

## Washington Update September 22, 2009

Once again famine stalks Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people face unnecessary hardships due the regimes indifference or outright malice. According to British journalist Paul Rogers writing for The Independent of London “*The spectre of famine has returned to the Horn of Africa nearly a quarter of a century after the world's pop stars gathered to banish it at Live Aid, raising £150m for relief efforts in 1985. Millions of impoverished Ethiopians face the threat of malnutrition and possibly starvation this winter in what is shaping up to be the country's worst food crisis for decades.*”

The non-response of the regime to the threat of mass starvation amongst the people of Ethiopia is more than a tragedy – it is a crime against humanity. We need now more than ever to contact our members of the Congress, both House and Senate, to urge passage of legislation addressing the humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia. Please tell them that the proposed legislation is important to you and all Ethiopian-Americans with roots in Ethiopia. This pressures the government in Ethiopia to abide by world human rights standards, release political prisoners, journalists, and begin to practice democracy. Freedom of the press and freedom of expression can make Ethiopia a prosperous and free country that can be a reliable ally of the United States.

Also the bill will help Ethiopia become free of dependence on foreign aid. Ethiopia can feed itself by employing modern agricultural technologies, and help eradicate HIV/Aids and tropical diseases. It should be noted that it is important too for the United States of America and its relations with Africa and the developing world. The reality is that the United States government can help Ethiopians obtain their human rights and it can promote democracy in Ethiopia but the destiny of the Ethiopian people is in their own hands.

Meles himself will be in the United States for the opening of the United Nations 2009 session in New York and then at the G20 in Pittsburgh. Before he left Addis Ababa, as reported by on the Voice of America <http://www.voanews.com/horn/2009-09-17-voa1.cfm?renderforprint=1> } he quarreled with Daniela Krosiak of the International Conflict Group. Krosiak spoke with VOA's Amharic service's and noted that she had replied to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's recent dismissal of the International Conflict Group's "Ethiopia: Ethnic Federalism and Its Discontents," by pointing out that he thought it was important enough to read it. The report by experienced

experts is devastating for the regime.

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