



EthioLion

የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝባዊ አብዮታዊ ፓርቲ (ኢሕአፓ)

Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP)

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MARCH 8 : STRUGGLE OF ETHIOPIAN WOMEN CONTINUES

Every New Year has brought more disaster to the people of Ethiopia and it is none other than women who have been forced to bear the brunt of the dictatorship. 2010 has not brought any improvement in the sad plight of Ethiopian women whose rights continue to be trampled upon by a chauvinist regime that pays lip service to rights and equality while pursuing an all round repressive politics.

Employment, education, equal pay: name it and women have few rights still. Of thousands of street children in the capital itself, the majority are girls and they continue to be victims of rape and AIDS. Domestic violence is on the rise and women receive little or no protection. Under age girls prowl the streets as prostitutes in a country where more than 3 million are HIV positive. The regime in power has policies militating for the spread of prostitution to please its foreign guests and degenerate officials who patronize exclusive topless bars in which preteen girls serve as waitresses. The overall social decay and total absence of democracy, the spread of drug use, the rampant frustration and desperation have all added up to make the condition of women unenviable. Worse still young girls and women are trafficked to the Middle east (some 30,000 in Lebanon alone) where they are exploited mercilessly and subjected to crude racism so much so that at least five to six Ethiopian girls are murdered or commit suicide in Lebanon alone.

March 8, as the world observes international women's day, we are forced to sadly note that women in Ethiopia have to yet to struggle to assure their basic rights. Their right to have their own autonomous organization has been denied by a totalitarian regime that has dissolved all such organizations and set up its own satellites. Ethiopian women have not, however, stopped their noble struggle and while mention is often made of famous women political prisoners (Aberash Berta - disappeared since 1993, Bertukan Midiksa - incarcerated for life in Kaliti, hundreds of women prisoners languish in Dedesa, Zwai, Bir Sheleko and other prisons all over the country. The absence of good governance and democracy has made Ethiopian women helpless victims of all kinds of oppression and injustice. A grim situation indeed -- a situation which the EPRP, together with the valiant women of Ethiopia is struggling to end.

EPRP
P.O.Box 73337
Washington DC, 20056
USA
Tel . 202-291-4217 Fax 202-291-7645

E-mail : ESPIC@aol.com

Website: www.EPRP.com

EPRP
BP 22
Bois colombes 92270
France

Ethiopia will prevail !