

EDITORIAL:

THE DAWN OF NEW ETHIOPIA: THE STRUGGLE FOR NEW LEADERSHIP

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I. Ethiopian Election '05 Invalid and Void

We have declared the Ethiopian election of 2005 to be invalid and illegal and not binding on any Ethiopian. Meles Zenawi and his government with massive election fraud and brutal violence including murders carried it out. The following illegal activities by the Government of Meles Zenawi have been carried out in broad daylight, and have been witnessed and fully verified throughout Ethiopia by reliable sources:

- a) Limited the movement of election international monitors, and banned or detained the observers sent by the Opposition from traveling to polling stations;
- b) Waged extreme violence including murders against Opposition and Independent candidates and supporters;
- c) Arrested and detained several Opposition candidates and their supporters;
- d) Disfranchised voters by insufficient polling stations in areas where the opposition support is strong;
- e) Stuffed ballot boxes for its own candidates, and destroyed ballots in favor of Opposition candidates;
- f) Bribed people to vote for the EPRDF (Government) candidates;
- g) Used the Ethiopian Government facilities, such as vehicles, government employees, military personnel, et cetera exclusively to promote the candidates from the EPRDF members.

We do not acknowledge any of the pronouncements of European or American based election monitors who supported the election process, such as the group led by Former President Jimmy Carter, for deep at heart they are all agents of the Government of the United States promoting the interest of the United States and not that of Ethiopia. There is absolutely nothing that is constructive coming out of the United States Government that will help Ethiopia when it comes to elections. The United States, with years of election experience and massive amount of money at its disposal, has not even solved its own corrupt election process let alone give advice on election to other nations.

In anticipation of his winning the election and knowing the illegal method he used to win the election and the inevitable peaceful massive demonstration against his government, Meles Zenawi has taken over the command of his repressive and brutal Police and

Military Forces nation wide including that of the city of Addis Ababa as of Sunday evening. He has also put on red-alert his military strike force as a backup to his plan to quash any demonstration of protest against the election results of massive fraud and election irregularities. He has declared a month-long state of emergency by banning any form of demonstration starting on the day after the phony election the outcome of which has been already settled through intimidation and massive election irregularities and manipulations. Former President Carter has prematurely jumped into concluding and stating in public that the election process to be fair and peaceful and democratic. And such shameful statement comes out of the mouth of a person whose reference point is limited to a handful of polling stations without any knowledge of what is taking place in thousands of stations throughout Ethiopia. For example, in Mekele alone all the opposition Candidates withdrew due to massive intimidation and threat of murder. At any rate, what does any senile old man know, while cooped up in a room, about the numerous antidemocratic manipulations, intimidation, murder, and disappearances taking place in the rest of Ethiopia?

The performance of the Opposition group during the last phase of their democratic and uphill campaign going into the “election” has been stellar with impressive results beyond anyone’s expectations. Once and for all, Ethiopians in opposition to an existing government have proven themselves capable of rising to the occasion when there is acute need for direct action. In the last two weeks, the Opposition has proven beyond any doubt of its tremendous ability and capacity to galvanize Ethiopians to its cause under the most caustic regime in existence now. The momentum for civil disobedience and constant struggle against Meles Zenawi and his corrupt and oppressive government of the last ten years has now a new beginning. The Opposition has the singular duty and power to build further on its early success in order to make it a lasting effort to change the current government.

The United States Government and its European allies must recognize the fact that Ethiopia is an ancient civilization that predates any of their civilizations, and the fact that the Ethiopian people are used to running their own governments and institutions long before there was any European nation. Ethiopia is not some Johnny-come-lately banana republic. The election process is taking up its Ethiopian characteristics and will be solved in our uniquely Ethiopian way. We believe that no country should interfere from now on in our internal affairs. We, the people of Ethiopia will resolve our own problem in our own way. Especially the Government of the United States should exercise great restraint not to interfere in the political process of change already taking place in Ethiopia. Meles Zenawi is the most despised person in Ethiopia, his own government leaders are held together not because of a commitment to any ideology or loyalty to him, but out of sheer fearfulness and greed. It would be a mistake for any foreign government to put all its support eggs in the bag of Meles Zenawi. All governments that want friendly relationship with Ethiopia must allow the current political upsurge of the people of Ethiopia take its natural course.

II. The Risk Facing the Opposition

Old habits die hard, to paraphrase an old saying. The risk of the Opposition disintegrating not because of outside forces, but due to internal conflict for power is a devastating possibility. From his erratic actions so far in the last two days, there is no question that Meles Zenawi is shaking with fear because of the extent of the opposition to his government. Like all dictators, his actions from now on will be increasingly irrational, more and more violent and brutal. He will attempt to divide the opposition groups through all kinds of corrupt means. Therein lays the risk to the opposition that we stated in the title of this subsection.

The scheme to emasculate the Opposition's momentum will come in different forms, even some being benign and harmless. For example, even the Mayor of Addis Ababa, who is much respected by the Opposition and others, is doing his little scheme to appease the taxi drivers of Addis Ababa from being in opposition to Meles Zenawi by forgiving them a burdensome and unjustified increase in payments to the City. That is simply a bribe disguised as a governmental benevolence. Soon, backdoor manipulators will be at the doorsteps of the Opposition leaders trying to buy them off, some will be offered governmental ministerial positions, ambassadorships, lucrative agency positions et cetera. The temptation for some individuals may be too attractive to pass. At any rate, we believe Meles and his associates may offer a kind of coalition to the opposition leaders as long as they accept Meles Zenawi as Prime Minister for the next five years. The United States government, which has already some connection with some of the leaders of the Opposition, would probably urge them to accept such compromise rather than risk plunging the country into a civil war.

No Ethiopian should heed or be afraid of the United States or European nations, for they have continuously betrayed our friendship and loyalty. There will be no civil war in Ethiopia. We are too old for such unruly behavior. The struggle must continue. The point is to get rid of Meles Zenawi from continuing to destroy Ethiopia for the next five years if he stays in power. Therefore, no matter what it takes, Meles Zenawi must not be allowed to be Prime Minister for the next five years. He must not have any position of significance at all. If it comes down to an only sticky point of the EPRDF having to stay in some form of power, one compromise that may be acceptable would be to have some other leader other than Meles Zenawi as President, but in no condition Prime Minister. This is the last chance Ethiopians have to save Ethiopia from being destroyed by Meles Zenawi and associates. No compromise is possible with Meles Zenawi, a person with such dismal record; to have him stay in power or in any position of prestige is unthinkable. People may have thought of the EPRDF or the TPLF as monolithic structures. The fact is that there are many individuals within the TPLF and the other members of the EPRDF who want to see Meles depart. It will be astute of the Opposition leaders to penetrate and divide from within the EPRDF and the TPLF and enlist the help of such individuals to isolate Meles and his group who have terrorized those members within the EPRDF and TPLF.

III. Stay the Course

We urge the Opposition and all patriotic Ethiopians to stay the course, never to give in to any compromise. The fight must go on until Meles Zenawi resigns and a caretaker government is in place to prepare for another election in order to draft a new constitution. We need to start from scratch, change the political structure of the country into the old administrative or provincial system. We need to throw out all ethnic based political systems put in place by Meles Zenawi. We have to start taking into our hands Ethiopia's sovereignty and restore the territorial integrity of our beleaguered nation. The momentum for political change is rapidly building; it must not be allowed to falter.

The Police and Military Forces of Ethiopia, as well as the national guards or militia forces, must restrain themselves from murdering Ethiopians. They must refuse any order to kill, torture, imprison or detain any Ethiopian. If any member of the Ethiopian police or military forces including national guards or militias is involved in such atrocities harming Ethiopians will not escape legal prosecution by invoking superior order when law and order is restored and a new government is in place. We urge the members of the Ethiopian Armed Forces identified herein to remember the great lesson from the events that took place after the 1991 fall of the military regime. All Ethiopians in uniform are forewarned of their responsibilities not to harm Ethiopians by the order of Meles Zenawi or anybody else. The current Government of Meles Zenawi is a transition phase. Ethiopia and its People are here to stay long after Meles Zenawi and his nightmarish government is long gone and forgotten. Beware of the wrath of the Ethiopian People!

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