

ARDUF

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Turning the Demise of a Dictator into Start of New Chapter in Ethiopia's History

Now the officials as well as the family mourning the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is over the Afars will be the last to join charade of mourning for his death as historic loss and national misfortune of the peoples of Ethiopia, because it was under his dictatorial regime that peace loving Ethiopian peoples in general and the Afars in particular experienced extra-judicial killings, forced disappearances, compulsory evictions from their homes and lands, and untold human rights violations.

Today Afar region in Ethiopia remains handicapped by socio-economic and political marginalisation and human rights situations than ever before by bad governance and lack of political social justice. Under Mr. Zenawi's regime the Afar people in Ethiopia were forced to move out of their traditional homes and grazing lands, water resources points against their will for sugarcane plantations and foreign commercial companies owned and managed agricultural and mining projects which have resulted in the displacement of thousands of Afar pastoralists, pushing them further into extreme poverty and exclusion. He was responsible for the creation of Issa-Somali tribe's illegal settlements in Afar land that today threatens the territorial integrity and security in Afar region. He was also responsible for the current religious problem affecting lives of millions of Ethiopian peoples.

Meles's death would provide an opportunity to the remaining Ethiopian leaderships to change their old political and economic marginalisation policy and infrastructural development discriminations against the Peoples of Ethiopia that is contrary to the Federal Constitution of Ethiopia and International Conventions. If the remaining TPLF/EPRDF Leadership continue Meles's discriminatory and marginalisation policy of the Afar people, then the TPLF/EPRDF leadership must know that the ARDUF would surely continue to resist and fight for rights until our democratic rights are fully gained, human rights are respected, territorial integrity is protected and our traditional land ownership rights is recognised by the regime.

ARDUF Organisation sees that the end of Meles's regime would constitute start of a new chapter in the history of the Ethiopian people for realizing their aspirations for stability, prosperity, democracy and good governance. Everybody claims Ethiopia today stands at the crossroads. As it stood in 1974, and 1991. All agree that those golden opportunities were squandered by those who took the reins of power at the time namely; the military junta in 1974 and TPLF in 1991. The question is will then we as the people of Ethiopia this opportunity as well. The Ethiopian oppositions will rise to the level of challenges and ARDUF will play its part in organizing the Afar people.

It is therefore, ARDUF would like to take this opportunity to call upon all peace loving peoples of Ethiopia and Ethiopian Democratic Forces to unite and to work together against the current dictatorial regime until we re-establish a real Federal system, based on justice, equality and respect for legitimate rights of the peoples of Ethiopia in partnership rather than the dictates of one ethnic group that by controlling power controls the national resources as well.

Victory to the heroic ARDUF- UGUUGUMO

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