

Change has to come to Ethiopia

(By Elias Mengesha - Heppenheim, Germany)

Ethiopia was known to be an old independent free nation with rich history, culture, tradition, religion and is the cradle of humanity. Despite its magnificent record, Ethiopia today is known for its famine, economic poverty, social crisis and political chaos. Now Ethiopia stands the rank of 171st out of 174 nations according to the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) listings, which arranges countries according to their overall level of human development.

We had suffered from three great famines in the last 33 years and we still are hungry due to mismanagement and maladministration run by our incompetent and autocratic regimes. We endure social crisis that include unemployment, health problems, cultural erosion and asylum seeking. We have become refugees all across the planet because home is not home any more. Think about the hundreds of thousands of orphans, street beggars and the unemployed youth (young pensioners) that have saturated the urban population all across the nation. Think about our daughters, sisters and mothers who have to sell their bodies in exchange for cash. When you think about Ethiopia, can you really imagine anything positive at this point in time? I doubt it. Ethiopia whose people have been mourning a national depression since the May 2005 elections is decelerating and degenerating at a faster rate which makes change inevitable.

It was just in May of 2005 when the Sun shone its rays of freedom and democracy on Ethiopia until darkness overshadowed it because the Woyanes couldn't take the heat. How can we forget those killed by the Agazis in broad day light, those eaten by wild beasts, those perished in malaria infested concentration camps, those tortured and incapacitated, those who lost their jobs unfairly, and those who fled their country? How can we forget those who still languish in Woyane jails with nonsensical crimes of genocide, treason, terror, conspiracy and other fabricated charges. And we have Martyr Yenesew Gebre who set himself ablaze after making a political statement. He told us that he didn't want to live in a nation where freedom and human rights are non-existent. He stressed the point that by sacrificing himself he wanted to leave a symbol under which we should struggle until freedom and justice are realized. All of these are recent time memories and Gobeze, I want you to use your conscience to do the reasonable; otherwise, tomorrow will hold you responsible for the consequence of your wrong doing today. At least history and humanity will curse you. Therefore, taking the following points into account do the right thing. Think about it, discuss and decide. Stand as one force. This is an open memo to you to ponder but not an imposition by any means.

- In a nation where millions of children starve day in and day out
- In a nation where millions of Ethiopians succumb to HIV/AIDS

- In a nation where millions of Ethiopians are unemployed
- In a nation where hungry city dwellers dine from garbage sites
- In a nation where millions of Ethiopians beg for a piece of bread to stay alive
- In a nation where the dream of freedom of millions of Ethiopians has been shattered
- In a nation where the votes of the people have been stolen
- In a nation where citizens who stood for democracy and peace have been executed in cold blood ruthlessly
- In a nation where those who demand a positive change languish in a Nazi style Kaliti Prison
- In a nation where thousands of Ethiopians have been brutally tortured and disappeared
- In a nation where people are subjected to insecurity, trauma, fear, anxiety, despair and helplessness
- In a nation where the leaders are narrow nationalists and promote ethnocentric ideology and are even anti Ethiopia themselves
- In a nation of heroes where the real traitors and renegades who have discredited Ethiopian history and Ethiopian flag have clung to power and reign uncontested
- In a nation where our identity as Ethiopians is becoming questionable . . .
- In a nation where land is sold to foreigners while farmers lack land to cultivate
- In a nation where the cost of living is unbearable
- In a nation where absolute dictatorship is being experimented and implemented
- In a nation where media is controlled and media people silenced and brutalized
- In a nation where nepotism and inequality are flourishing
- In a nation where corruption has devoid the nation of some 11 billion dollars
- In a nation where the majority of Ethiopians are ruled against their will

Change has to come for all of the above reasons!

The count down has started and the downfall of the ethnocentric regime of Meles Zenawi is hanging over the horizon like a thundering cloud following the recent popular movement of North Africa. We Ethiopians in the Diaspora today have to participate in this process of change and we should invest our time, knowledge, experience and money to realize the change by supporting the struggle for democracy. Know this! No force can stop an idea whose time has come and that time is now. This change has the capacity to transform Ethiopia from famine to feast, from backwardness to modernity, from partiality to partnership, from suppression to freedom, from feud to peace, from dictatorship to democracy and from misery to joy. Remember, in this chaotic, unjust and unfair world of ours, and in our lives that are too short, to do our part for a social good is a human wisdom.

Get up stand up; don't give up the fight. Struggle and support the struggle.

Peace, Freedom, Justice and Democracy for Ethiopia!