

A Meeting Organized by APPG on TWS in Collaboration with Ethiopians in GB, Regarding the Human Rights Violations in Ethiopia on 15 March 2010 in the House of Commons, Portcullis House, London

Speech by Kefale Alemu

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is now clear to the wider international community, human rights groups and governments around the world that the current ethnic based minority regime in Ethiopia is running the country by force and intimidation. As a result of this the aspiration of Ethiopians for peace, justice democratic rights, and development have been greatly sabotaged. On 15 May 2005 election Ethiopians rejected this criminal regime and is an illegitimate government which is still staying on power against the will of the people.

To date killing, torturing and imprisoning continued in unprecedented manner. Intentionally encouraged ethnic conflicts and as a result hundreds of thousands of people displaced and persecuted. Looting and corruption are rampant. Recognising the above-mentioned facts, Genocide Watch requested an investigation by the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights.

The international community and democratic governments around the world need to condemn these serious and widespread human rights violations. The regime is currently talking about code of conduct for the May 2010 election. However, it has continued to kill, intimidate and imprison. There are also indications that Zenawi's separatist army is preparing to commit further crimes in large scale. The main reasons for today's meeting is to create solidarity with the victims of the Ethiopian people, to promote the EDM, to maintain the Genocide enquiry and investigation by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for the crimes committed against humanity over the last 20 years, and also to consider the recent Research Report warning issued in September 2009 by the International Crisis Group (ICG) about the danger of Ethnic politics and repression in Ethiopia.

Britain, the international community and the rest of the world need to be prepared for any eventuality/genocide in connection with the upcoming election. If TPLF and its henchmen continue to disrespect the international community and the Ethiopian people it must be apparent that they will take responsibility for all forms of sufferings and crisis in the area. We are calling for a re-examination of the British foreign policy towards Ethiopia so that Britain will make sure that our future relationship is intact.

Section 134 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 of U.K. authorizes the prosecution in Britain of any person who commits an act of torture anywhere in the world. Accordingly we British Citizens of Ethiopian origin are prepared to exercise our citizenship rights if Zenawi wants to come to London at any time in the future.

The opportunistic TPLF used the end of the cold war to commit crimes and loot the whole nation. The merciless and barbaric action against the innocent people of Ethiopia should not be tolerated. Using empty rhetoric and Jargons the corrupt racists TPLF continued its outdated ploy to divert attention from the very issues of the Ethiopian people. Let the minority leaders and their henchmen learn that democracy is not a tool to kill, loot and imprison people.

The Ethiopian Community in GB and other countries are part of the international Community. As most of us still have families, friends and communities at home of origin what is going on in Ethiopia has great implications to British Ethiopians living in the UK. The Ethiopian Community member abroad together with the main land have great interest in promoting peace, justice, democratic rights and also to diminish terrorism and anti development elements.

Ethiopians are deeply hurt and suffered by the continuous human right violation and vandalism which includes an attack on the country's flag. The organized crime against humanity in the name of democracy and ethnic federalism for the last 20 years must end with justice. If TPLF continues its defiance and repression, Ethiopians have the right to defend themselves using legal and peaceful means.

Recently Sen. Russ Feingold told President Obama that, if nothing changes, they should not be afraid to stand with the Ethiopian people. We have also heard from BBC how TPLF used aid money to buy arms. Isn't it a wake up call to the UK, the US and other European countries to side the people and deny all forms of grants, concessional or soft loans that include military training and equipment supplies to TPLF?

H.E. Ana Gomes, the leader of the EU Observation Election Mission in 2005 has informed the world that the election was not a free and fair one. It is historic that right now she is with us in this marvelous building. We always admire and give great value for her integrity, humanity, responsibility and for defending the Ethiopian people.

Regardless of the divisive and malicious propaganda campaign against us we Ethiopians have shown TPLF our unshakeable unity and resilience by overcoming difficulties. This is because the incumbent is isolated from the people and beyond that we are both morally and legally superior over the criminals. We shall continue to struggle until we get rid of dictatorship and repression.

Please allow me to thank the British Government and people, Lords, MPs, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Third World Solidarity, Chair Dave Anderson MP, Diplomats, people from the Media, friends of Ethiopia and the Chair of the Third World Solidarity, Cllr. Mushtaq Lasharie for helping us to pass this message on behalf of the voiceless people of Ethiopia.

We thank you all for coming!