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The Meles-TPLF Regime's May 23, 2010, Sham and Fraudulent Election Embarrassed its Foreign Supporters

Oromo Liberation Front – Press Release

The Meles/TPLF regime's May 23, 2010, sham and fraudulent election vindicated the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and embarrassed its foreign supports. The OLF did not have an illusion that the Meles/TPLF regime is an antithesis to democracy and the rule of law. After all, the Meles/TPLF regime is a declared and ardent disciple of the "Maoist theory of Revolutionary Democracy" and as such one could expect of it nothing but a sham and farcical elections.

The relation of the OLF and the TPLF regime was an adequate early warning to all interested that the TPLF régime is tyrannical and it has no political will and commitment to democracy; respect for human rights and freedoms and the rule of law. This early warning was conveniently not heeded particularly by the Western supporters of the tyrannical regime.

It is worthy to note that the OLF was part of the struggle against the Military Junta that preceded the Meles regime. It is also important to remember that the OLF was a party to the governing Coalition established in 1991, after the down fall of the military junta. The OLF joined the coalition government with the TPLF in good faith with the intention of laying down foundations of an all inclusive democracy, respect for human rights and effect a peaceful transition to the peoples' sovereignty whereby the Oromo quest for self-determination and all other lingering political questions of the country would be peacefully and democratically resolved. For the record, the OLF had opposed the TPLF's undemocratic stance of excluding some of the stakeholders from the transitional arrangement.

However, before the transition took roots, the OLF was forcefully pushed out of the purported peaceful and democratic transitional process by the TPLF/EPRDF. TPLF/EPRDF, did not want the participation of any politically and organizationally independent force, like the OLF, in the country's politics. The OLF was taken as a threat to compete against in a free and fair election because of the overwhelming support that OLF enjoyed among the Oromo people; the single majority national group in Ethiopia. The TPLF/EPRDF stated that it does not wish to surrender the political power it won by bullets to the OLF in a ballot box. The track record of the incumbent regime in the past elections of 1995, 2000 and 2005 confirmed that the regime cannot conduct a free and fair election. It was very clear that the Meles regime is not willing to transfer power through democratic and peaceful means. The May 23, 2010, election could not have been any different than the previous ones. Nevertheless, the May 23, 2010, sham election proved one more thing: the Meles/TPLF regime said enough is enough and stopped pretending democratic and openly declared a one party dictatorial rule under the guise of "winning 99.6% of the seats" in the parliament. In our view, the May 23, 2010, sham and fraudulent election has

changed the hitherto defacto one party TPLF rule to a dejure TPLF one party rule. The Meles regime came out of this election as a spotless and an absolute totalitarian regime.

The Western supporters and sponsors of the TPLF regime appear to have been embarrassed by Meles' behaviour and the outcome of the May 23, 2010, election. The TPLF/EPRDF's "land sliding election victory" appears to have shocked their conscience and the United States and the European Union, one after the other, declared that the election has failed to meet international standards and commitments. If it is indeed sincere, one wonders for how long the shock of their conscience and remorse would last.

What should the West do? The Western Democracies should re-examine and correct their wrong and short sighted policies of looking the other way and hold the Meles regime accountable for its crimes against humanity. By siding with the dictatorial Meles regime, the Western Democracies not only that they have violated their own democratic values and commitments but they are sacrificing their own long-term interests. Unfortunately, they are also standing on the wrong side of history. We call upon the United States and the European Union and its Member States to honour their commitments and stand with the forces struggling for liberation, freedom, democracy, justice and the rule of law in Ethiopia. It is long overdue, in your part, to tell the totalitarian Meles led regime that enough is enough.

To the political forces struggling for liberation, freedom, democracy, justice, human rights and the rule of law in Ethiopia, the situation for the struggle cannot be clearer and favourable. It is long overdue to put our acts together and cooperate. It is time to immediately cease bickering and focus our struggles to free our peoples from the Meles/TPLF tyrannical rule. The OLF would like to take this opportunity to again call up on all concerned political forces opposed to the TPLF's tyrannical rule, to cooperate and coordinate our struggles and once and for all get rid of the wicked, cruel and criminal regime led by the tyrant Meles Zenawi; and usher in an era of liberation, freedom, democracy, justice, peace and prosperity for all the people in Ethiopia.

Victory to the Oromo People!
Oromo Liberation Front
May 30, 2010