



## CAN THE TPLF GOVERNMENT SILENCE ANUAK, OROMO, OGADENI AND OTHER ETHIOPIANS IN MINNESOTA?

**JOIN IN PROTEST OF ANY ATTEMPT TO ENGAGE ETHIOPIAN MINNESOTANS IN COVER UP OF GENOCIDE, POLITICAL REPRESSION AND LAND-GRABS IN ETHIOPIA**

**PROTEST THIS SATURDAY, APRIL 17<sup>TH</sup> AT 1:00 PM (PRIOR TO 2:00 PM EPRDF MEETING)  
CROWN PLAZA HOTEL, 5401 GREEN VALLEY DRIVE, BLOOMINGTON, MN  
(SOUTHWEST OF INTERSECTION OF HWY 494 AND NORMANDEALE BLVD)**

On Saturday, April 17, 2010, some top officials from the Ethiopian government, which we have heard includes the Ethiopian Vice Prime Minister, Addissu Legese, the Governor of Oromia, a representative from the Office of Foreign Affairs as well as others, will be coming to the Twin Cities in an attempt to meet with members of the Ethiopian Diaspora—in particular, those of Anuak, Oromo and Ogadeni ethnicity, many of whom have made Minnesota their home.

We are calling on all Ethiopians to take part in a protest against this oppressive government who is robbing the people of their land, life and liberty while repressing their human and civil rights. The meeting on Saturday targets the Anuak but similar meetings are allegedly planned with these other groups as well. In response, let us join together in a show of solidarity.

This is not only for those from the *Solidarity Movement for a New Ethiopia (SMNE)*, but should include any Ethiopians who want to see freedom and justice come to the country. Somalis, who want to protest against the horrific human rights violations being committed in their country at the hands of the Meles regime, should also come! Despite just learning of this meeting, some have already moved quickly to organize this protest. The permit has already been issued for 1:00 PM, just prior to their scheduled meeting, so let us do our best to join together in protest.

### **Purposes of the meeting:**

#### **1. Recruitment of co-conspirators to spread propaganda that “things” are good in Ethiopia!**

Reports indicate that the Meles regime seeks supporters who will speak out with government propaganda about how good things are in the country. In other words, they want to “do damage control” to condemn **the 2009 US State Department’s Human Rights Report, the new Human Rights Watch Report and other reports from Ethiopians in the Diaspora; all of which have exposed the increasingly repressive and brutal nature of this regime.**

#### **2. You may used to deny the Meles regime’s complicity in human rights crimes!**

Those who attend the Anuak/Nuer meeting should know that they may be used as a puppet by the Meles regime to cover up all the evidence pointing to the regime’s responsibility for masterminding the 2003 Anuak genocide. For those Ogadenis, you may be expected to deny the continuing genocide in the Ogaden region. For Oromos, you will be expected to call the countless human rights atrocities and political imprisonments in Oromia counter-insurgency efforts, when it is well-known that Oromos have suffered great injustice under this regime. They may be expected to support the land-grabs in most every region of the country where long-term leases are being given to foreign investors, countries and multinational companies for nearly free, while Ethiopians, who cannot own land, are left out of the deals. Instead, Ethiopians are being displaced from their land with no other means to sustain themselves. Some of the people are ending up as “slave-laborers,” working for wages less than the minimal standards set by the United Nations. **Nearly all these “deals” have no input from Ethiopian stakeholders, leaving them out of every aspect, including any benefits.**

### **Warnings and actions:**

#### **1. Making these ‘deals’ with the Meles government may take the control, livelihood and resources of Gambella (or other regions) from the people who live there and put them into the hands of foreign groups with foreign interests!**

Ethiopian Minnesotans who go to this meeting or those who get further involved in potential “backroom deals,” may end up betraying their people back home. Those who love to return home to visit may find that their homeland is no longer “owned” by Ethiopians, but instead by foreigners who have their own self-interests in exploiting the natural resources and the people for a profit. It is clear that many of those involved intend to export their food and other products to their own countries. In a chronically hungry and poor land that depends on foreign food aid to feed nearly 16 million people, this does not make sense!

**2. Allegations that some Anuak, Nuer and others will be offered airline tickets, jobs in Ethiopia and other benefits if they agree to support the government spin!**

Reliable sources also have reported that these top Ethiopian government officials allegedly want to find 15 Anuak and 15 Nuer to side with the government in reporting that these “land, resource and business deals” are good for the people. Those who agree to the government’s terms may be offered incentives and various opportunities from these government officials—like airline tickets to go back to government-provided jobs in Gambella, where they would be used to further counter and silence any who object to these business, land, and/or natural resource giveaways. Economic development and foreign investment in Ethiopia, which can be a very good thing for Ethiopians, can exploit them when there are no safeguards, protections and transparency; all of which will jeopardize the long-term future of Ethiopians.

**3. People should be warned to not accept any bribes that may later result in criminal charges under the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act!**

Ethiopians should be warned that accepting such benefits, such as bribes, job offers, airline tickets or other perks, in order to support a government plan to advance any illegal business deals in Ethiopia between government officials and wealthy individuals, foreign governments and/or foreign multi-national corporations, may be considered guilty of transnational bribery by US law—a criminal offense under the United States Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Under this act, violators could be charged large fines, imprisoned or both for being part of a bribery scheme between businesses, government officials and intermediaries. For those who are not citizens, it possibly could affect their visa status. Before falling for any potential illegal traps, anyone considering such actions should consult an attorney or US official to avoid legal trouble later. In Ethiopia, one can get away with such acts, but in the US, the rule of law is much different!

**4. Ethiopian Community leaders should be cautious about giving any help in support of this meeting!**

Ethiopian community organizations, religious groups and other concerned people should warn those who might otherwise be tempted to accept bribes or other perks to not do so. **Official organizations who support this meeting, if there are any, should also be advised to be very cautious to warn their membership so they do not become complicit in any way.** Religious leaders should counsel their members to make moral choices that support truth, justice, freedom and the well being of others.

**5. Meles regime uses freedom in the US to block freedom in Ethiopia, let us expose the truth!**

Here is the Ethiopian government, attempting to use the freedom of speech in the United States, to suppress the freedom of speech in Ethiopia. They are pressuring people into silence, blocking the media, choking the country of any life, but then coming to a free country to recruit more people to defend them by covering up their destructive agenda of ethnic hatred and self-advancement.

**6. Join with others against the injustice that is threatening all Ethiopians!**

All Ethiopians who are concerned regarding the deteriorating conditions, the land and resource grabbing and the associated serious human rights abuses within your own regions and ethnicities, should put aside any differences and come together in protest; not just on Saturday, but until Ethiopians accomplish their freedom agenda in Ethiopia. Any opportunistic Ethiopians, who attend these meetings and hope to take advantage of these offers should be warned, confronted and encouraged not to forget about the suffering of their own people that will continue longer if they hide the truth.

Let us show up in solidarity; demonstrating that the Ethiopian government cannot simply come to Minnesota and expect to succeed in bribing and intimidating us into betraying our own families, friends and communities people back home. As much as the Meles regime is thriving on our division, they will be weakened with our unity. If we can come together around God-given principles that value all people, together, we can bring greater sustainable freedom and justice to all by putting humanity before ethnicity! The truth is, no one will be free in Ethiopia and in the Horn of Africa until all are free! May God help us!

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