

# What Happened To Kinijit after Kaliti?

**Ethiopian People Voice Support in United Kingdom  
02 October 2007, London, UK**

The Kinijit delegation to Europe has completed its tour of duty to the United Kingdom but it failed to tackle issues that had divided the support group in the last two years. The performance of the delegation in the United States seems to have brought out the worst in the on going disagreement of Kinijit Supporters. It is time to ask what is happening to Kinijit after Kaliti.

It is with great joy and a sense of fulfillment that we received the news on the release of the Kinijit leadership from Kality prison, Ethiopia. Their imprisonment, along with the killings of about 200 citizens, the bodily harm inflicted on some 700, and the detention of some 30 to 40 thousand in sub-human conditions was unprecedented in peace time Ethiopia and the most severe in recorded modern history. Our appreciation goes to the judges that delivered the incontrovertible evidence on the repression.

When the idea of a delegated visit was announced, we had looked forward with glee and anticipation to meet the leaders. Our delight and anticipation on the visit did not last long as the idea of the delegated visits developed a controversy within the party. Disagreements were not anticipated on what initially appeared to be a first step in the start of operations of the party. Nevertheless, when the delegation to Europe finally arrived in London on the first leg of its visit, we went out to the airport to meet them and to extend our appreciation and honor them.

We had expected to hear from them on what had transpired in the post-election period. We also had prepared to relate to them our concerns on issues that now may be of less importance but had bogged down Kinijit support in the last 2 years: KIL, AFD, the issues of disbursement of funds raised for Kinijit, the numerous letters from Kality, etc., etc. Unfortunately, while they stayed in London for 9 days we only had two views of them one of which was incidental and the second in a rowdy public meeting that was averse to any dissenting opinion from what was on promotion. The essential feature of the occasion became apparent in the giving of prizes for what was dubbed as 'good performance'.

To our surprise, one important message that was put across by the delegates was that there are no political disagreements between Kinijit supporters in the UK. They also added that any problems that may exist are personal. It was unfortunate that the European delegation was wrong-footed on its first step of its visit to Europe.

Kinijit support in Britain has been divided on issues that were debated among the Diaspora for the last 2 years. Members of the delegations are aware of this. Not wanting to listen to strong ideas held by a section of supporters of the party is regrettable and not very much in keeping with "the spirit of Kinijit", to say the least.

The delegates have witnessed first hand how rowdy the audience can be when some speakers attempted to air critical ideas. TPLF representatives and supporters had much better opportunities to express their critic and opposition than dissenting supporters of Kinijit. It all showed that reasoned exchange of ideas among Kinijit supporters has become difficult even in the presence of a high level Kinijit delegation. At one point a member of the delegation made a critical remark against the behavior of a section of the audience. The event has demonstrated the deep division of opinion among Kinijit supporters in the UK, which the delegates failed to listen to.

Current dissenting supporters in Britain resolved to support Kinijit in the first place not because it asked for our support but on our own volition. Kinijit had won the trust of the Ethiopia people to a level that no other organization has been able to achieve in the past. In supporting Kinijit, we are essentially supporting the Ethiopian people. When and if that support wanes, our support goes away with it. We urge Kinijit and its leadership to maintain that trust and not squander it.

Manifestations of disagreements that are being made public by the Kinijit delegation in North America in the form of one statement here and another action or inaction there is in no way in keeping with what was widely believed to be the Kinijit way of doing business. With the Diaspora clamor added to it, all has turned out to be an organized chaos.

It is despicable to see these highly honored and revered national leaders slinging dirt and conducting dark campaigns against one of their own. What we see happening is far from what we have been given as 'modern politics' (ሥልጣን ፖለቲካ - seltun politka) that Kinijit endeavors to advance. It is a disaster beyond our expectation. It is far from the reorganization and rebuilding work that we expected to be launched in earnest in the wake of the release of the leaders from Kality. The events that have come to pass have ushered a dark period to come not just for Kinijit but for the process of democratization in Ethiopia that was put on the agenda through the blood and suffering of citizens in the country.

Even at this late stage, we urge and appeal to the Kinijit leadership both outside and inside Ethiopia not to resort to adversarial politics that would unnecessarily delayed democratization in our country. Kinijit, we trust, is about peace, democracy, legality and openness. Above all we appeal to the leadership not to abandon that trust given to them by the Ethiopian people. An abandonment of that trust will definitely be a set back to the progress made so far by at least 10 to 20 years, or even by a generation. Those that have instigated the desertion of the people and helped in their betrayal shall go down as part of the dark history of our country.

**Let us unite for democratic change.**

**Let us persevere for equality, unity and peace.**

Note: forwarded message attached.