

Sad Time of Sorrow but Bright Future with the Legacy of Meles

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi; a Reformer, Knowledgeable, analytical, Competent, An Engineer of Development, Politician, Military Commander, Economist, Diplomat, Philosopher, Listener, Orator, Reader, Writer; an all rounded Ethiopian Leader is no more.

What a sad time this is to Ethiopia and Africa? Really, it is shocking. As many people said "Ethiopia is in absolute sadness." Yes in did we all Ethiopians are in absolute sadness.

Dear all, this is the most sad hours of Ethiopia and but bright future for Ethiopia with the legacy of Meles. Sad because we lost an ever beloved, trusted, honourable and respected leader Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. **It is totally wrong time to lose Prime Minister Meles at this critical time, at the time of implementing Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) pioneered and designed by him and was needed Meles's critical role.**

On Tuesday, I was grief-stricken, weeping out loud the whole day. My neighbourhood, a Danish, university student asked me "are you ok?" "Do you need help?" and he added that he can call police or ambulance if there is any need. I said "Yes I am ok; no need for police or ambulance, sorry, I have lost a brother, a leader and this is out of my control, I did not know that I disturbed you to this extent." He added another question "is he your brother by birth or have you any blood relationship?" I answered back "not at all but he was my comrade, mentor and beloved leader of his people." The Danish university student told me that he knew a story about Ethiopia famine and the poorest country king, his Majesty Emperor Haileselesie, but since the Prime Minister Meles vital role on the two Copenhagen International Conferences, his picture to Ethiopia is changed. It is to be recalled that, one of the conferences was dealing on Global Climate Change and Prime Minister Meles was represented Africa to appeal Billions of Dollars of compensation to Africa. And then I displayed to the Danish university student via internet the Ethiopian people sadness showed from Bole international Airport to the Palace, which takes around three solid hours.

He honestly told me that, this is his first experience that thousands of hopeful people, most of them were young, to over through poverty cried for their political leader as if he was their relative or very close family member. He also expressed his amazement and said that "how a crowd of people showed this type of respect and love for a leader of an African poor country?" Lastly he promised to visit Ethiopia, her people and the achievements of the leader and the country at large. He also expressed his condolences and wished the beloved leader's body to rest in peace.

Meles passed away left us behind with his strategically lined vision, clear path of development and huge responsibilities. **He was one of the most precious gifts of the Millennium**, to the peoples of Ethiopia, Africa and to the rest of the world at large. Meles did his best. **On my point of view his indispensable and restless 38 years of service to the Ethiopian people shall be considered as 57 years of services, 38 years multiplied by 1.5 simple calculations. To his capacity fruit full and no waste of time, even a single hour; therefore for me Meles is passed away at the age of 76. He used his time effectively and efficiently more than anybody else.** We shall be very strong, responsible, dedicated and committed enough now, more than ever, to mark our permanent successes, aims and Meles's vision irreversible.

Let's defeat the very pain of this sad time by working hard with competence and full of responsibility and accountability to make real the Development and Democracy change agenda and to make poverty a history via five year Growth and Transformation Plan and other future Growth and Transformation Plans, the very dream of Meles.

Ethiopian people, as they showed, remains united to fulfil the vision of our beloved leader Meles and our country at large. The sadness exhibited and promises entered by Ethiopian people, especially by the young Ethiopians, in the last couple of days throughout the country (still it is continuing with high passion) as well as from Bole to the Palace on the arrival of Meles body at the Airport are proof enough with clear message to all of us; to friends as well as to enemies of Ethiopia internally and externally.

But, to be honest I did not expect that Meles is loved and respected and has place in heart of all Ethiopians, especially in heart of young Ethiopians to this extent. Meles, his accomplishments and

his vision are already championed by Ethiopians. I am praying to my comrades/leaders of the country to get this type of love and respect from their people and the international community.

I hope the current leaders of the country will secure love and respect from the Ethiopian and African people and the international community at large; if they keep their promise, if they serve our country with the very interest of her people, if they fight corruption to the best and maximum level of their knowledge and effort, if they are committed for bringing good governance and high quality of leadership, if they promote and protect justice, all in all if they make their firm, smooth and swift move without compromising the quality of the on-going democracy and development change agenda.

I believe in the almighty my lord God/Allah, the only perfect one. Meles was a human being and I could not blindly walk to argue he was the perfect one. Therefore, it is natural that Meles and his leadership exercise some wrong doings. Meles was one of the best leaders in Ethiopia as well as in Africa history. **I could also confidently argue that in history of politics and leadership, Meles was also an extraordinary and one of the best thinker, reformist, action oriented and influential leaders of our world.**

However, it is impossible to deny the gap that will be created in the absence of Meles, but as our history has witnessed; we, members and the leadership of EPRDF, Government and the people of Ethiopia at large have the potential and competence to bridge the gap in time without any significant damage. **As far as my knowledge concerned Government/ EPRDF current leadership has the capability and the competence to sustain the progress of our country's Democracy and Development change agenda.**

In addition to this EPRDF is very strong political organization and well equipped with potential dedicated young scholar members and supporters who have strong political background as well as commitment and competence to play their leading role on democracy and development change agenda of the country, securing regional stability and security, as well as on various African issues at large. **I hope the current Government/ EPRDF leadership will not allow failure, but utilize rightly this opportunity, strength, potential and resources of EPRDF and the country at large for the utmost success; at present, more than ever, more than before.**

Dear comrades, friends and peoples of Ethiopia at large, it is natural to express our sadness. But we have to remember Meles by paying back to his credit by promoting peace, respect and love among peoples of Ethiopia in home and abroad putting aside our political differences. We shall also return Meles's credit by supporting his legacy, playing our vital role on the current Growth and Transformation Plan and other plans on the future to the maximum level of our knowledge and effort. We are also expected to sustain the give and take and peaceful relationship with neighbouring countries and the role of Ethiopia at the international stage.

Last but not least leaders and the peoples of Ethiopia at large, we must be loyal citizens and play our role on assuring our country **HEDASSE, ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE** to its completion and irreversible stage, as Meles said that make us stand proudly on front of the African platforms as well as the International Community at large.

I myself as a loyal citizen and a person who is committed to serve my country and her people, I promised to exert my effort to maximum level of my knowledge with commitment and responsible manner than ever; to play my role on making sure our country **HEDASSE, ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE** to its completion and irreversible stage.

I do not have any hesitation that Meles's vision, "ETHIOPIAN HEDASSE" or "ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE", will be achieved by the leading role of the dedicated young Ethiopians.

Once more, I cannot express enough my deepest sorrow over the loss of our comrade and leader Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. My condolences and prayer for strength goes to his family, friends and all the people of Ethiopia and Africa who loves and are genuinely grieving over this tragic loss of an indispensable great person and leader.

My lord God, I know you love Ethiopia and her people, I thank you for protecting the extraordinary leader Prime Minister Meles Zenawi up to the age of 57 (on my calculation of service years 76) to serve his country, Africa and the poor and Black people of the world at large.

MAY OUR LORD GOD PUT MELES'S SOUL IN HEAVEN, MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE!

Abraha Berhanu Gebre (Abraha Lenin or Abraha Manguse) (former TPLF/EPRDF fighter),

PhD student on Governance and Leadership, Denmark