

Ethiopians in Chicago Celebrate the Birth of the TPLF

Chicago, February 21, 2009--Tigrayans and other ethnic groups from all walks of life celebrated the 34th anniversary of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) Saturday with a sense of tremendous appreciation for those who paid dearly during the arduous struggle against the defunct military junta to bring about the fruits of democracy and freedom of speech that today's Ethiopia enjoys.



On the occasion, Mr. Mulie Tarekegn, Minister Counselor with the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington D.C., said that when the Tigrayan Community celebrates Lekatit 11 the rest of Ethiopians join it in doing so. “The Celebration of Lekatit 11 as the birthday of the Tigray People's Liberation Front is in essence the celebration of all Ethiopians, because men and women fighters from all parts of Ethiopia fought hand-in-hand to expedite the demise of the brutal Derg government that terrorized its own citizens,” he remarked.

He reiterated the significance of the Lekatit 11 in laying the corner stone for today's democratic Ethiopia, and called upon all Ethiopians in the Diaspora to contribute their share in building their country by leaving aside any political differences they might have with the government. “Manifesting political differences is only natural and is expected, but these differences shouldn't prevent us from realizing the bigger picture—assisting our people in their endeavor to make poverty a thing of the past,” he added.

This year's commemoration of Lekatit 11 was also unique in that it attracted a significant number of the Eritrean Community in Chicago. A representative from the community congratulated the Tigrayan community in particular and Ethiopians in general on the occasion. He said that Tigrayans and Eritreans share the same history and blood that transcend the political and geographical differences they have. “Regardless of what Isayas and his cohorts in Eritrea say, Tigrayans and Eritreans are historically the same people and they need each other now more than ever,” he underlined.

The notion that Tigrayans and Eritreans are one and the same people is undeniable truth, and is nothing new—wise Tigrayans have been saying it all along. What is new, however, is the recognition of this fact by a growing number of Eritreans as evidenced by people in attendance. This is a significant development that must be encouraged for the welfare of the people in the Horn of Africa. As the old adage goes, “It takes two to tango,” both peoples need to work together to bring a sustainable peace in the region.

Last, but not least, renowned artists Miruts Abraha, Yayne Abay, and Eden Gebreslassie entertained the audience with mesmerizing music and captivating voices ranging from revolutionary songs to modern love songs.

Eternal memory to our martyrs!

Mezgebe Gebrekiristos (emaa_go@yahoo.com)