The Phoenix Has Risen!

Ever since I can remember, I have never been ashamed to be called Ethiopian even as a young adult in a foreign land surrounded by people who associated Ethiopia with “We are the world” and the “you can save a child for $1 a day” infomercials. I saw myself as an ambassador to my great country. I glaringly described how great my country is. In every conversation that took place with fellow Ethiopians and non-Ethiopians however, I vehemently and yet unconsciously relied on our marvelous history from the rock hewn churches of Lalibela, the Stella in Axum, Fasiledes of Gondar and to top it off on how we defeated and humiliated the Italians.

In a sense and in hind sight, this is not that surprising coming from a child of the ‘80s as it was the direct result of the unimaginable sufferings of our people caused by decades of civil war, drought and famine. At times, I conveniently disregarded these facts so not to adulterate the image of my great country. I chose to ignore these facts and attributes as an inherent character of my country. I refused to associate such with my country by reading history books of our Kings/Atses in order to reinforce the positives.

In the last five years however, my conversations have focused on the present and the future of my country. I’m now realizing that the transformation in my mind had taken place subconsciously. I now relegate the history of our great nation to history books. I no longer need to rely on the past but the present and the future when discussing, introducing Ethiopia. I recognize that our problems are many, the solutions, not so simple but the ambitious plan of the government, along with the astute determination of my people, Ethiopia will keep marching forward while her detractors are left in the dust bins of history.

Contrary to what the few inconsequential expats would like us to believe, Ethiopia has made a significant progress in multitudinous sectors including but not limited to Education, Health, and Infrastructure. This in no way implies that we are out of the woods but highlights the path and achievements of our county under the leadership of EPRDF.
Some examples,

1. The country’s energy capacity increased to 2000MW from mere 750MW five years earlier.
2. 200k plus housing units were constructed more than half delivered to urban dwellers, which also created 176k jobs
3. Number of undergraduate students increased to 185k from 78k (around 22 universities)
4. The country has Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) enough for two months (yes you read it right. Strategic Petroleum Reserve)

Having said that, I would like to make an urgent call to all young Ethiopians who reside at a foreign land to lend a hand and get involved in this ambitious five year transformation plan. Millions inside the country are giving up their breakfast and lunch to contribute to the Great Renaissance Dam. It is only right then that we contribute what we can in whatever form because our country, that’s the Phoenix has truly risen from the ashes.

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