



### **An ad hoc Coalition of Adversaries!**

Many political parties/organizations or groups around the world, including in Ethiopia, find coalitions to be a useful way to stretch resources and increase power that enables them to further their agenda and ultimately win a political power. There is nothing wrong when blocs of political parties with a common political objectives and goals agree to work together. This does not mean that parties necessarily agree on every issue; but they should have at least one or more important political issue that hold the coalition together. But does a coalition of parties that have entirely opposing political agenda make sense?

In the Ethiopian political arena, this is not the first time that we saw two or more forces of antagonistic political views stand together. We witnessed several unholy alliances formed in Addis, Asmara, European cities, Washington DC with much fanfare. But to what extent is there unity among these actors? Not much! The grim fact is that the Sanskrit proverb that “The enemy of my enemy is my friend” has always been the characteristics of these unprincipled political groups. Obviously, they lack all elements of unifying factors, nor have a fertile ground to grow within the people.

OLF with a failed separatist ideology of carving an independent state out of Ethiopia, and the illegal flag of the old regime that we see in the picture obviously represents the anti-federalism nostalgic forces who even deny the existence of the many nations and nationalities in the country appeared in public as allies. The truth is that they have uncompromising agenda and there is nothing that unifies and holds them

together. Ethiopia with a unitary state, one language, religion, and culture does not unite them; an independent state of Oromia does not either.

The only similarity one can find in these forces is that both have unrestrained hate towards TPLF and beyond, and boundless desire for a political power through illegal means. But they have conflicting priorities and divergent ends – one separatists, and the other anti-diversity, which hold incompatible political views and non-negotiable political objectives. And since this sharp difference is not hidden to each other there is nothing that ties the ad hoc together; hence, such coalition is destined to fail time and again.

However, the non-existence of a unifying factor between the parties does not prevent them from forming a coalition. They do it whenever something pops-up; it can be an election or any sort of political upset in the country. For instance, many of the anti-diversity and separatist forces have been engaged in fabricating misleading rumours to exacerbate the recent protest in Ethiopia's Oromia state in the guise of defending peoples' rights. By inciting further unrest, the protest become violent and caused unnecessary damages; some has been killed, instability and fears raised, infrastructures are demolished, public and private properties were burned, schools have been closed, transport has been halted for weeks. This is what these sinister forces deliver to the poor people. As the Oromia residents succinctly described it, the recent violent act and destruction was a "... journey to backwardness"!

As to the Oromo people, particularly those living around the capital, they have a legitimate concern and let them raise it peacefully and fight for their constitutional rights. Meanwhile, it is essential that the government never lose sight that transparency and accountability are fundamental tenets of effective governance. Democracy is about meaningful involvement of the people in planning as well as decision making; thus any development scheme should not be planned and materialized without consulting the people on the right time. In other words, citizens have rights to involve in the decisions and processes which affect their lives. This is the only politically correct way to win the hearts and minds of the people.

By actively linking citizens and the state in the process that affects their lives, trust and cooperation between all stakeholders can be built; and these destructive forces will have remote chance to achieve any of their evil intentions though they will leave no stone unturned. The Oromo and all peace loving people of Ethiopia shall not allow such manipulators to hijack the true public quest and hurt the nation again and again.

Peace and prosperity for the Ethiopian people!

Gebre Selassie Araya

19 Dec. 2015