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*Famine and Economic Collapse were remained as history and Ethiopia is growing very fast. But still we have some external people who are seeking for the economic collapse and thinking to profit from this loss in order to gain personal economic advantage in the name of poor Ethiopians. Can we remain silent from this messy mentality?.....No more again .....*

Toward the end of the 1980s, several crises, including famine, economic collapse, and military setbacks in Eritrea and Tigray, confronted the Derg. In addition, as democratic reform swept through the communist world, it became evident that Addis Ababa no longer could rely on its allies for support. Ethiopia had never recovered from the previous great famine of the early 1970s, which was the result of a drought that affected most of the countries of the African Sahel. The late 1970s again brought signs of intensifying drought. By the early 1980s, large numbers of people in central Eritrea, Tigray, Welo, and parts of Gonder and Shewa were beginning to feel the effects of renewed famine.

By mid-1984 it was evident that another drought and resulting famine of major proportions had begun to affect large parts of northern Ethiopia. Just as evident was the government's inability to provide relief. The almost total failure of crops in the north was compounded by fighting in and around Eritrea, which hindered the passage of relief supplies. Although international relief organizations made a major effort to provide food to the affected areas, the persistence of drought and poor security conditions in the north resulted in continuing need as well as hazards for famine relief workers. In late 1985, another year of drought was forecast, and by early 1986 the famine had spread to parts of the southern highlands, with an estimated 5.8 million people dependent on relief food. Exacerbating the problem in 1986 were locust and grasshopper plagues.

The government's inability or unwillingness to deal with the 1984-85 famine provoked universal condemnation by the international community. Even many supporters of the Ethiopian regime opposed its policy of withholding food shipments to rebel areas. The combined effects of famine and internal war had by then put the nation's economy into a state of collapse. The primary government response to the drought and famine was the decision to uproot large numbers of peasants who lived in the affected areas in the north and to resettle them in the southern part of the country. In 1985 and 1986, about 600,000 people were moved, many forcibly, from their home villages and farms by the military and transported to various regions in the south. Many peasants fled rather than allow themselves to be resettled; many of those who were resettled sought later to return to their native regions. Several human rights organizations claimed that tens of thousands of peasants died as a result of forced resettlement.

The so called Modern Age of Ethiopia, which began in the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, brought four very powerful emperors into rule, which expanded the empire and shaped modern Ethiopia. The first of these emperors, **Theodore II**, was a strong warrior who reassembled the army and used canons and roads to bring many of the regions under his control. He had delusions of grandeur, which were thwarted by those who did not share his dream of unity for

Ethiopia. Theodore II ended his own life in 1868 after an argument with the British government (Kurtz 51).

His successors, **Yohannes IV and Menelik II**, were able to triple the territory and add millions of people to Ethiopia. Emperor Yohannes struggled with invasions from Egypt, Italy, and Sudan during his rule from 1871 until he was assassinated by a sniper's bullet in 1889 (Kurtz 51). Menelik II was crowned Emperor in 1889 after uniting all of the provinces, including some of them that had been cut off for centuries. In 1896, Emperor Menelik fought Italian armies at Adwa, which was a decisive victory because he stopped Italian expansion in Ethiopia. Menelik's army of nearly eighty thousand people had to live off of the land as they traveled north, which caused many deaths among the commoners as they ate their crops and livestock. During his rule, Menelik brought schools, banks, roads, telegraphs, and the first motor cars to Ethiopia (Kurtz 53). After Menelik's death in 1913, the country plunged into crisis. After years of fighting in the royal family, his daughter, Zauditu, was finally crowned Empress in 1916; Ras Tafari, the son of Menelik's cousin, was named regent and heir to the throne. When Empress Zauditu died in 1930, Ras Tafari was crowned Emperor Haile Selassie I, the *nugusa negast* (king of kings) (Kurtz 54).

Haile Selassie, which means "Lion of Judah," is regarded as one of the most important African leaders of the twentieth century. His first challenge was to preserve Ethiopian independence from Italian aggression (Gish 22). In the early 1930s, Benito Mussolini signed a pact of friendship with Ethiopia (Stewart 16). However, in October 1935, Italy attacked Ethiopia in an attempt to avenge its loss at Adwa thirty-nine years earlier. The Emperor went into exile in Britain and asked the League of Nations to take action against Mussolini. Britain came to the aid of the Ethiopians, helping them to defeat the Italian armies. Haile Selassie was reinstated after Italy surrendered in May 1941 (Gish 22).

The Italian and Ethiopian war was a landmark in the history of the African people worldwide because the war pitted an aggressive European power against a small African country. It came to stand for the unequal struggle between Africa and Europe, between blacks and whites, which contributed to the stereotype of African identity (Harris 154). Haile Selassie is also known for the many reforms that he initiated during his reign, including the development of secular educational systems and bringing in Western economic and technical assistance. In 1955 he signed a new constitution which allowed parliamentary elections, restricted the power of the aristocracy and the church, and made Amharic the official language of Ethiopia. Selassie also instituted the Organization of Africa Unity, which is located in Addis Ababa (Gish 23). Haile Selassie desired to unite the various tribes into a strong Ethiopia, with a central government built around one person-himself. To keep control, he handpicked weak people who would not go against his wishes. He even had control over the Christian church, which he proclaimed as the state religion of Ethiopia. He wanted the people to think of themselves as Ethiopians first, and their respective tribes second, almost as those living in Phoenix would consider themselves Americans first and Phoenicians second (Stewart 22).

In 1974, a communist regime, also known as the "Derg," that included soldiers, young bureaucrats, teachers, and students, shattered Haile Selassie's control over the political and economic systems (McCann 205). From 1982 to 1984, northern Ethiopia had no rain to water the crops or for drinking. The Derg knew about this, but they did not act right away because they wanted to keep the Eritrean army, also known as the EPLF (Eritrean People's Liberation Front), from getting food and supplies (Young 130-131). It was not until the BBC unveiled the story on October 23, 1984 that the government decided to respond (Sorenson 1). The drought of 1984 claimed the lives of many Ethiopians and those remaining were destitute. The people

were deprived of basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and medication. Many died as a result of starvation and from water-borne diseases. It became very apparent that to recover from this terrible drought the people of Ethiopia would need outside assistance and instruction.

A community-centered program was implemented, teaching them to use better farming practices as well as to take care of their land. This, along with better health care, would be a long-term solution rather than just giving free handouts (Yamamori 16-20). The government in Ethiopia both Haile Selassie and the Derg, failed because it did not respond to the desires of Ethiopians for a democracy, national self-determination, and development (Young 216).

### **The Ethiopian real m modernism and renaissance is right now, since 2005ff.**

The November-2010 edition of the Economist came up with a new global economic world forecasts. The Economist forecasted Ethiopia to be the 5th fastest growing economy in the world in 2010. It's been some time since we start to hear positive news about Ethiopia's economic growth. The UK based magazine-The economist has been publishing positive and encouraging report about Ethiopia. Last year the economist predicted Ethiopia to be amongst the top ten fastest developing nations in the world. The same magazine has now predicted Ethiopia to be the 5th fastest growing economy in the world.

### ***Congratulation to peace and development loving Ethiopians.***

This is a great achievement for the EPRDF and its leadership. I always have confidence in the pro-poor policies of the Ethiopian government. Some contaminated diasporas who are siding with anti Ethiopian forces to destabilise Ethiopia will keep on talking the talk. The gigantic majority of Ethiopians are now enjoying the fruits of the existing relative peace , stability and economic growth in Ethiopia. The development Ethiopia witnessing is right there on the ground to be seen, this is not a data on paper. One can simply move around Ethiopia and see the development. The development in housing and construction work, the expansion of road infrastructure, the building of billion dollars worth of hydroelectric plants are few examples. If one visits the service sector similar developments are visible.

There are many privately owned banks, colleges and universities, 5 star hotels, schools, hospitals etc. The numbers of newly established industrial and manufacturing plants is rising. Ethiopia as we speak now is home to more than 23 Universities, let's remember we just had two universities a decade ago. The development in the housing and construction sector deserves mention here. This year alone (2009) the Addis Ababa city government is building 54,000 houses for the poor and middle income residents of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia has never seen such a boom in construction sector in its entire history. The same development is being witnessed in various regions of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's government mission in the coming two decades isn't just to be an economic power of eastern Africa, Ethiopia is working hard to move one ladder to join the second world countries in less than two decade. To achieve that the government is working jointly with its developmental partners and the people. The war against poverty is governments main confront, and slowly we will triumph against it. Ethiopia will continue to grow fast, those groups who see a developed Ethiopia as a threat to their survival can watch us from a distance and learn a good lesson. Ethiopia has untapped huge water and mineral resources coupled with massive fertile lands. Big commercial multi-billion dollar farms are now on the way to start mechanized agriculture with a potential to produce surplus products to satisfy local and foreign markets.

Ethiopians main concern now is to see a developed Ethiopia, we want to see a government that can lift us from abject poverty. We want to see a government that can promote positive image of Ethiopia. These is what citizens want, we citizens of Ethiopia don want to be fed by false promises by these so called opposition groups. The opposition groups should first and foremost learn how to work together. The tendency of creating coalition when election approaches and division after it ends should stop. Ethiopia needs a strong and viable opposition group who can help us to further consolidate the democratization process's.

I will continue to cast my support to the EPRDF as long as it secures peace and development in Ethiopia. As Ethiopia moves in a positive direction the government of the EPRDF will be voted to stay in power. The people of Ethiopia will rally behind the EPRDF. The majority of Ethiopians who live in Ethiopia believe in what they see and not in what they hear from certain groups. Some groups are working hard to destroy Ethiopia's image, they always preach of doom and gloom hitting Ethiopia. The reality on the ground is however different, the country is consolidating democracy ,development and good governance. If we continue to develop in the same manner which we did in the last 5 years, Ethiopia will be an African success story. We will definitely be the African Tiger economy.

BUT we need to be free again in order to use our resources without harming anybody as our prime minister told to an Egyptian journalist. You must suffer of famine and we should eat instead of you, do not worry cannot help us to forget our famine wound. Thank you those who are daily motivated for common good of Ethiopians and we will pray for you and will help according to our competence and self-respect!

*Working together can help us only to forget famine history and to create revitalization of Ethiopia. Thus and for other good reasons, Hundreds of Ethiopians and Ethiopian-Americans Stage a Huge Demonstration in front of the White House! Thank you being a simple and innocent Ethiopian who is looking for the development of Ethiopia and may God bless you. The Ethiopians who were repeated slogans, elevated the Ethiopian flag called upon the US to continue to be an active partner in Ethiopia's drive to realize democracy, the rule of law, justice, human rights, good governance, peace and development.*

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