

## **EDITORIAL:**

### **ELECTION 2005, ETHIOPIA: NO VOTE FOR MELES ZENAWI!**

After carefully studying the record of the governments of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi for the last ten years, as well as the transition period of 1991 to 1995, we have reached the unequivocal conclusion that a vote for Meles Zenawi and his party (the TPLF) and/or associates on May 15 '05 is a vote for the destruction of Ethiopia. [There is no real separation between the many members or satellite organizations of the EPRDF and the controlling group of the TPLF.] We have no personal animosity or personal grievance against Meles Zenawi or anyone in power. Our concern is purely a matter of our civic duty motivated by our desire to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our ancient and great nation and people in freedom and independence.

In fact, as individuals go, we acknowledge very many admirable qualities in Meles Zenawi and in some of his subordinates if only they have used their talent to build our shared nation rather than work to our demise and destruction. Such qualities of dogged persistence, capacity to manipulate adverse situations to ones own advantage, fearlessness in the face of personal crisis, single mindedness in the pursuit of power, the ability to work with diverse groups et cetera, are all desirable and admirable qualities if used for the benefit of us all. Nevertheless, they are not the corner stone of the form of leadership Ethiopia hungers for at this stage/time of our history. We want a unifier, a person who gives us all hope and pride, and not someone who is constantly engaged in adversity against the interest of all of us.

#### **I. Meles Zenawi**

The most glaring examples of Meles Zenawi's failure as a leader are the following:

1. He bred discontent and discord within the TPLF, which finally resulted in a "mini" coupe within the TPLF whereby veteran members of the leadership of the TPLF were summarily dismissed and thrown out of the party.
2. He manipulated the Central Committee and the Politburo members of the TPLF into endorsing his anti-Ethiopian political programs and into cooperation with hostile foreign governments to the detriment of the interest of Ethiopia.
3. He caused the fragmentation and bantustanization of Ethiopia laying the groundwork for weakening the political, economic, and cultural close ties among the different ethnic groups that constituted Ethiopia, the ties that had been forged over several centuries of coexistence under one sovereign power.
4. He has fomented disagreement and hate in between different ethnic groups thereby dividing the nation into a boiling mass of ethnic hatred and conflict.
5. He is the supreme controlling authority of the many syndicalist business and non-profit organizations engaged in monopolistic businesses in Ethiopia and elsewhere in the world. There never been any full accounting of those organizations, and no one knows where the hundred of millions dollars and equivalent wealth is deposited, how it is moved, in whose names such accounts are held.

6. He has encumbered and betrayed Ethiopia with tremendous international legal burden by signing the Algiers Agreement of 2000, an agreement that is conspiratorial, treasonous, and criminal.
7. He has misrepresented to the Ethiopian people the state of affairs in the border demarcation process and case that was illegal presented to The Hague Boundary Commission. Because of incompetent representations, and limitations set by Meles Zenawi, the Boundary Commission had entered its illegal decision against Ethiopia.
8. He has expressed in countless monologue his own and his government's position that the issue of the Ethiopian Afar Coastal territorial sovereignty as nothing more than a question of "port" access to the Red Sea. He has undermined thereby totally the legitimate and historic sovereignty of Ethiopia over the Afar Coastal area, the territorial waters on the Red Sea, and the human rights of the Afar people who are Ethiopian citizens.
9. He has no coherent foreign policy except reactive processes that is constantly appeasing bullies and powerful governments rather than being proactive and taking the initiative to create new allegiances and prospects in order to make decisive stand in the interest of Ethiopia..
10. He has allowed rich individuals and agents of hostile nations to penetrate the political, economic, and cultural life of Ethiopia, where by our national security and our national pride had been dealt a sever blow.
11. He has repeatedly violated and circumvented our Constitutional procedures meant to guarantee proper hearing and notice to the Ethiopian public about all major international agreements or decisions affecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia.
12. He has corrupted and subverted the judicial system of the country through his appointment of partisan TPLF members or supporters as judges; moreover, he has interfered in specific cases before the highest courts of the nation. At times, he had blatantly refusing direct court orders to free prisoners.
13. He has been repeatedly accused of the murder, torture, or disappearances of Ethiopians who may have opposed his political ambition, and had never fully answered to such accusations.
14. He has detained thousands of Ethiopians without court order for an extended period under brutal living conditions thereby affecting the health and well-being of thousands of Ethiopians. Most importantly, he has violated the human rights of Ethiopians guaranteed by the Charter of the United Nations and numerous Resolutions of the General Assembly, and the Ethiopian Constitution. Furthermore, he has choked all forms of freedoms of speech and expression by incarcerating publishers and reporters under a draconian press law.
15. He has put in place an education program that has left tens of thousands of young Ethiopians without a future, without training, and without hope.
16. He has put in place an economic program that is syndicalist, monopolistic, and adverse to competition and hard work
17. He has put in place rural development and agriculture policy that had a stifling effect on small farmers, who are blackmailed for political reason at all level by the bureaucracy. Under his administration, Ethiopia has been exposed to a series of famines and is in a state of extreme poverty.

18. He has allowed the enemies of Ethiopia to infiltrate Ethiopia's military forces thereby compromising the national security and defense strategy and tactics by appointing high military commanders whose loyalty to Ethiopia and the defense of Ethiopia's territorial integrity is highly questionable and manifestly suspect.
19. He has degraded deliberately the defense capacity of the nation by removing seasoned commanders and great veteran soldiers from the Ethiopian defense forces. In addition, had failed from upgrading and replacing acutely needed military weapon systems especially Ethiopia's Air force.
20. He has allowed moral deterioration and massive prostitution in Ethiopia adding to the spread of AIDS. He had failed to defend the honor and individual human rights of Ethiopian women who have been forced under inhuman conditions to work in the Middle East. He has abandoned Ethiopia's poor children to live in squalor and dehumanizing conditions on the streets of Addis Ababa and other urban centers.

**Therefore**, we believe Meles Zenawi and his associates are not the right leaders for Ethiopia. We urge all Ethiopians not to support Meles Zenawi's reelection as Prime Minister of Ethiopia. We urge all Ethiopians not to reelect any of the members of the political organizations under the banner of the EPRDF.

## **II. The TPLF and all Other Ethnic Based Political Organizations**

Over the last fifteen years, the TPLF has been transformed from a great "liberation front" into the personal "Tom Tom Macoute" organization of Meles Zenawi and his associates who are at the very center of that secretive organization. As it claims to be a political organization, the TPLF should have put the interest of Ethiopia at the forefront of its mission rather than reducing itself to serving the interest of Meles Zenawi and associates. Thus, we believe that the TPLF is no more a political organization, but a subversive criminal syndicate involved in monopolistic enterprises, money laundering, illegal business, and carrying out day-to-day activities of political subversion with reports of kidnappings and murders as a private enforcer organization of a handful of criminals parading as government leaders. It is not any different in its activities from the outlawed WPE, Mengistu's Workers Party. Moreover, the TPLF that has been registered since 1995 as a political organization is in violation of numerous provisions dealing with associations and political organizations under several Ethiopian Proclamations and Regulations. It should be closed down and its officers should be tried under several criminal provisions of the Penal Code of Ethiopia.

The many development and charitable organizations organized under the banner of the TPLF have never submitted formal public accounting as required by law for the last fifteen years or for the duration of the period since they were registered under the laws and regulations of Ethiopia. Those charitable or business organizations under the banner of the TPLF, which were not properly registered as required by law, have also committed criminal and civil infractions. All civilized nations that respect the rule of law have such systems of registration and proper annual accounting in order to safeguard the public from being victimized by a handful of unscrupulous individuals who may use the structure of a political organization to loot millions of dollars or equivalent of charitable equity for their own personal wealth and use. How are the people of Tygrie or Ethiopia in

general, in whose name such charitable organizations are functioning, ever going to get hold of their wealth stashed all over the world under numerous individual accounts.

We also do not accept nor recognize all other ethnic based Ethiopian political organizations as legitimate, constructive, or useful to Ethiopia and Ethiopians. They are all divisive, narrow minded, bigoted, and regressive structures that are already falling into the direction of civil war and destructive conflicts. The fact is that we are fighting for our national survival at this very moment. Ethiopia is surrounded by hostile nations, our historic enemies. Throughout our long history, we Ethiopians have fought numerous enemies from within and without. Such facts must make the matrix of our current political perception. Patriotic stand is the only stand that should unite us all against all forms of destructive forces of the current Ethiopian government and some of its opposition members.

At this moment of turmoil in the life of our nation, what is most important for our continued existence as a people and a nation is the way we structure our political organizations. We have never truly experienced political structures that represented our desire and aspirations. Thus, at this inception of our democratic political life, we must heed how we take our first political step. What we Ethiopians hunger for is for a leader who would raise our shriveled pride and help us walk with our heads held upright with pride and hope. We hunger for a leader who inspire and galvanize us. We want a leader who brings out from each one of us our very best. We need a leader who would instill compassion for our fellow man and confidence in our Ethiopianess.

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