

## **Ethiopia - Don't Let Loose Lips Sink the Ship**

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As a people we must be able to believe in principle and seriously consider that passion should be driven by principle and surrounded by reason. Otherwise, too much passion with no principle or rational reasoning will make the Diaspora Ethiopians to remain emotional and blind fighters. We should not let loose lips sink the ship called 'Ethiopia' that we are all sailing on for as long as we are breathing and alive. Why am I writing this article? What motivated me to share this very opinion with you all? The answer is clear. I feel that there is a missing link in our political outlook.

As a matter of fact, there are opposition groups that remain opportunistic and only contribute to enhance destructive political ploys by painting subsequent black images of episodes taking place inside Ethiopia and trying continuously carrying out ideas that encourage marshalling bulldozer politics. This reminds me of the following story I heard once: 'Dan was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business. When he found out he was going to inherit a huge fortune when his sickly father died, he decided to marry a wife with whom to share his fortune. One evening at an investment meeting he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen before. Her natural beauty took his breath away. Instantly he made a move to her: "I may look like just an ordinary man," he said to her, but in just a few months, my father is likely to die, and I'll be the sole heir to inherit his \$200 million." Impressed, the woman obtained his business card and three days later, she became his stepmother.' That is the kind of story that brought the huge divide between EPLF and TPLF; and ever since the mid 1990s this shrewdest politics is keeping us all busy in endless political think tanks and tick-tacks arguing over the un-demarcated border issues as well as Ethiopia's legitimate access to the sea through Assab Port.

As far as I see it we need to strive for change and change must be transformed through peaceful means at any cost. Particularly, we (people in Diaspora) are actually missing the middle ground on various national and regional issues as most of us run into emotion rather than attempting to be governed by objective reasoning. Extremism/emotionalism is nothing more than an expression of ignorance and greed; what so ever its basis may be. We should not go for bulldozer politics. Rather we should be responsible and rational in opposing or supporting any political opinions/groups regarding this beautiful country that has been and still is suffering in all aspects due to ignorance and greed, but nothing else. Thus, we need to be inclusive rather than exclusive, objective rather than subjective, rational rather than emotional. At the end of the day the middle ground will come as the result of our zealous efforts. Whenever we want to contribute especially to the political discourse of our country, I think, our objective should be how to break the conflict trap rather than how to generate further conflicts by adding fuel to the already burning fire.

Indeed TPLF was born and brought-up by Shaabia inside Eritrea; by no one else but Wodi Afom. All I know is that our peoples (those in Eritrea and Ethiopia alike) are at an

alert for sometime now to start the next war at any minute here after. There is no UN-peace-keeping mission or any other war-protective guarantee. In such occasions I have no doubt that Shaabia will try to use the Ethiopian opposition groups in Eritrea as its front-runners to challenge TPLF. But for what good is war really? Cannot we come to round table discussions and resolve our differences for the sake of peace? In a recent interview Afewarki gave to Asharq Al-Awsat at which time he said: "there is no dialogue or nothing to discuss about with Ethiopia."

We know for sure that Shaabia, the mother source of all misery and suffering in the region as a whole, has a very short life to live. Just now Shaabia is vesting all its interests in the border issue. And if Shaabia and TPLF go to war once again Afewarki is ascertained that this time round the death toll of TPLF army will be more than what it was during the 1998-2000 war. In fact Afewarki is sure that no Eritrean blood will be spilled this time as he has what he calls: "the gallant Ethiopian opposition groups inside Eritrea that are ready to chase the TPLF-army and claim Badme back to where it belongs - Eritrea. And no western power can save TPLF from its last demise since Shaabia has done its home work and will be involved only in the clinical surgery of it in helping remove the cancerous TPLF from the political arena of the region."

All told, the night may be long but surely and eventually, a day will come soon when Ethiopia will retain access to the sea. Likewise, a day will come soon when Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples will join hands, talk the talk and walk the walk jointly for mutual socio-economic progress and peaceful co-existence. But the main precondition for these factors to be fulfilled is the wearing away of any form of tyranny both from Eritrea and Ethiopia.