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CONDEMN THE BETRAYAL OF THE MELES REGIME
ON THE QUESTION OF THE NILE RIVER

The tyrannical regime of Meles Zenawi has struck a secret deal with Egypt on the question of the Nile and the said deal reportedly betrays the national interest of Ethiopia and that of the Nile Basin countries.

Officially the Meles regime signed with Egypt a Memorandum of Understanding to establish an Ethiopian-Egyptian Council of Commerce but sources close to the regime in Addis Ababa reveal that Egypt's interest not to sign an agreement demanded by the Nile Basin Initiative has obtained the support of Meles Zenawi. Ethiopia's Blue Nile supplied 85 % of the Nile's water. Egypt and the Sudan are the two countries still opposing the equal sharing of the Nile water resource and are proposing the maintenance of an old colonial agreement that gave Egypt the lion's share of the use of the Nile water. An agreement signed in 1959 between Egypt and Sudan allowed Egypt alone to use 55.5 billion cubic meters (87% of the Nile's flow) and Sudan 18.5 cubic metres of water each year. Ethiopia, which contributes more than 80 percent of the water to the Nile basin, and the rest of the riparian countries were left out.

The present deal followed a meeting between Meles and the Egyptian prime minister and which was chaired by Meles Zenawi in Addis Abeba. Most observers have affirmed that the Meles regime would shift position and back Egypt thereby betraying Ethiopia and the Nile riparian countries. Egypt has been dragging its feet on the issue of signing a Nile Basin Cooperative Framework for the establishment of a permanent river basin commission. The Meles regime has already handed over thousands of hectares of fertile land to Egyptian agriculture firms. Back in October an Egyptian delegation comprising of 90 owners, leaders and representatives of nine giant Egyptian companies inspected land in Ethiopia and the latest delegation led by Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif included 26 agricultural companies. The sale of Ethiopian land to foreign companies constitutes a serious danger to the sovereignty

and economic interests of Ethiopia and the deal that Meles Zenawi has struck with Egypt over the Nile is a serious betrayal that calls for strong condemnation. The EPRP calls on the people of Ethiopia to fight with all appropriate means against the traitorous regime and its anti Ethiopia deals.