

# Ethiopia's Upcoming Local Elections Unlikely to be Free and Fair!

## Press Release

**By United Sidama Parties for Freedom and Justice (USPFJ)**

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The Ethiopia's regime is preparing to hold its so called nationwide local and the city of Addis Ababa elections. According to its fake, inadequate and nonfunctional election board that solely serves the interests of the rulers (<http://www.electionethiopia.org/en/>), local elections in the city of Addis Ababa and others parts of the country are scheduled for 14-21 April 2013. The regime appears to be pretending that it is lobbying its voters in its attempt to show international Diplomats and Western politicians and donors that it's implementing its constitution in civil and democratic way. The reality on the ground however indicates that there is no level playing field that would allow various political entities to freely lobby their voters for the stated elections.

The Ethiopian government has failed in various occasions to abide by the vary constitution it has promulgated and ratified. It chops and changes numerous legislations within 24 hours to incriminate civilians under various pretexts including the current anti-terror law which was created to curtail freedom of expression.

Based on these incontestable and irrefutable facts, we don't believe that this regime has transformed itself from bestiality to genuine democracy to accept the rule of law as supreme in the country. Therefore, there is no guarantee that the required level playing filed will be created this time for all political parties to contest the elections freely.

Time and again the incumbent regime has shown its unwillingness to live up to its words by persistently breaking its promises, deliberately and obliviously violating its constitution; the lifeless document about which it boasts in the country and at international arenas. Ethiopians are persistently brutalized and tortured by the very government's security forces and army constantly. The security forces are regularly ordered by the regime to massacre civilians in broad day lights when they attempt to claim their fundamental rights that are enshrined in the said constitution. Nations and peoples of the country are automatically regarded as anti-peace and anti-constitution elements for claiming the very constitutional rights. Several civilians were incarcerated and slaughtered for voting for opposition parties as per constitutional rights and numerous others were arrested or were obliged to flee the country further affirming the bestiality of this regime. There aren't shreds of evidences to advise that the incumbent regime behaves differently at these upcoming elections of April 2013.

Hundreds of the Sidamas were massacred in Loqqe on May 24, 2002 claiming their constitutional rights to regional self determination; for which the current PM is one of the major culprits. Nevertheless, none the culprits have to date been accountable for the atrocities. Instead, the culprits and miscreants are circulating among the society to create further possible

precondition for another massacre of genocidal intents. With varying degrees this is the case in Oromia, Ogadenia, Afar, Gedeo, Keficho Shekicho and in most parts of the country. The said entire state sponsored criminalities take places under the pretexts of defending the fake constitution including the so called democratic elections. These all claims are untrue and remain utter deceits devised to hoodwink nations and nationalities of the country.

It's wholly deplorable to massacre and butcher armless and defenseless civilians carrying the leaves of trees and Ethiopian flags as a sign of peace whilst claiming their fundamental rights. Doing so is indefensible under whatsoever explanations. It's also deplorable suppressing, repressing, stifling and banning freedom of expression and incriminating those who use their fundamental and constitutional rights to freedom of expression. Erroneously blaming and imprisoning civilians for expressing their opinions and labeling them as an anti government elements, to coerce them to flee the country is the evidence of the very undemocratic nature of this regime. There are tens of thousands of prisoners of conscious who are unlawfully thrown in to jails all over the country with more severity in some regions including Sidama. Once they are thrown to very unhygienic and crowded prison cells, the said civilians are often subjected to relentless tortures, physical and psychological abuses and at worst death. Several dozens of journalists and others civilians are imprisoned for exercising their legitimate rights to freedom of expression. Media is strictly controlled by the state which hoodwinks the population with lies and deceits.

When it comes to Sidama region, the way and the methodology of subjugating the nation is entirely different from other regions for variety of reasons including the fact that the Sidama nation is being the largest and economically lucrative in the south. This exposed the Sidama nation to sustained and extremely barbaric treatments of the successive northern led regimes. The Sidama nation gallantly fought against all of the northern oppressors for the past 100 years before the current regime assumed power and the current regime understands that the resistances of the Sidama nation would remain strong and unshakable. Therefore, to make the Sidama nation subservient to its undemocratic rules, this regime always makes sure that the Sidama nation is constantly bombarded with lies, deceits and deliberate and systematic socio-economic marginalization. Its sons and daughters continue to be unlawfully imprisoned in addition to others forms of injustices the various peoples in the rest of the country are subjected to.

From the examples of the current systematic impoverishments of the Sidama nation one could highlight manipulation of the current prices of Sidama coffee to benefit TPLF's lucrative companies. The groups of Sidama civilians who are unlawfully arrested for claiming Sidama nation's constitutional rights include Mr Duka'le Lamiso, a Sidama human rights activist. He was arbitrarily arrested with hundreds of others Sidama civilians and made to languish in prison.

Expecting fairness for the upcoming elections from the regime that seriously undermines its constitution is has promulgated; and from the regime that slaughters civilians for democratically voting for opposition members would be wholly unwise and naive. The current regime consistently plays tricky games with its guidelines on elections and electoral procedures; including extending and at times contracting the dates stated in their fake election board

schedules, <http://www.electionethiopia.org/en/> as it suits best its interests and as such it remains untrustworthy.

The 'USPFJ' therefore emphatically condemns the deceitful and criminal acts and natures of the current Ethiopian regime and demands it to stop causing untold havoc to Ethiopians in general, and the Sidama nation in particular in relation to the upcoming election. There are credible evidences that, through its cells of five peoples, the regime is directly spying on civilians from the levels of farmers association to the Sidama capital Hawassa's civil servants in its attempts to silence and pinpoint any diverging opinions to punish and intimidate the civilians individually. This is wholly deplorable and must be unconditionally stopped as it infringes the fundamental rights of civilians to freedom of expression and assembly.

We also demand the current regime to stop harassing, intimidating, repressing and suppressing the Sidama people who are rejecting its manipulations and criminal acts against its constitutional rights. The current deceitful acts of the regime under the slogan of 'Zemetcha Meles Dream' are wholly deplorable; therefore must be unconditionally stopped in Sidama region. The attitude, behavior and the deplorable actions of the regime in relation to the fake election must be categorically rejected by the Sidama nation. We unequivocally maintain that the oppressed Ethiopians nations and nationalities never get justices and fairness from this regime. Therefore, the USPFJ urges all the oppressed Ethiopians in general and the Sidama nation in particular to reject the current regime and its fake local elections!

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