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SHENGO CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

FORMATION OF A NATIONAL SALVATION (Transitional) GOVERNMENT FOR ETHIOPIA

In its history Ethiopia has faced numerous foreign invaders that have encroached on its territory or violated its sovereignty, but it never faced an internal challenge that threatened its existence, until now. The combined weight of continued repression, obscene corruption, boundless abuse of authority and runaway poverty and inflation have become too much to bear. From end to end the population is revolting against the dictatorship and this is leading the country to the brink of chaos. Pent up anger and fury is fueling a popular movement that has shown tenacity and widespread acceptance.

On the other hand, while the people are calling for change the ruling party (TPLF/EPDRF) is making every effort to stay in power; at times it resorts to State of Emergency to impose its dictatorship on the people. At other occasions, in an act of deceit and subterfuge, the ruling party, keeps churning out the same old cliché that they are in “deep reform”; people are not asking for any reform, deep or shallow; people are demanding real change and that change starts when the ruling party and its entourage step down.

Reports show that the EPDRF executive meeting is beset by rancor and feud between those who realize change is due and those who gang up to keep the status quo. Seekers of change within the ruling party have been threatened and some assassination attempts have been foiled. Despite escalated repression,

despite enormous sacrifices, the popular movement is chugging ahead; large swats of the country are becoming ungovernable.

Increasingly, the government's machinery of coercion is proving to be inadequate to maintain peace and order. Lately, conflicts are brewing between the top level of the regional parties and the federal/TPLF government; a few of the regional parties are openly defying the authority of the Federal government. Some have expressed displeasure with the interference of federal/TPLF authorities in their region. Looked more closely, two regional parties representing the most populous parts of the country (OPDO and ANDM) are not in harmony with their creator and mentor- the TPLF, which enjoys political and economic supremacy in the whole country. This discord is fracturing the ruling party from within, thereby making it ineffective and unable to lead or to govern. At this point the dictatorship has reached a stage where it cannot govern without deploying lethal force. On the other hand, the popular movement is gathering momentum and despite heavy sacrifices it shows no retreat before ensuring freedom and democracy.

Another remarkable development is the recurrence of skirmishes between the so called National Army and Regional police forces. For all intents and purpose the Agazi army is commanded by TPLF and is considered like its private army. Shoot outs between the two have been reported in some regions; in some instances, the skirmishes occurred when the police intervene to prevent the army from shooting at demonstrators. Increasingly an encouraging solidarity is evolving between the local police and the population, thereby proclaiming the beginning of the demise of the dictatorship. TPLF's poisonous pangs are falling off at an alarming rate.

The ruling group's ethic based, inward looking politics is now displaying its ugly face. Ethnic tension is brewing and spreading very widely. Despite the government's denial, ethnic based conflicts are witnessed in many parts of the country. This is a situation that seriously concerns both the Shengo and the general public. Ethiopians need to channel their frustration and express their anger at the very government that has planted the seeds of mistrust and division but not against each other. The solution is to stand up for our rights and against our repressor, the TPLF/ EPRDF, and not against each other.

At this very difficult time, there is a need to continue eroding the regime out of existence but at the same time demonstrate solidarity and unity among Ethiopians of all ethnic and religious backgrounds.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

- 1) Shengo calls upon all opposition political entities – inside and outside the country to come together and form a **Grand Coalition immediately**; we urge the international community and the UN to support, finance and facilitate the formation of such a coalition.
- 2) We call on all Ethiopians – inside and outside the country to stand behind this coalition and demand the ruling party to transfer power to the Grand Coalition in a transitional arrangement. This call is extended to the armed forces of Ethiopia and the entire civil service as well.
- 3) In the event TPLF/EPDRF? hesitates to transfer power we call upon the Ethiopian people to oust the dictatorship from power through an extension of series protracted civil disobedience campaigns, strikes, and other methods of peaceful struggle. The Opposition must encourage defections from the ruling party, either individually or in groups, and must embrace and protect those who have shown solidarity with the popular movement.
- 4) Patriots and citizens of Ethiopia, the waiting game should come to an end; during the last couple of years, we have followed the evolution of the crisis through leaps and bounds. Ethiopia cannot afford any more time for discussions and hollow intellectual analysis. We have seen enough pictures of our people being massacred in practically every major city. As we speak killings targeting members of one or another ethnic group are being committed in different parts of the country – most of them planned and implemented by government agent provocateurs.
- 5) Compatriots, are we waiting for a full-scale carnage, consuming our people, our cities and our villages? The time to save our country is now and we must act; there is only one action we suggest at the moment: **Formation of a National Salvation Government and a transitional process.**

Ethiopia Shall Prevail!!