

*Press release concerning the death of Ethnic oriented Dictator Meles Zenawi.*

Though the ethnic oriented ideologist dictator Meles Zenawi passed away 6 weeks ago, his regime officially announced his death on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 2012. Meles Zenawi seized political power by waging a liberation war using the ethnic army of his Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and toppling the military regime of colonel Mengistu Hailemariam in 1991. The TPLF was also a Marxist front which was closely allied with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF).

Upon seizing power Meles Zenawi promised far reaching political and economic reforms to secure continued western financial and political support for his narrow based ethnic rule. He had not delivered or done any other than introducing some cosmetic changes to deceive western donors. His rule was marked by increasing repression and violence against political oppositions and dissenters.

Meles Zenawi abused ethnicity for his grand scheme of divide and rule and clinging to power for his lifetime. He muzzled freedom of expression and was referred to as one of the notorious enemies of the free press in the world. He had imprisoned and forced into exile hundreds of journalists and politicians. His regime has committed massacres in different parts of the country and most Ethiopians are the victims of his repression and ethnic discrimination. Despite the egregious violations and widespread abuses of human rights, his regime has remained the largest recipient of western aid in Africa. He was reviled by almost all Ethiopians but loved by the major western powers. He posed himself as an ally of the west in the fight against international terrorism to secure aid. The western aid also constituted budget support which went into the regimes coffers directly. The massive western aid has not been effective in alleviating poverty and famine in the country. Rampant corruption and nepotism are responsible for hampering economic development in the country.

The ethnic dictatorship of Meles Zenawi was based on ethnic discrimination, exclusion and favoritism. The false or exaggerated economic growth figures and showcases infrastructure expansion the regime and its western donors use are primarily intended to justify more aid and conceal the failure of aid to the ethnic dictatorship in Ethiopia. In fact there are no independent institutions or organizations which can confirm or refute the growth figures the regime issues and the western donors consume. We are very much surprised by the naivety of some Norwegian government officials who happened to consume and echo the hollow propaganda of Meles Zenawi regarding economic growth and achievement of the so called millennium development goal.

Ethiopians struggling for democracy, justice and human rights see the death of Meles Zenawi as another opportunity for an inclusive transition to and creation of a just, stable and democratic system in Ethiopia. Meles Zenawi ruled Ethiopia as an ethnic leader, not as the ruler of the country. Thus he had no national agenda and vision other than collecting western aid in the name of the country's poor to consolidate and prolong his dictatorship.

The regime is coercing citizens in the country to mourn the late dictator and we condemn this immoral and violating act. We call on all the donors including the Norwegian government to support the Ethiopian democratic forces struggling to achieve the real noble goal.

The Organizers of the day for Victims Remembrance by Zenawi's Regime!!!

Norway – Oslo, September 2, 2012