

Washington Update

March 23, 2009

1. President Obama has nominated Ambassador Johnnie Carson as Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, State Department

According to a White House statement:

Ambassador Johnnie Carson is currently the National Intelligence Officer for Africa on the National Intelligence Council. He joined the NIC in September 2006 after a 37-year career in the Foreign Service. Prior to this appointment, Carson served as the Senior Vice President of the National Defense University in Washington D.C. (2003-2006). Carson's Foreign Service career includes ambassadorships to Kenya (1999-2003), Zimbabwe (1995-1997), and Uganda (1991-1994); and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of African Affairs (1997-1999). Earlier in his career he had assignments in Portugal, Botswana, Mozambique, and Nigeria. He has also served as desk officer in the Africa section at State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research; Staff Officer for the Secretary of State (1978-1979), and Staff Director for the Africa Subcommittee of the US House of Representatives (1979-1982). Before joining the Foreign Service, Ambassador Carson was a Peace Corps volunteer in Tanzania. He has a Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science from Drake University and a Master of Arts in International Relations from the School of Oriental and Africa Studies at the University of London. Ambassador Carson is the recipient of several Superior Honor Awards from the Department of State and a Meritorious Service Award from Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. The Centers for Disease Control presented Ambassador Carson its highest award, "Champion of Prevention Award," for his leadership in directing the US Government's HIV/AIDS prevention efforts in Kenya.

2. Rep. Donald Payne's staff has indicated that he plans to reintroduce legislation to support human rights and democracy in Ethiopia. All Ethiopian-Americans should contact Rep. Payne's office ((202) 225-3436; (973)-645-3213; <http://www.house.gov/payne/IMA/email.shtml>) to urge him to introduce the legislation as soon as possible. The legislation passed the House of Representatives last year because of Ethiopian-Americans took the time to contact their elected representatives. It is essential that we repeat the experience this year, and that we get legislation enacted in both houses of

Congress this time.

3. DLA Piper, an international lobbying firm has responded to the efforts of Ethiopian-Americans to draw attention to the fact that it is representing a bloody dictator. DLA Piper recently provided a written statement to Ethiopian-Americans who are protesting its representation of the Meles regime. The statement notes: "There are elements of the Ethiopian Diaspora, particularly in the Washington, DC area, who are bitter opponents of the current administration and go to great lengths to try to embarrass or demean those who are associated with it." DLA Piper receives at least \$50,000 per month to lobby Congress and the administration on behalf of Meles and the Ethiopian government. The statement fails to note that despite expensive lobbying, observers in the media, non-governmental organizations and even the U.S. State Department are well aware of the Meles regime's terrible human rights record and its suppression of democracy. Parade magazine recently put Meles on a list of the world's worst dictators, Amnesty International has reported on the Ethiopian government's human rights abuses, and this year's State Department Human Rights report again notes massive human rights violations and suppression of democracy.

4. The All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP) has opened the Liberal Open Air College. It will provide training in organizing for democracy, human rights advocacy and peaceful struggle.

5. The Kinijit AEUP has a new website: www.kaeup.com <<http://www.kaeup.com/>>. The website has fresh news and accurate information straight from Ethiopia. The website also offers readers an opportunity to make financial contributions to the AEUP and to contribute to the peaceful transition to a democracy, prosperous Ethiopia.

6, **Voice of Kinijit AEUP with AEUP VP Ato Assefa Habete Wolde - Kinijit AEUP Voice, March 22, 2009** [Special interview with AEUP Vice President Western Region, Ato Assefa Habete Wolde. Interview provides valuable information on AEUP regional activities in particular the western region and more after news special programs. For those that reside in Washington, DC Metro area we recommend to stay tuned to this educational & informative program that broadcasts every **Sunday, at 11:30 a.m. Easter standard time on WZHF 1390 A.M.**](#)

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