



AUGUST 24, 2010

Dear Friend and Colleague,

I am contacting you because you are one of those who has already enabled the work of the **Solidarity Movement for a New Ethiopia (SMNE)**; not only through your counsel and encouragement, but also through your willingness to provide concrete support. I truly thank you for being part of the SMNE, your contributions are greatly appreciated, but today, **I am writing to ask you to add even more volume and power to your voice and ours by working together in strengthening our advocacy work world-wide.**

I do not need to detail the crimes and injustices ongoing in our beloved country day-in and day-out. The recent election results have conclusively shown us that the current regime cares very little about a multi-party system, human rights or any of the tenants of democracy.

**You may not hear the cries of the Ethiopian mothers, see the tears flowing on the cheeks of the Ethiopian children, feel the pain in the hearts of the Ethiopian elders or know the desperation of Ethiopian fathers as they lose hope in providing for their families. You may not see the increasing numbers of children with swollen bellies, the emaciated people dying in the streets or the homeless children searching for food; but, many of us are painfully aware that the level and depth of poverty in Ethiopia has tragically deepened despite claims of double digit economic growth—the profits of which all must be ending up in the pockets of those in power, namely the EPRDF/TPLF leaders and their supporters, who have sold out on the people. Only good leadership, accompanied by good governance, will change the image of Ethiopia.**

In these dark days for our country, it is easy to lose sight of the light at the end of the tunnel, just as it is equally easy to under-estimate the immense power of our collective voice. As the famous Ethiopian saying goes, "Dir biaber, Anbessa yassir."

The question that I would like to pose to you today is; are you doing your part? Can you do more?

**On these premises, SMNE is undertaking a world-wide membership drive to make the “loud roar” of the suppressed and silent masses be heard around the world. We must be able to target our efforts as well as to mobilize our membership quickly at the right opportunities.**

As proven by other successful advocacy organizations, this type of organized effort allows advocacy groups to put pressure on all levels of government and to be used as an effective means to produce a favorable outcome in other high-impact advocacy efforts where success would otherwise be impossible.

**SIGN UP AS SMNE MEMBERS TO RECEIVE FUTURE SMNE COMMUNICATIONS:**

As part of the development of the SMNE’s organizational capacity, our **IT Task Force** is updating our data base in order to both improve communication within the SMNE membership and to better coordinate calls for action. This will be information geared to our members that will not otherwise be available to the public. Of course, our website will continue to be available to anyone.

**Those who want to continue to receive communications from us, which might include newsletters, updates, initiatives, calls to action and other important communications, must indicate their interest by providing us the necessary information, all of which may be filled out, preferably on via the link, provided below, to our website, but if necessary, you may also do so by letter, Email or by phone.** This information will be confidential and will not be shared with any other groups without your permission.

## **RATIONALE:**

1. Knowing where our members are geographically based throughout the world will allow us to pin-point these advocacy efforts; making it easier to undertake targeted campaigns in order to achieve our desired outcomes. This will also multiply the opportunities for effective action for our members. As the famous saying states, "*All politics is local,*" hence, our members world-wide will be able to lobby their elected representatives or other targeted groups.
2. Secondly, as we become a more powerful force to be reckoned with in the cause of advancing true democracy and justice in Ethiopia, we must be able to improve the communication within the organization and our capacity to call our membership into quick and coordinated action; either as a whole or as focused sub-groups with strategic goals; not necessarily organized around geographic location as under the first category, but related in other ways.

## **HOW TO SIGN UP FOR MEMBERSHIP/COMMUNICATIONS**

Please help us by clicking the following link and by filling out the required fields:


<http://www.solidaritymovement.net/>.

I would also ask that you forward this link to the SMNE website's Membership Application to your friends and family who support the SMNE so that they may do the same. Our leverage for change increases in direct proportion to our numbers and our ability to be better connected with our membership.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation; knowing that together, we can bring about systemic and lasting change; where our people will enjoy greater freedom, justice and prosperity. In this pursuit, we are seeking to work with all other organizations who want to bring about the betterment of Ethiopia as we believe that "none of us is free until all of us are free!"

The future of a New Ethiopia is in the collective hands of Ethiopians. **This is a movement of the people. It is not possible to succeed without people actually getting involved!** To wish for change and to not be willing to step forward in action makes us partners in prolonging our own oppression. **Giving up is not an option!** Instead, let us hold tightly to our vision for a New Ethiopia, trusting in God to guide and empower us in our battle for a healthier, more harmonious and more caring society, especially to the most vulnerable—our children, women, elders, disabled, the poor, the weak and the marginalized! Again, thank you for your commitment to these principles and this work.

**In hope for a government that is not more concerned with its image than it is with its dying and suffering people,**



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