photo are ***attached.***

4.2 Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce Initiative

4.3 2020 Children's Art Exchange

Update.

4.4 International Relations Committee 2021 Operating Budget

Update.

4.5 Twin Cities with the Corporation of the City of Windsor

The list of Sister Cities, year of twinning and anniversary dates – ***attached.***

5. Communications

- 5.1 Letter from Mayor Dilkens to Mayor Zuk, Lublin, Poland regarding the 20th anniversary of the twinning partnership between the City of Windsor and Lublin – ***attached.***
- 5.2 Letter from Mayor Zuk, Lublin, Poland to Mayor Dilkens regarding the 20th anniversary of the twinning partnership between Windsor and Lublin – ***attached.***
- 5.3 Letter of congratulations from Mayor Dilkens to Mayor Zhang Zhijun, Changchun, China on the appointment as Mayor of Changchun – ***attached.***
- 5.4 Letter from the Tigray Community of Windsor and Essex County regarding a request to assist the Tigrayans in Ethiopia – ***attached.***

6. New Business

7. Date of Next Meeting

To be determined.

8. Adjournment

International Relations Committee
Meeting held June 18, 2020 via Teleconference

A meeting of the International Relations Committee is held this day commencing at 11:00 o'clock a.m. via teleconference, there being present the following members:

Councillor Francis, Chair
Councillor Fabio Costante
Councillor Gary Kaschak
Councillor Ed Sleiman (arrives at 11:07 a.m.)
Daniel Ableser
Scott Despins
Jerry Barycki
Ronnie Haidar
William Ma
Steven Spagnuolo
L.T. Zhao

Regrets received from:

Maria Belenkova

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Sandra Gebauer, Council Assistant
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 11:01 o'clock a.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Declaration of Conflict

None disclosed.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by Councillor Costante, seconded by R. Haidar,
That the minutes of the International Relations Committee of its meeting held February 28, 2020 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.
Carried.

4. Business Items

4.1 Medical Supplies for Changchun, China

The Chair indicates although medical supplies were ordered to be sent to Changchun, China due to COVID-19, it was determined that the supplies would remain in the City of Windsor and be distributed to the city's frontline workers.

The City of Changchun contacted the City of Windsor in April 2020 with an offer to send 20,000 medical masks and to absorb the costs associated with the International shipping. A logistics company was contacted to determine if they could help facilitate the delivery of the masks however, the masks that they had available did not meet Canadian standards.

A similar situation arose with Guro, South Korea, (not one of our twin cities) who offered to send 10,000 non-surgical masks, which were not acceptable due to the types of masks available.

Moved by Councillor Sleiman, seconded by R. Haidar,

That the verbal update provided by the Chair regarding the purchase of medical supplies for Changchun, China due to COVID-19 and the decision to distribute the supplies to the City of Windsor frontline workers **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

4.2 2020 Children's Art Exchange

S. Gebauer states our contact in Gunsan, South Korea inquired about the 2020 Children's Art Exchange and asked that if the City of Windsor decided not to host the event this year, if we would consider sending children's artwork as they are planning to hold their exhibition at the end of this year.

S. Gebauer expresses concern that the children's art could be collected, however, due to COVID-19, and the fact that many of our City facilities are currently closed, finding a space to display the drawings would be a challenge and we would have to get creative.

R. Haidar suggests collecting children's art and placing it on a multimedia video to share with the community and with our twin cities, which would demonstrate the sister city relationships and that we're all in this together.

D. Ableser proposes the IRC work with Communications to undertake a 3D video. S. Gebauer to contact Communications and to report back to the IRC.

Moved by R. Haidar, seconded by D. Ableser,
That the 2020 Children's Art Exchange **MOVE FORWARD** and that Administration **BE REQUESTED** to report back on the feasibility of creating a Virtual Children's Art Exchange for 2020.
Carried.

4.3 Update regarding Possible Twin City Posts

S. Gebauer indicates at the February 26, 2020 meeting, the IRC was provided with photos of "Sister City Posts" located in Los Angeles and San Francisco. There was discussion on the possibility of erecting something similar on the City Hall Campus, which would display the names of our twin cities. The Parks and Traffic Departments were consulted on the potential of designing and creating the Twin City Post and an estimate of \$14,000 was quoted.

J. Barycki requests that a preliminary design of the Twin City post be provided.

Moved by J. Barycki, seconded by S. Spagnuolo,
That Administration **BE REQUESTED** to provide a rendering of the Twin City Post for consideration by the International Relations Committee.
Carried.

4.4 Twin Cities with the Corporation of the City of Windsor

Moved by Councillor Kaschak, seconded by Councillor Sleiman,
That the "Twin Cities with the Corporation of the City of Windsor" document **BE RECEIVED**.
Carried.

5. Communications

5.4 E-mails from Krzysztof Stanowski, Director International Centre & Daniel Gorbaczyk, Lublin, Poland regarding the LGBT+ Community

The Chair reports an e-mail from an individual in Toronto was received by the Mayor and City Council regarding discriminating policies in Lublin.

J. Barycki states the allegations are not true and he refers to the statement from Krzysztof Stanowski, Director International Centre.

In response to a question asked by D. Ableser regarding if a response was sent to the complainant, the Chair indicates he is not aware of a response being sent.

Councillor Sleiman states as a false accusation has been made, it would be appropriate to respond to the complainant.

Councillor Kaschak advises that as the complaint was initially sent to the Mayor's Office, it would be fitting to follow-up with the Mayor's Office. S. Gebauer to contact the Mayor's Office on this matter.

5.5 E-mail from Jerry Barycki regarding the 20th Anniversary of the Twinning Relationship between Lublin, Poland and the City of Windsor.

J. Barycki states June 26, 2020 will mark the 20th anniversary of the twinning relationship between Windsor and Lublin, Poland. The two decades of well-documented, active cooperation have been very productive. For the 20th Anniversary, they have prepared an exhibition, which will be in the form of an electronic document. S. Gebauer to work with Communications to ask if the electronic document can be displayed on the City of Windsor website and to assist with a display at City Hall at a later date.

Moved by Councillor Sleiman, seconded by Councillor Kaschak,
That the following Communications **BE RECEIVED:**

- 5.1 Letter to Mayor Dilkens dated March 6, 2020 from the Mayor of Saltillo, Mexico extending an invitation for the Mayor and a delegation of three to visit Saltillo from July 18 to July 21, 2020.
- 5.2 Letter to Mayor Dilkens from the Mayor of Changchun, China dated March 31, 2020 regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 5.3 E-mail from Trudy Baek, Manager of International Affairs, Gunsan, South Korea dated May 14, 2020 regarding the Children's Art Exhibit
- 5.4 E-mails from Krzysztof Stanowski, Director International Centre and Daniel Gorgaczuk, City of Lublin, Poland dated May 15, 2020 regarding the LGBT+ community – **attached**.
E-mail dated May 15, 2020 from the Chair, IRC to Members of Council regarding the LGBT+ community/
- 5.5 E-mail from Jerry Barycki regarding the 20th Anniversary of the Twinning relationship between Windsor and Lublin, Poland.

Carried.

6. New Business

In terms of a possible twinning with the United States, S. Gebauer reports we were asked in the past to gather some information from the City of Detroit regarding their policy

on twinning. It was determined that there is an organization called Sister Cities International, whose headquarters are located in Washington D.C. and that they are responsible for linking cities in the US with Cities worldwide based on culture, education, information and trade exchanges. The organization is membership based and as a member, they assist with the networking and support required to get to the sister city status. They also have other programs including high school homestay programs, annual conferences and so on.

It is generally agreed S. Gebauer will contact the City of Detroit International Relations Committee or similar committee regarding a potential collaboration with the City of Windsor's International Relations Committee.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 11:57 o'clock a.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR

STRENGTHENING OF COOPERATION IN THE POST-CORONAVIRUS
ERA AND PROMOTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CITIES

**JOINT POLITICAL DECLARATION WITHIN THE
SCOPE OF THE VIRTUAL MAYORS' SUMMIT IN
MANNHEIM**

We, the political representatives of the cities of Mannheim, Berlin Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, Beyoglu, Bydgoszcz, Chi inau, Klaipeda, Riesa, Swansea, Toulon, Windsor and Zhenjiang, allied through partnerships and friendships between cities,

who have met on 9 September 2020,

in the 75th year after the founding of the United Nations,

for a virtual conference,

recognise

that the United Nations was founded as the world community's reaction to the devastation of two world wars and with the aim of maintaining world peace and the economic and social progress of all peoples;

and

that the United Nations, like no other organisation, stands for the concept of a multilateral, rule-based world order;

determine

that the aims of the United Nations, especially the creation of a peaceful world, respect for human dignity, the equality of genders and a good standard of living for all people, are still of unchanging relevance and have not been achieved to the required extent in the 75 years of the existence of the United Nations;

that armed conflicts and political oppression as a reason for flight and expulsion represent major obstacles to sustainable development and that the community of nations, in adopting the Sustainable Development Goals, has committed itself to creating and permanently protecting peace and justice;

that today the majority of people live and work in cities and that the growth of the urban population will persist steadily in the coming decades;

that the achievement of the objectives that the community of nations has adopted in the area of sustainable development, especially the Paris Agreement to combat climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals, will only be successful if implementation is at local level;

that we must undertake efforts to pursue green, low-emission development;

that many cities have already initiated ambitious transformation processes to facilitate the protection of natural resources, a responsible economic system and socially just development with the desire to ensure in this way that no-one is left behind;

that the coronavirus pandemic has hit all cities hard worldwide, led to the severest levels of death and illness, involves severe cutbacks for many businesses and their employees and has caused considerable losses of revenues for many cities, made public life and the exercise of the most diverse forms of culture more difficult and presented financially weaker cities in developing countries with sometimes insurmountable problems;

that people form a community with a common goal and that we can only tackle the various global risks and challenges facing us through our concerted efforts;

that the City of Mannheim and its partnership and twin cities have shown and experienced solidarity in the coronavirus pandemic and that worldwide there are countless examples of how cities have helped each other across the borders of countries and continents in times of crisis and thus made a real contribution towards overcoming the crisis;

and declare herewith

that it is the urgent wish of the citizens of our cities and their legitimate political representatives that the national governments that are the sole representatives on the Security Council of the United Nations and that have the power to make decisions about war and peace should increase their efforts to end armed conflicts and to combat all causes of flight and expulsion, including human-made climate change, to an extent leading to an actual improvement in the living situation of all people in crisis areas;

that the institutions and bodies of the United Nations should be equipped by the national governments with all necessary financial and personnel resources to fulfil their important tasks;

that the provision of financial aid programmes for the cities to overcome the coronavirus crisis by the national states and international organisations is correct and important, but that what counts, when these are implemented, is that the transformational processes that have started should be speeded up rather than slowed down;

that the cities within the system of the United Nations are important partners for the maintenance of a multilateral, rule-based world order and therefore must be permanently integrated into the processes and structures for the further development of multilateralism;

that the achievement of the goals of the community of nations, especially in the area of sustainable development, can only succeed through a redefinition of the role of the cities within the United Nations system and there is therefore a need for an institutional reform of the United Nations which will lead in the end result to a formalised participation of the cities in the decision-making processes of the United Nations;

and that it is our common will, especially as a consequence of the coronavirus crisis, to continue and further intensify our international collaboration within the framework of city networks and partnerships, project cooperations and the shaping and implementation of global political agendas with the close integration of the citizens of our cities and using the technical progress made in digitisation with the aim of achieving a peaceful, fair, sustainable world.

Dr Peter Kurz
Mayor of Mannheim
Germany

STADTMANNHEIM⁶

Haydar Ali Yildiz
Mayor of Beyoglu
Turkey

Rafa! Bruski
Mayor of Bydgoszcz
Poland

Reinhard Naumann
Mayor of Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf
Germany

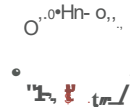
Iob Ceban
Mayor of Chişinău,
Republic of Moldova

Vytautas Grubliauskas
Klaipeda
Lithuania

CHI IN . A . U

Marco MOier

David Hopkins



Magali Turbatte

Fred Francis
City Councillor of Windsor
Canada

Jian GUO
First Deputy Mayor of Zhenjiang
China

IN SUPPORT OF THE GLOBAL CONVERSATION
HONOURING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

**SHAPING
OUR
FUTURE
TOGETHER**

2020 AND BEYOND

Greetings from Windsor, Ontario, Canada!

On behalf of Mayor Dilkens, Windsor City Council and our International Relations Committee, it is an honour to be invited to speak with you, to adopt a joint declaration relating to the future of the United Nations.

Today, I will discuss international cooperation between cities and will share our storied relationship with our American neighbours in Detroit, Michigan. Windsor and Detroit are separated by the Detroit River, but are connected by an international bridge and a tunnel. A second span, The Gordie Howe International Bridge, which is currently being built, is the largest shared infrastructure project between Canada and the United States.

Windsor and Detroit share a very busy border crossing. On average, 15,000 cars and 8,000 trucks cross our border every day, which equates to 1/3rd of all surface trade, or half a billion dollars between our two countries.

Moreover, approximately 7,500 individuals cross the border daily for work in the Healthcare, Education and Automotive sectors.

Our region is now home to Canada's highest concentrated automotive cluster, which borders America's Motor City in Detroit. Beyond automotive and manufacturing, there are many other examples of bi-national cooperation. For instance,

- Transit Windsor operates the only cross-border public transit system in North America;
- The Windsor–Detroit tunnel is co-owned by the cities of Windsor and Detroit;
- The Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Detroit Chamber of Commerce offer cross-border membership;
- And, Hacking Health Windsor-Detroit, pairs innovators with healthcare experts to build solutions to healthcare problems through the use of emerging technology.

Furthermore, Tourism is vital to our shared success. American travellers account for almost 40% of visitation and almost 40% of spending in the Windsor region. Gaming accounts for 50% of all activities and in fact, 1/3rd of all business at Caesars Windsor Casino Resort is from American clientele.

Travellers also visit parks and gardens, attend festivals and sporting events and spend their money on recreation, entertainment, food and beverage, retail and accommodations.

Through the years, the marketing of a "Two-Nation Vacation Destination" has become a popular theme for both our cities. Large-scale events, such as Super Bowl 40, the Detroit Grand Prix, Red Bull Air Races, the Detroit Free Press Marathon, the North American International Auto Show, and the Ford Fireworks have been able to capitalize on the connectivity between both countries.

Today, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we live a new reality.

In March, the Governments of Canada and the United States instituted a temporary 30-day restriction on all non-essential travel at the Canadian-American border. This restriction has been further extended to late September and possibly beyond.

The border restrictions obviously resulted in a steep decline in both trade and traffic. However, cross border cooperation was necessary to enhance public safety. In fact, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of our cross-border cooperation more than ever, as thousands of Windsorites work in Detroit. The border remains open for essential workers, such as truck drivers who are crucial to maintaining our integrated supply chains and overall economic well-being. This pandemic has reinforced the importance of a strong cross border relationship with our neighbours in Detroit.

The reality, which we face today because of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to quickly shift from normal to something completely different in order to respond to the needs of our community. Windsor has worked closely with our neighbouring municipalities over the past several months and together, with senior levels of government to ensure the public's safety.

Our goal is to continue to strengthen our international cooperation by sharing our experiences with other jurisdictions so that we are better prepared in the event of a second wave of COVID-19, or perhaps a different virus or situation that may arise in the future.

Our many lessons, our successes and our failures must be shared. While navigating this pandemic we have worked to ensure that cross border trade resumed quickly and that the health and livelihood of our citizens was not compromised.

While continuing our day-to-day operations, the safety of our community has been our number one priority. The City of Windsor will continue to do what is required for the wellbeing of our community, the success of local businesses, and of course the continued mutually beneficial relationship with the City of Detroit.

We look forward to sharing our lessons, our knowledge and expanding on our awareness through more communication with other cities, both local and international.

Thank you!

Virtual Mayor's Summit – Mannheim

September 9, 2020

Twin Cities with the Corporation of the City of Windsor

(Chronological Order)

<u>City and Country</u>	<u>Year of Twinning</u>	<u>2020/2021 Anniversary</u>
Granby, Canada	1956 (May)	64/65
Coventry, England	1963	57/58
St. Etienne, France	1963 (June)	57/58
Udine, Italy	1977 (November 14)	43/44
Mannheim, Germany	1980 (April 14)	40/41
Ohrid, Macedonia	1981 (June 29)	39/40
Las Vueltas, El Salvador	1987 (April 13)	33/34
Fujisawa, Japan	1987 (December 2)	33/34
Changchun, China	1992 (June 16)	28/29
Saltillo, Mexico	1994 (November 6)	26/27
Lublin, Poland	2000 (June 26)	20/21
Gunsan, South Korea	2005 (June 20)	15/16

THE CITY OF WINDSOR

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DREW DILKENS, DBA

June 26, 2020

Mr. Krzysztof Zuk
Mayor of the City of Lublin
Plac Kr6la Wtadystawa tokietka 1, 20-109
Lublin, Poland

Dear President Zuk,

On behalf of the City of Windsor, it is my honour to congratulate you, the City of Lublin council and residents as we join in commemorating the 20th anniversary of the twinning partnership between Windsor and Lublin on June 26, 2020.

For two decades, our cities have enjoyed a close and fruitful relationship that has only flourished since the first delegation from Lublin arrived in Windsor to take part in the official signing ceremony of our twin-city agreement in council chambers on June 26, 2000.

Our lasting friendship was made possible thanks to the admirable efforts of Polish Canadian Business & Professional Association president Jerry Barycki who recognized the compatibility of Windsor and Lublin and partnered with the International Relations Committee to realize the great potential we shared for increased cultural and economic exchange. Their hard work paved the way for Windsor to send our first official delegation to Lublin in 2001 to sign the second part of the twinning agreement and since then our alliance has only grown stronger.

Our two cities have held numerous political, business, education and cultural exchanges that have enriched our social and economic ties. I have had the honour of leading two of these official visits to your beautiful city and have many fond memories of the warm welcome and hospitality that is effortlessly extended to the Windsor delegation each time.

While the pandemic forced us to postpone our planned 20th anniversary celebrations until 2021, we can look forward to building on the solid foundation we have set over the past two decades. Looking back on all that we have accomplished together, there is much to celebrate and so much to look forward to in the future of our long-standing friendship. Thank you for your partnership and congratulations.

Drew Dilkens
Mayor, City of Windsor

CC: Leslie Scalon, Ambassador of Canada to Poland



Krzysztof Zuk

PREZYDENT MIASTA LUBLIN

Lublin, 21 July 2020

Mr Drew Dilkens
Mayor of the City of Windsor

Dear Mr Mayor,

On behalf of the city of Lublin, I would like to thank you for your congratulations and all the kind words on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of establishing cooperation between our cities. Also, I would like to extend my compliments to you personally and the residents of beautiful Windsor and wish all the best on the occasion of this jubilee.

The ties connecting Lublin and Windsor have been built continuously for 20 years, it has been a time of undertaking many fruitful initiatives. The cooperation between our cities was multidimensional, starting from political and economic cooperation and finishing on cultural projects. I particularly recall, last year's economic mission, aimed at strengthening economical cooperation between the Lubelskie Voivodeship and the Province of Ontario. Further, your and your wife's visit to Lublin in 2015, stayed with me as a lasting memory of time spend among friends. It also helped me to consolidate a firm belief, that we share the same vision for our cities development.

I would like to extend a word of thanks to the Polish Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor and its President, Mr Jerzy Barycki, thanks to whom we managed to establish many fruitful contacts and engage in meaningful initiatives.

I deeply believe that, despite the uncertainty associated with the coronavirus pandemic, our cooperation will be continued and its effects will bring even more benefits for both Lublin and Windsor.

Yours sincerely,

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THE CITY OF WINDSOR

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DREW DILKENS, DBA

August 26, 2020

Mayor Zhang Zhijun
Floor 10, Building A
Second Office Area of Changchun Municipal Government
No. 3066 Third Ring Road South (Nansanhuancheng Road)
Changchun, Jilin, P.R. China | 130011

Dear Mayor Zhijun:

On behalf of the City of Windsor, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to you on your appointment as mayor of Changchun City.

The City of Windsor has established a longstanding, deep friendship and strong Sister City relationship with Changchun for nearly 30 years. Various cultural and economic exchanges between Changchun and Windsor have strengthened and benefited our friendship over the years. There have been efforts to develop more culture and business projects with Changchun, especially in regards to shared interests in the automotive industry and in agriculture.

There have been multiple delegation visits to Windsor and joint initiatives in partnership with our local economic development corporation. In addition, in the past, Windsor delegates have been invited to attend race marathons, an International Agricultural Expo, and the Mayors' Forum, Entrepreneurs Summit and Sister Cities & Cooperative Cities Development and Cultural Expo conference in Changchun.

These exchanges, these celebrations of the friendship between our two communities are very important to us. With many Chinese residents and organizations in Windsor, we always welcome the opportunity to share new, important cultural experiences and exchanges with you. I know that under your leadership, we will continue to grow the strong bond between Changchun and Windsor. I look forward to meeting you and welcoming you to the City of Windsor at some point in the future.

ou for your partnership. Thank you for your friendship.

Tigray Community of Windsor and Essex County

2267 California Avenue, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3V5, [Tel: 519 257 3389](tel:5192573389)

(Ontario Corporation Number: 1976058)

His Worship Mayor Drew Dilkens, 350 City Hall Square West, P.O. Box 1607, Windsor, Ontario
N9A 6S1

Date: July 20, 2020

Dear Mr. Mayor,

We the members of the Tigray Community of Windsor and Essex County who are Canadian citizens seek your immediate assistance regarding the dangers and threats happening and looming against our people of origin, Tigrayans in Ethiopia, spearheaded by the current prime minister of Ethiopia, Mr. Abiy Ahmad and his government. Tigray and its people as one of the eleven regional states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia have contributed to its development and have paid the highest sacrifice in defending their country's sovereignty. The Tigrayan citizens of Ethiopia along with their compatriots have fought generations after generations to overthrow the totalitarian and rouge governments of Ethiopia, and finally were successful in establishing a federalism which grants full rights of self-determination of all nations and nationalities of Ethiopia on February 22, 1987.

The prime minister of Ethiopia Mr. Abiy Ahmad and his government who took power in April 2018 have aimed at subjugating the people of Tigray against their constitutional rights, and engaged themselves in such countless dreadful political encounters, just to mention but a few, are the following:

1. Repeatedly provoked genocidal attack against them by
 - Blaming the Tigrayan citizens of Ethiopia as the only root-cause of all the political problems of the Ethiopian people.
 - Spreading venomous lies and creating fake documentaries and broadcasting them on the publicly funded media outlets such as ETV, WALTA, FANA, AMAHRA MASS MEDIA.
 - Holding televised hate speeches by the prime minister himself and assigning aversion names to leaders, scholars and politicians of Tigray as "Day Light Hyenas".
2. Intentionally punished the people of Tigray economically by
 - blocking the main highways linking the regional administration of Tigray with the rest of the country for over a year and half.
 - Cancelling developmental projects particularly that of Tigray regional state such as railway lines and industrial parks which were initially planned by the federal government before the prime minister came to power.
 - Refusing foreign investors who were interested to invest in Tigray by not allowing them to travel to Tigray
 - Intimidating domestic and foreign travelers, scholars and politicians who are interested to travel to Tigray for business and tourism.
 - Threatening to cut the budget and the power supplies, and close universities of Tigray.

3. Created psychological anxiety, instability and constant fear against Tigrayan citizens by
 - Arresting high ranking members of the military, successful businessmen, politicians and journalists of Tigray origin who have been bravely serving their country.
 - Denying justice to the families of those heroes who fought for their motherland, general Seare (the then Ethiopia's chief of staff) and general Gezaee who were assassinated while they were actively serving under the command of the prime minister.
 - Encouraging the political elites of the neighboring administrative region and country to engage in a conflict with the people of Tigray and possibility create a civil war against them.
 - Threatening Tigray and its people to be subjected to a war if they exercise their constitutional right, holding the 2020 election as scheduled. The prime minister, Mr. Abiy Ahmad was heard as saying in a publicly broadcasted speech that "we don't want to see houses burned, mothers cry and young people die" If Tigray hold elections. Those are the prime minister's words against his own people. (A prime minister who once was a Nobel laureate and has gone on a streak of political loss day by day.)
4. Cut off media outlets and tele-communications of Tigray using their federal powers by
 - Blocking Tigray TV, Dimitsi Weyane (*DW*) and channel 29 TV stations
 - Cutting off the internet for unlimited time, in Ethiopia where there are 110 million people.

Currently, Ethiopia is in a political turmoil. Based on Ethiopian state media, it has been reported that the government security forces have killed more than 230 young citizens (mostly Oromos) while protesting the assassination of a well-known Oromo nationalist singer, Hacchaluu Hundessa. In early November 2019, more than 86 people were killed by the government security forces in Addis Ababa and its environs while protesting the government. In May 2019, in a statement issued by Benishangul Gumz regional party, it was indicated that more than 200 civilians who are ethnically Gumuz and Sinasha were brutally killed by the regional government's armed group including kids, elders and mothers. Thousands of innocent civilians from the *Kemant, Tigray, Oromo, Guji, Afar*, etc. were killed in the last two years by the government security forces.

Extreme human rights violations, mob justice and lawlessness, and displacements of citizens are happening now in Ethiopia in unprecedented way. Last week, most prominent opposition party leaders in the country were arrested. TV stations which were the voices of the people of nations and nationalities were shut down. It has been almost two weeks since the internet is cutoff. The prime minister of Ethiopia has suspended Election 2020 indefinitely using COVID -19 as an excuse. He breached the constitution repeatedly so he could be in power illegally for an unknown time even though his term expires in October 05/2020. Moreover, he has orchestrated a wide range of campaigns against the people and government of Tigray administrative region, and repeatedly threatened that he will declare war against them if they hold election according to the constitutional deadline.

We kindly ask you to be the voice of the Tigray people who are running an uncertain life due to the threat of war and genocidal attack orchestrated by the prime minister, Abiy Ahmad, and the federal government of Ethiopia for exercising their constitutional right. We hope that you will impose pressure against the government of Ethiopia so it can hold civilized dialog with the opposition parties of the country to come up with political solution for sustainable peace.

Thanks,

Sincerely,

The Tigray Community of Windsor and Essex County Board