

# Washington Update September 10, 2009

Now the House and Senate have returned to Washington after the summer recess. It is now time to make a concerted effort to contact all members of Congress to enact legislation promoting democracy, human rights, and economic prosperity in Ethiopia.

We need both the House and the Senate to pass this legislation before it can be presented to President Obama. Our legislators have concerns with many things and Ethiopia is only one of them. They need to be reminded again of the importance of Congressional action.

Meanwhile the regime continues to be active in Washington. As most of you know they have hired a big K Street lobbying firm, DLA Piper to influence the American government. According to the public web site of Pro Publica: (<http://foreignlobbying.org/client/Government/Ethiopia/>)

The regime has already spent over \$2,300,000.00 to date on registered lobbying by DLA Piper.

We cannot match their use of expensive lawyers but we can organize ourselves to act!

Ato Abayneh Berhanu, vp AEUP and I have had a recent meeting with the United States State Department's people most concerned with Ethiopian affairs. The meeting went well and we agreed to continue to meet here in Washington.

Recent interest in the problems in Ethiopia on Ethnic issues was highlighted by a report issued by the prestigious NGO, The International Crisis Group. The report warns of potential disaster if the regime's game of divide and conquer persist.

You can read the whole report on the Web at:

[http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/horn\\_of\\_africa/153\\_ethiopia\\_ethnic\\_federalism\\_and\\_its\\_discontents.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/horn_of_africa/153_ethiopia_ethnic_federalism_and_its_discontents.pdf)

In the last week the All Ethiopia Unity Party along with other

opposition groups met with the ruling party to discuss the upcoming elections and rules of conduct to yield free and fair processes and results. The meeting was coordinated by the United States and the European Union. The AEUP reiterated its call for observance of the seven/eight points as first announced by president AEUP, Hailu Shawel, that no free and fair election can take place until the 7/8 points demanded by the AEUP are met, which include freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of movement for political parties, freedom for all political prisoners, and a neutral and honest electoral board.

Recent events in Ethiopia have included a note worthy series of problem for citizens. In Addis Ababa there is a health crisis caused by an out break of Acute watery diarrhea reported reported by the United Nations's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). You can find links to this at:

<http://www.ocha-eth.org/>

This could be a very serious circumstance for all Ethiopians as famine has weakened the population's resistance to many diseases.

Also human rights of some Ethiopian farmers have been violated by the government when the regime has forcibly evicted them from their land in Northern part of Ethiopia. You can learn more about this at:

<http://www.kaeup.org>

Finally, we will have more to report on this year's agenda next Sunday on the radio program, "Voice of Kinijit/AEUP" broadcast live on Sunday morning on station WZHS 1390 A.M. in Washington.

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