



A 6 POINT HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA FOR ELECTIONS 2021

The national elections, due in June 2021, the first since the start of a new political chapter in the country, provides an opportunity to take important measures that will help address the complex human rights issues in Ethiopia.

To ensure that the national election process is credible, peaceful and one that allows for concrete measures that will lay the ground for lasting solutions to human rights issues, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) calls for a public pledge from all stakeholders participating in the elections, and in particular from political parties, government bodies, civic society and media organisations to respect, to protect and to ensure the implementation of, at a minimum, the following 6 Point Human Rights Agenda for the 2021 Elections.

1

Pledge for Concrete Human Rights Actions

Political parties should publicly pledge, in their manifestos, to tangible measures they will take to respect, to ensure the protection of and to fulfill human rights, especially with regards to the protection of the rights of vulnerable persons such as women, children, persons with disabilities, minorities and internally displaced persons.

2

Commitment for Human Rights

Political parties including the incumbent, candidates and all opposition parties should commit to act peacefully and in a manner that respects human rights throughout the entire process of the elections; to publicly pledge that they shall not tolerate violations of human rights on the part of their members and/or their supporters, and set up transparent internal processes to ensure that any members who act in violation thereof are investigated and held accountable.

3

Ensuring Gender-Responsiveness of the Election Process

Recognizing that elections play an important role in increasing the political participation of women, all political parties should design and implement strategies to increase the participation of women within their own political party, and all stakeholders should make a particular effort to ensure that the entire electoral process is gender responsive.

4

Pledge for legal and policy reform

All political parties, whether or not they win the elections, should pledge to work together and along with other stakeholders to find a sustainable solution to the complex human rights crisis in Ethiopia; and publicly commit to undertake a rigorous review of all legal, policy and administrative issues that cause human rights violations and to make the necessary legislative and policy reforms.

5

Protecting freedom of movement, association, expression, and access to information

Federal and regional authorities, and security forces in particular, should carry out their duties in a non-partisan and responsible manner and ensure that all political parties, candidates as well as media and civil society organisations are able to exercise their right to freely move and to express their opinion freely, to access information, to association and all other political rights without restriction, prohibition, discrimination, undue interference or retaliatory measures.

6

Fully Refrain from Incitement, Hate Speech and Violence

All political parties, candidates, media and civil society organisations as well as community influencers should all commit to fully refrain from inciteful and hateful speech and other behaviour and acts that provoke human rights violations, and refrain from any acts of violence.