

## **A Successful GTP Conference Conducted in Bay Area, CA**

**April 10, 2011 San Jose CA:** Ethiopians and persons of Ethiopian origin residing in Bay Area California and surroundings conducted a successful GTP conference. Meeting organizers as well as attendees were pleased by all aspects of the conference, from beginning to the end.

The conference exceeded expectations in terms of public turnout and the manner in which it was conducted. Few of the much talked about Diaspora extremists camped outside the meeting premises. It did not take long before they show their true color by harassing peaceful and law abiding meeting goers whose only crime is supporting Ethiopia's cause. Police and security personnel pushed out those toxic extremists from the parking lot for trespassing of a private property which they subsequently disappeared to the thin air momentarily.

It goes without saying how all Ethiopians of different walks of lives came together, engaged themselves in the meeting and stayed vigilant throughout.

The program started with a DVD play that promotes the various investment opportunities Ethiopia presents today citing expert and data analyses.

Guest presenters Ato Debretsion Gebremichael, Minister of Communication & Information Technology and Ato Binalef Andualem, Amara State Deputy Chief took the stage next.

Ato Binalef made a Power Point presentation of the five-year GTP plan. In his presentation, Ato Binalef stated the GTP plan makes a realistic reference starting point from the annual economic growths Ethiopia has registered in recent years and aims to transform Ethiopia to a middle income country when the grand plan is implemented in the next five years.

Ato Debretsion on his turn discussed various issues ranging from some core projects included in the GTP, current urban and farm land policies and the vital role of information technology in implementing the five-year Growth and Transformation Plan. Ato Debretsion stressed the importance of information technology in doing business so much so, for the first time in history, Ethiopia has established communication and information technology at the ministry level. The minister acknowledged the current manual based urban land management lacks means of control and the Ethiopian government is keenly working on introducing GPS or digital based land management system which is believed to play a substantial role in minimizing corruption and in avoiding confusion about land ownership.

The guest speakers made it a point, from the get go, any Ethiopian related question is worth asking and addressed in a public forum so that innocent people are not misled by rumors and myths.

To that end, Ato Debretsion and Binalef took turns and gave elaborated explanations to numerous questioned raised by meeting participants.

The participants expressed their pleasure about the informative and at times entertaining presentation of the guest speakers. Furthermore, meeting attendees conveyed their excitement about the overall GTP plan and the bright future ahead for Ethiopia.

Meeting organizers distributed Millennium dam bond forms and conference participants took a pleasure in participating in the grand dam project and enthusiastically filled the bond forms.

Finally, the conference was successfully concluded by passing 8 points of resolution and by playing Ethiopian national anthem.