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## Follow up to Invitation to Ethiopian Stakeholders' Meeting: Beginning the Dialogue Towards Collaboration

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June 27, 2010

### **To all Ethiopian Stakeholders;**

*This is a follow-up to the invitation recently given to all Ethiopian stakeholder's to take part in a meeting—the actual date, yet to be set—with the goal of exploring ways to achieve some basic goals in Ethiopia that we could agree on as important first steps to enhancing our society to the benefit of all of us.*

We want to know if there is interest in doing this and if so, we in the SMNE would facilitate or work with a coalition of other individuals or representatives of any other organizations to facilitate a meeting in the next few months where representatives from a wide range of political, faith, women's, youth and other such diverse groups would come together to start creative discussions around increased collaboration in order to achieve a few very simple and basic goals towards bringing greater freedom, justice, truth, equality, civility and the respect for human and civil rights to Ethiopia and beyond.

In order to make sure that more stakeholders are informed about the meeting and that they have time to consult with others in their group about this—possibly appointing a representative—we are extending the response date by another **two weeks to Wednesday, July 14, 2010**. We ask that you submit a written statement of your serious intention to participate.

We have already heard from a number of groups who have indicated their total support of this idea; even indicating that they were thinking of doing the same thing! Some have also expressed a willingness to take a role as part of a larger coalition of facilitators. ***This is great for we in the SMNE are simply facilitating this initial process and welcome others to join in.***

The response from the public has been very positive as well. Many say they are very encouraged by the idea of diverse groups cooperating on some shared goals. However, let us be clear, this is NOT a meeting focused on unity, because that is a much slower process that builds over time and success in working together.

Additionally, participating individuals and group representatives will certainly not agree on all aspects of this struggle because their agendas and methods to achieve these agendas will differ.

In other words, ***we never will have unanimous agreement on all of what must change in Ethiopia; but we do believe we can certainly settle on a few basic priorities in order to move ahead.***

We also believe we can achieve more if we set some ground rules for all participants that would promote a reasonably respectful and inclusive atmosphere for discussion that could improve collaboration and trust.

We have sent letters to many, but we hope to hear from more stakeholders, including those of you we have not personally invited, because we do not have everyone's contact information and may not know about you and/or your organization or background experience that might contribute to the effort. We also welcome those who are pro-government because we assume many of you genuinely seek a more reconciled and harmonious society for the future of all our children.

We look forward to hearing from you!

***May God guide us; giving us creative minds, humble spirits, open and accepting hearts towards others and willing hands and feet to do the work required of us at such a time as this.***

Sincerely yours,



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**This letter will be cc or send to all Ethiopian Stakeholders. For the names of the Stakeholders, please see the link on the SMNE website.**

Please respond to this request by emailing the **Reconciliation Task Force of SMNE** at [reconciliation@solidaritymovement.org](mailto:reconciliation@solidaritymovement.org) or by emailing the Director.

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