



የመላው ኢትዮጵያ አንድነት ድርጅት ALL ETHIOPIA UNITY PARTY

+251-111 55 35 06, +251-111 55 17 89, +251-116-55 12 56 Fax. +251-111 55 31 55
17013 አዲስ አበባ ኢትዮጵያ Addis Abeba Ethiopia, Website:- www.kaeup.org e-mail:- info@ethionet.et

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PRESS CONFERENCE

All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP)

Respected Diplomatic Corps
Dear Journalists, Invited Guests and AEUP members.

Four days ago on 7 November 2010, almost six months after the 23 May 2010 Ethiopian elections of the House of Peoples Representatives (HPR) and State Councils, the European Union Observation Mission (EU EOM) has finally announced its findings at its headquarters in Brussels.

Although All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP) and other opposition parties expected the Report to be announced in Addis Abeba much earlier to the Ethiopian people who are the primary stakeholders, we have learnt from interview given by Mr. Thijs Berman, Head of the Mission and Member of the European Parliament to VOA and Deutsche Welle that the Mission was denied by the Ruling Party and Government, EPRDF, to deliver its findings in Addis Abeba on the planned date of August 2010. From the same interview, we have also come to know that the delay was forced upon the Mission by pressure imposed upon EU by the EPRDF.

The behavior of the EPRDF is, indeed, enough testimony that the EPRDF had two motives. First, it did not want the announcement to take place before it formed its Government. Second, it has something in the Mission's Report that it wanted to hide from the Ethiopian public.

It is apparent that it has achieved both objectives. The Report was delayed until after it has formed its Government and it was announced in Brussels not in Addis Abeba, in spite of the Mission's plan.

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But does it really both matter whether the Findings of the Mission were delayed until after EPRDF formed its Government and whether it was announced in Addis Abeba or not? These would be dealt with hereafter in turn.

It would not really matter when it was announced, because the vote rigging and violations of the Proclamation to Provide for the Electoral Code of Conduct for Political Parties No. 662/2009 that the EPRDF has committed with the help of the National Electoral Board and other organs of government, including the police force, the militia and the judiciary, and there are six violations and it has broken them all, were already very well known beyond the EU by the Ethiopian people and other stakeholders. The Ethiopian people have the right to demand for reinstatement of their stolen votes whenever they found it suitable and to rectify these violations as they deemed them necessary.

The only difference it would have made if the Report were released earlier, it would be timely and according to plan for EU's Report.

But does it matter whether the Findings were delivered in Addis or in Brussels? Not really again, because thanks to the VOA and Deutsche Welle radios, the Ethiopian people have heard the full text of the Findings and the interview. Addis is preferred because it is the most relevant place to announce the Mission's Findings and interview.

Hence, if indeed the EPRDF wished to hide something from the Ethiopian public it has not succeeded. Because every Ethiopian is eager to listen to these radios and those who have heard as usual have passed the information to their friends and neighbors.

However, there must be something else the EPRDF may have also calculated to get the EU Findings and Interview postponed until after it has formed its Government. It might have calculated that after the formation of its Government no Ethiopian would bother about the revelation by a foreign observer mission of the wrongs EPRDF has committed.

Unfortunately for EPRDF, it is not in the nature of opposition parties to forget election rigging nor would crimes committed against humanity be ignored by the people who suffered the harassment, beating, imprisonment and even killing as well as land confiscation and dismissal from government employment due to their political views.

These are too gross violations to be ignored affecting not only the welfare of a few victims but that of 80 million Ethiopians and 80 nationalities in Ethiopia.



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Not only that the violations and vote rigging that the EPRDF had committed and the way they were done can be forgotten, for the tactics were tantamount to blatant provocation of the public. Neither the Ethiopian people nor AEUP, and for that matter the other opposition parties, therefore, forgot or could forget the result of the elections that ended in coercive formation of a Unitary State in a country that proclaimed multi-party democracy in 1995.

Regardless of how long it would take the Ethiopian people to set things right and obtain our freedom from dictatorship, we will fight to the end. For AEUP, its members, its supporters and the whole Ethiopian people know that dictatorships have never given up their brutal rule without the power of the people.

We would, therefore, like to congratulate the EU Mission for its accurate reporting of its findings, recommendations and terrific effort in delivering the Report. AEUP fully supports the findings, because we have experienced them and paid the price. If anything, the Mission's Report was modest and diplomatic in the style of writing its findings.

AEUP is therefore happy to announce today to the august members of the EU member countries, and the diplomatic corps and the distinguished journalists assembled here at AEUP hall, and through you to your governments and peoples and to the entire world community and our people that it is renewing its call on EPRDF for repeat of the 23 May 2010 National and Regional elections as soon as possible.

We further call upon the EPRDF to disband its illegitimate government and to sit down with the AEUP and other truly opposition parties for discussing the modalities of the re-elections.

Genuine elections are the marks of democratic governments and the means to peaceful transfer of governments, which the Ethiopian people deserve after a long and relentless struggle they have been waging. The Ethiopian people shall prevail in their struggle for such a government and the method of government transfer.

The Unity and Integrity of the Ethiopian people and nation shall prevail through their hard struggle and through exposure of dictatorship by free governments and peoples of the world!

Thank you.



You may know ask questions or comment.

All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP)
11 November 2010
Addis Abeba

