



## DEFEND ETHIOPIA TASK FORCE EUROPE

### Organization and Code of Conduct for Steering Committee Members

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- ❖ 27 February 2023 – Version 1 of the DETF-EU Organization and Code of Conduct presented to the [regular Steering Group and approved](#)
- ❖ Next: Iteration with other stakeholders of DETF-EU

## 1. Mission and Objectives of the Task Force

Defend Ethiopia Task Force in Europe (DETF-EU) is a group of Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia in Europe, from all walks of life, including professionals and scholars, defending Ethiopia from pressures by external entities through Public Diplomacy with the support of Ethiopian Communities in Europe. Contribution to the Task Force is open to all Ethiopian nationals or any nationals of Ethiopian origin, residing on the European continent. DETF-EU's long-term mission is to contribute in transforming Ethiopian Diaspora Communities in Europe into a meaningful and independent public diplomacy instrument for Ethiopia and Ethiopians in a constructivist approach and its yearly objectives are regularly reviewed by its Steering Committee on [DETF-EU's website](#).

## 2. Organization

The Defend Ethiopia Task Force in Europe shall have a Steering Group to coordinate the activities of the Task Force. In particular, The Steering Group shall:

- Exchange and share current and up to date news and information from well-grounded sources as input to set Agendas for advocacy and campaigns
- Act as an advocate for Public Diplomacy initiatives to Promote and Defend Ethiopia with the support of the Ethiopian Diaspora communities and government representations in Europe through focal individuals in different countries
- Set the strategic direction of initiatives including ways and means to conduct effective digital and conventional campaigns in relation to Public Diplomacy to Promote and Defend Ethiopia
- Identify and establish timely Public Diplomacy agendas - set priorities, initiate campaigns and responses to issues, set goals and scope as well as determine how success will be measured
- Identify, monitor, discuss and address common challenges and risks in the Diaspora with a view to effectively conduct the activities of the Steering Group towards its mission.

The Steering Group shall have functions, elected by its members, with a limited term to effectively and efficiently conduct the activities of the Task Force towards its objectives at the European continent level.

### 2.1 Chairperson

- provides leadership and is responsible for coordinating the overall activities of the Task Force
- ensures the actions taken are in line with the organization's mission, objectives, and code of conduct, assigns tasks, coordinates and monitors the activities of the Task Force, including the composition and effectiveness of Working Groups
- ensures agreed tasks are carried out, and makes decisions between meetings, at his/her discretion through consultation by consensus or vote if and when possible and necessary
- approve the formal minutes of the meeting after they have been formatted by the Secretary
- ensure fairness, equality at meetings and maintains harmony among the Task Force members
- liaise with the group of ambassadors and other external entities in the name of the Task Force

## 2.2 Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson and will act on his/her behalf in his/her absence.

## 2.3 Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for

- reviewing and updating documents as necessary including meeting minutes, official letters and reports
- ensuring all documents are safely stored and readily accessible
- maintaining effective administration of all important digital records

## 2.5 Internal Mediation Committee

The Internal Mediation is responsible for meditating differences among members of the Steering Group. The Mediation Committee does not decide the outcome of disputes, but helps the parties understand and focus on the important issues needed to reach a resolution. Should such conciliation or mediation proceedings fail, the matter shall be settled through voluntary arbitration by an external committee.

## 2.6 Working Groups

The following working groups shall be formed by the Steering Group in consideration of available resources, interests, skill sets and availability. In consultation with Steering Group members, the Chairperson shall be responsible for selecting the leaders of each group, who will be responsible for its composition and effective delivery. The leaders of each working group must be a member of the steering group. The members of the groups can be a set of volunteers from the public or other partner organs. A leader can delegate responsibilities to other members in case of difficulties.

**Content Team** - Draft letters, emails, Twitter content, Web Content, Editorial tasks

**Technical Team** - Update, manage security, availability and performance of Twitter and email Platforms, DEFT-EU website, Editing Graphics and Videos

**Monitoring and Evaluation Team**- Monitor Social media trends for launched campaigns, define performance indicators, collect data to measure achievements, create meaningful performance reports and dashboards

**Dissemination Team** - Maximize reach of campaigns and messages through all relevant means including Social Media influencers, organizing and moderating Webinars in Amharic, with foreign guests in English or local European languages.

## 2.7 Elections

- a) A temporary election committee shall be formed to conduct the elections for the three functions.
- b) The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson shall be elected in one single election by the Steering Group Members on the basis of one country one vote. Only primary country representatives are eligible to vote.
- c) The election shall be conducted using electronic means and a reasonable amount of time is given for all members to cast their votes (or delegate his/her vote).
- d) The term of the Chairperson and other functions shall have a duration of six months and can only be renewed once (a maximum of two terms of six months).

## 3. Guiding principles

1. Members of the Steering Committee bear the responsibility for translating the ideals of the mission of DETF-EU to reality by relying on practices centered on: inclusiveness, integrity, impartiality and independence.

2. But over and above this, the Steering and other Committee members have a special calling to serve the ideals of Ethiopian sisterhood and brotherhood, of respect for rights of all Ethiopians, regardless of their political affiliation, religious practices and ethnic appurtenance. It is therefore incumbent on Steering and other Committee members to adhere to the highest standards of conduct, for, ultimately, it is their conduct and contribution that will enable the Ethiopian Diaspora in Europe to bring about a strong Ethiopian Diaspora Community engaged in the defense and development of their country.

3. Steering and other Committee members should share the [mission of the DETF-EU](#). It is loyalty to this mission that ensures the integrity and outlook of the group; it guarantees that they will place the strength of the Task Force high and use their time and the group's skills and resources in a responsible manner.

4. Members of the Steering Committee should be constantly aware that the Defend Ethiopia Task Force In Europe's decision body is the Steering Committee and be committed to respect this status.

5. Integrity embraces all aspects of behavior of the Steering Committee, including such qualities as honesty, truthfulness, impartiality and incorruptibility. These qualities are as basic as those of competence, efficiency and availability for members of Committees.

6. Tolerance and understanding are basic human values. They are essential for the Steering Committee, who must respect all persons equally, without any distinction whatsoever. This respect fosters a climate and a collaborative environment sensitive to the views of all.

7. Loyalty means loyalty not only to the Task Force and its contributors but also to all Ethiopians at large. Steering Committee members are expected to understand and exemplify this wider loyalty. The need for a cooperative and understanding attitude towards all segments of Ethiopian Communities, in and outside Ethiopia, is obviously most important where Steering and other Committee members are serving in the same city or region of other Ethiopian Networks and Community associations.

8. If the impartiality of members of the Steering Committee is to be maintained, they must remain independent of any authority outside the Task Force; their conduct must reflect that independence. In conducting their contributions in the Task Force, they should not seek nor should they accept instructions from the Ethiopian Government or any person or entity external to the Task Force.

It cannot be too strongly stressed that members of the Steering Committee are not, in any sense, representatives of the Ethiopian Government or other entities, but rather the Ethiopian Community abroad in its broader sense. They should liaise with Ethiopian Government officials at all levels when and if it is necessary in fulfilling the Task Force and achieving its objectives, on government policies relating to the Ethiopian Diaspora.

9. Impartiality implies tolerance and restraint, particularly in dealing with political or religious convictions. While their personal views remain inviolate, members of Steering Committee should refrain from expressing their personal convictions publicly on controversial matters that may be detrimental to the Task Force's objectives. This can mean that, in certain situations, personal views should only be expressed with tact and discretion.

10. This does not mean that Members of Steering Committees have to give up their personal political views or perspectives. It does mean, however, that they should try, when speaking publicly in their capacity as members of Defend Ethiopia Task Force in Europe, to maintain a broad outlook and an understanding of the Ethiopian Diaspora community as a whole.

11. The independence of the Steering Group members does not conflict with, or obscure, the fact that it is the individual members that collectively make up the Task Force. As such, their conduct should further good relations with all Ethiopians in Europe and worldwide and that contributes to their trust and confidence in the Task Force.

12. Steering Group Members who are responsible for particular tasks may be called upon to exercise special care in maintaining their independence. They might receive instructions from the Ethiopian government or other entities, but this should not compromise their independence. If at any time they consider that such instructions threaten their independence, they must consult the Chairperson or other members of the Steering Group.

13. A broad outlook of the Ethiopian Diaspora stems from an understanding of and commitment to the objectives and purposes of the Task Force itself. It implies, inter alia, respect for the right of others to hold different points of view. It requires a willingness to work without bias with persons of all ethnic groups, religions and cultures; it calls for constant sensitivity to how ideas, proposals, events and statements may look to others. It requires punctilious avoidance of any expressions that could be interpreted as biased or intolerant.

14. Freedom from discrimination is a basic human right. Steering and other Committee members are expected to respect the dignity, worth and equality of all people without any distinction whatsoever. Assumptions based on stereotypes must be assiduously avoided. They should do their utmost to promote gender equality and ensure the equality of men and women.

## 4. Working relations

1. Members of the Steering group have the responsibility to ensure a harmonious teamwork based on mutual respect. They should be open to all views and opinions. It is inappropriate for a single individual member to unilaterally, without consultation, to make decisions that can reasonably be perceived to offend or negatively affect the Task Force or its members. Likewise, it would be quite improper for them to solicit favors or gifts from other members or Ethiopian government officials.
2. It is naturally incumbent on all members of the Task Force to communicate effectively with other committee members and share information with them. Members of committees have a reciprocal responsibility to provide all pertinent facts and information to the group and to abide by and defend any decisions taken, even when these do not accord with their personal views.
3. Members of the Steering Committee should not act or follow verbal or written instructions that are manifestly inconsistent with their expected contribution in the Task Force or that threaten their safety or integrity or that of other members.
4. It must be the duty of members of the Steering Committee to report any breach of the Task Force guidelines to the Mediation Committee, whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action. A member who makes such a report in good faith has the right to be protected against exclusion.

## 5. Conflict of interest

1. It can happen that Steering Committee members are confronted with a question entailing a conflict of interest. Conflict of interest includes circumstances in which individual members, directly or indirectly, would appear to benefit improperly, or allow a third party to benefit improperly, from their association with the Task Force.
2. There can be no question but that members of committees should perform their contribution and conduct their private affairs in a manner that preserves and enhances confidence in their own integrity and that of the Task Force.
3. It is the clear duty of all members of the Steering Committee to maintain good relations with Ethiopian government officials and avoid actions which might impair this. The Task force should certainly not interfere in the policies or affairs of the Ethiopian government unless it directly affects the Task Force's ability to fulfill its objectives.
4. It would not be proper for members of the Steering Committee to air personal grievances or criticize the Task Force in public. They should endeavor at all times to promote a positive image of the Task Force.

## 6. Relations with the media

Openness and transparency in relations with the media are effective means of communicating the Task Force's messages. DETF-EU should have guidelines and procedures for this purpose. Within that context, the following principles should apply: members of committees should regard themselves as speaking in the name of the Task Force (and its members), state facts about the Task Force (including their role within it), and avoid personal references and views unless clearly stated as such. In no circumstances should they use the media to further their own interests, to air their own grievances, to reveal unauthorized information or to attempt to influence decisions facing the Task Force.

## 7. Use and protection of information

The disclosure of confidential information may seriously jeopardize the efficiency and credibility of the Task Force. Members of the Steering Committee are responsible for exercising discretion in all matters when contributing to the Task Force and interacting with external entities and individuals. They must not divulge confidential information. Nor should members of the Steering Committee use information that has not been made public and is known to them by virtue of their association to the Task Force to private advantage or discredit the Task Force's work. These are obligations that do not cease upon separation from the Task Force. It is necessary for DETF-EU to maintain guidelines for the use and protection of confidential information in any form (including electronic, voice) as well as the protection of its digital assets.

Respect for these standards assures that the Task Force will continue to be an effective group in meeting its objectives and fulfilling its mission.