

'A Criminal': Ethiopia Accuses WHO Chief Tedros of Backing Rebel Group

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Ethiopia's military has accused World Health Organisation chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of supporting and trying to procure arms and diplomatic backing for Tigray state's dominant political party, which is fighting federal forces.

"He himself is a member of that group and he is a criminal," army chief of staff General Birhanu Julia claimed in a televised statement on Thursday before calling for him to be removed. Birhanu did not offer any evidence to support his accusations.

Tedros, 55, is an Ethiopian of Tigrayan ethnicity.

He immediately denied aiding the dissident Tigray region.

"There have been reports suggesting I am taking sides in this situation," Tedros said in a statement. "This is not true and I want to say that I am on only one side and that is the side of peace."

Western diplomats in Geneva said that for now in the absence of any evidence of wrongdoing, there was no rush to judgment or move to challenge Tedros at the WHO.

On Twitter, Britain's ambassador Julian Braithwaite posted a photo of himself and Tedros after a Thursday meeting on the campaign led by WHO and the GAVI alliance to distribute COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and tests to poor countries.

Our thanks to The SMH for having brought this article to our attention

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Featured image: WHO-Generaldirektor Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. © Xinhua/IMAGO

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