

"We must learn to Live together as brothers or perish together as fools"

Dr Martin Luther King

Let the Silence of TPLF members end!

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February 17, 2007

To all TPLF current and ex-fighters:

May the peace of God be with you all. Expressing first my admiration and respect I have for the sacrifices you paid to free Ethiopians from the brutality of the Derg, I would like to communicate to you certain urgent matter that needs your immediate attention.

On February 19 2007, the whole nation awaits the decision of the "court" that listened the case of Engineer Hailu Shewal et all. Sources and political pundits are predicting a non-guilty verdict would not be rendered. I hope and pray they are wrong.

In my September 8 2006 letter to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi [1] I wrote:

"Though the TPLF seems to be the winner for now it will be the ultimate and permanent looser at the end unless it takes some concrete, positive and reconciliatory steps as soon as possible"

I then called for a new beginning in a new year of 1999 Ethiopian Calendar. I called for the unconditional release of political prisoners. I warned peace cannot be imposed by force and the only solution for our country is forgiveness, love and reconciliation.

Numerous efforts were made to bridge the gab between Kinijit (CUD) and the TPLF. It has been now 473 days since the leader of Kinijit are incarcerated. So far the government of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is refusing to listen.

Your leaders may feel emboldened by their military might. They may be deceiving themselves by thinking that they can get away by locking up Kinijit leaders for years and suppressing the people by force. They may have been filled with a false sense of security because their soldiers (you) "defeated" one of the strongest army in Africa 15 years ago. They may simply assume they are invincible.

By incarcerating the true Kinijit leaders for years they might think Kinijit has lost forever. However, their sense of security is false. The defeat of Kinijit is only temporary and cosmetic. **The longer Kinijit leaders are in kaliti the stronger and the more popular they would become. They are winning and the TPLF is loosing.** As Dr Martin Luther King said:

"unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. The temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant."

TPLF officials must know that, unless they unconditionally release political prisoners the alternative may be very ugly. Their inaction now may lead us to an irreversible chaos in Ethiopia that will surely consume all of us like wild fire, including rulers in Arat kilo themselves (wherever they may be), their children, their relatives and all of you. Unless we come together and reconcile our differences today no-one will be safe tomorrow. As Frederick Douglas stated:

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"Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is in an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob, and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe."

Has anyone thought, three years ago, Sunnis would be killed by Shiias because they are Sunnis or vice versa? I for one have never imagined such sectarian violence would erupt in Iraq. The lack of political solutions, reconciliation and true dialog between all parties has made Bagdad a horrible place to be.

As Hate and bitterness reach to an all time high, anger and irrationality will take the stage. When people loose hope anything is possible. What guarantee do we have that Addis Ababa would not be like Bagdad or Mekelle like Falujah? Even the supreme might of the United States military could not control the insurrection in Iraq (population 27 million) by force. A lesson can be learn here. How could the TPLF Security forces can forcibly control 77 Million people (3 times that of Iraq) ? They cannot. Should they persist in their arrogance they will find out soon.

Supporters of Kinijit and Millions of Ethiopians are silent not because of fear but because they want to give peace a chance. Your leaders, for their own sake, must stop pushing the people to the edge. They must know that their rigidity will bite them back and have dire and grave consequences beyond what we can imagine.

Our appeal to your leaders seems to bare no fruit so far. I, hereby, request for your active involvements in this regard. You must act now before it is too late. You have the power to stop Prime Minister Meles Zenawi from making serious mistakes. You have the power to protect the TPLF from falling apart. You have the power to save Ethiopia from choas.

Any verdict other than a "not guilty" one is a suicide for the TPLF. It is important you rise up and make your voices heard for peace. You must not be silent in view of this great danger we are about to embark. You must demand the unconditional release of political prisoners and a new beginning.

Failure to release the political prisoners will be a monumental political blunder of a historic proportion that no Ethiopian will look at it lightly. It will definitively lead us to a point of no return.

Would you choose to be carried over to your own destruction by your leaders? Would you choose to make the sacrifices of tens of thousands of TPLF fighters for nothing? Would you let sectarian civil wars (where people are killed because of their ethnic groups) erupt in all cities of Ethiopia because of lack of hope and a better future? Would you allow the blood river to flow again?

I hope and pray you hold accountable your leaders as you gave them the platform and the power base to rule Ethiopia. Should you fail to do so, you must be ready to face the consequences of their poor judgments.

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With Hope and Prayer

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[1] <http://www.dekialula.com/articles/lettertomelessept182006.pdf>