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ALL ETHIOPIA UNITY PARTY

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Ref No. AM/15/142/2011
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Date 15/12/2011

From: The All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP)

To: "Friends of Ethiopia"

Statement Issued by the All Ethiopia Unity Party

Re.: Gross Interference by NEBE in the affairs of AEUP

In the last five months certain executives of the Election Board of Ethiopia have been and still are actively interfering in the running of our party, the All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP), initially in the pretext of resolving minor problems faced by us, but more recently unnecessarily delving deeply into the affairs of AEUP.

Before going into the problems that are being created by the Election Board, we will need to provide some background information for those who might be new comers to the diplomatic and political situation in Ethiopia in order to present our problems unencumbered with the obvious. Prior to the Ethiopian National Elections of May 2010 AEUP, in its desire to make the election process transparent, fair, democratic and with minimal danger to all participants, negotiated and signed a Code of Conduct for the election and related activities with the help and advice of "Friends of Ethiopia" in the diplomatic corps. As already attested to by independent observers, concerned groups and the Ethiopian people themselves, the ruling party, with full connivance of the NEBE, finally destroyed even the small remnants of a democratic process in our country.



Despite the above and harsh measures that were and are still being taken by the Government to completely destroy a possible multi-party form of democratic struggle, our party in particular continued in the peaceful and fully transparent political undertaking. Regrettably, our party leadership and members in the rural areas continue to suffer harassment, torture, imprisonment and even death. That has not swayed AEUP from its chartered path of peace and tolerance. But the pressure on us kept intensifying and now threatens to close down our party on several pretexts. Alternatively an attempt is being made to replace the leadership with individuals who our party found undermining its efforts and have been dismissed from our party. The Ruling Party considers these as amenable to rendering AEUP fully subservient to those in power. This of course is not acceptable to the existing AEUP leadership and its membership at large. To make their stand clear, all zones have sent their support to the current leadership.

We are forced to bring to the attention of "Friends of Ethiopia" and human rights organizations at large that AEUP's legal rights are being usurped by those in power. More specifically, AEUP has dismissed certain senior members of AEUP who are found undermining the progress of our party. This was done strictly in line with our Party's by-laws, a copy of which had been lodged with the NEBE. We advised those individuals to refer to the party's Disciplinary Committee according to the Party's by-laws. Copies of all suspension letters are sent to the NEBE in order to keep them up to date with full explanation for our actions. We also advised the NEBE the names of those assigned by AEUP Executive Committee to again keep NEBE fully in the picture. All actions are taken strictly according to our by-laws.

To our surprise the NEBE wrote to us two times in a period of one month that we must call a General Meeting of our Party which clearly of course requires significant financial outlay that AEUP cannot afford at this time. In any event, we believe this is not warranted at this time since AEUP had already held its General Congress only in November last year. Our by-laws stipulate that such General Meetings are required to be held only once every two years. A more sinister aspect of NEBE's demand is to include the dismissed group in our proceedings.



This is NOT acceptable to us since it is contrary to our Party's by-laws and long-standing practice.

The Political Parties' Establishment and operation law of the country allows all parties to run their affairs free of interference from NEBE or any other body of the government. So the NEBE's repeated efforts to undermine AEUP and collude with those dismissed from our Party grossly violate the laws of the country. That is why we believe that "Friends of Ethiopia" and those concerned with human rights and democracy should clarify their stand in this matter. Expressing concern after a seriously deleterious measure is taken by the Government and its institutions like NEBE will eventually lead to serious confrontation at several levels.

We tried to present a very serious problem as toned down as possible. The attack on our Party is multi-faceted – administrative, police, legal – and daily interference by the Security Police in the day-to-day life of the leadership of AEUP. Our single request is that the government of Ethiopia should cease its gross interference in the affairs of AEUP. Since we operate fully transparently, no attempt to show us in a different light will be viable in any form of human activity.

Those requiring more detail concerning the problems briefly stated above could obtain it from the Secretary General of our Party or Head of Public Relations in our Addis Ababa Head Office.



LONG LIVE ETHIOPIA!

AEUP Executive Committee