

**Everything here is not a ' bed of rose',  
but the future is promising!**

**Abraham Gebremedhin ,July 25,2011**

**Coordinator, Diaspora Affairs office of Tigray**

A press release stating on the opening of Diaspora affairs office of Tigray National Regional state was posted on Aiga Forum dated on July 6,2011. Moreover, an interview with online audience at gezategaru was also conducted in helping to explain how the newly instituted office is ready to help the Diaspora invest in their own mother land. In addition, some important materials, helps to minimize the information gaps, like

- Tigray Lease policy
- Updated lease policy of Tigray
- Study made on investment priorities in Tigray
- List of projects where by Diaspora's could be involved, and
- List of Diaspora investors in Tigray are also posted on Aiga Forum and others as well.

A lot of Ethiopian Diasporas readers have forwarded their views and reflections from all over the world. Some wrote their greetings and congratulations, some others wrote their concerns and grievances. Of course, such type of reflections can help to understand the strength and weaknesses of the relationship that we have between the Ethiopian Diasporas and the government.

For a meaningful contribution towards the development of the country, the Ethiopian Diaspora needs to over come the major challenges of lack of accurate and updated information about the country development policies and programs. Taking this in to account, a booklet entitled <<***Basic information for Ethiopian***

*in the Diaspora*” is also posted on FDRE Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website ([www.info-gov.et](http://www.info-gov.et)).

This effort is intended to help Ethiopian Diaspora to fill the information gap and get more information in one book to enable them channel their initiatives and efforts, and to understand the national required procedures.

The book contains different kinds of information about the Diaspora engagement Affairs, like-:

1. Investment procedures in Ethiopia .
2. customs Duty, tariff and taxes in Ethiopia
3. Tax Regulation
4. customs procedures in Ethiopia
5. Ethiopian origin ID card and Guidelines
6. opening Diaspora Account
  - Bank Addresses to open All Diaspora Accounts
7. Millennium Bond
8. Formal Remittance Services in Ethiopia
9. Tax ID number and Finger Print Requirements.
10. Migration for Development in Ethiopia program ,etc are posted on the web.

Apart from these all efforts, some people within the Diaspora have expressed strong resentment towards the amount of attention and power the Diaspora has been given.

Their complaints are stretched from how they are and they were treated where they try to make some investment here to the handling mechanisms. It is to be believed that many of the problems crop up due to the absence of well-established system (of course, up to the expected level) to take care of these people. On the other side, the Diaspora people are also for some time does not

have the patience to understand the existing situation. Over all, as a Diaspora coordinator I noted the following interesting trends. Hopefully, these learning impediments are going to be minimized if we try to look ourselves inside

### 1) ***“we are In our position”***

No one can deny that for long time we are trained to be loyal to our jobs- so much so that we confuse them with our own identities. When asked what we do for a living, most of us are describing the tasks that we are performing everyday, not the purpose of the greater enterprise in which we take part, most see our selves with in a ***“system”*** over which we see little or no influence. We ***“do our Job”*** put in our time, and try to cope with the forces outside of our control. Consequently, we are tending to see our responsibility as limited to the boundaries of our position. Henceforth, I am of the opinion that when we focus only on our position, we have little sense of responsibility for the results produced when all positions interact. Moreover, where results are disappointing, It can be very difficult to know why. All we can do is assume that ***<<Some one screwed up.>>***

### 2) **The enemy is out there.**

There is in each of us a propensity to find some one or something outside ourselves to blame where things go wrong. To the extent, I understand from the reflection that some respondents elevate this propensity to a commandment: ***“They tempted in finding an external agent to blame,”*** If we would only quit screwing up our designs and design the products we are capable of, for sure we would be an industry leader.

The ***“ enemy is out there”*** syndrome is actually a by product of “ we are in our position,” and the non systematic ways of looking at the world that it fosters. So, when we focus only on our position, we don't see how our actions extend beyond the boundary of that position. When those actions extend they have consequences that come back to hurt us, and we misperceive these new problems as externally caused.

"The enemy is out there," **however, is almost always an in complete story.** ' **out there**' and " **in here**" are usually part of a single system. This learning obstacle makes it almost impossible to detect the leverage which we can use 'in here' on problems that straddle the boundary between us and " **out there.**"

### **3) The illusion of taking charge**

To be honest, a lot of Diasporas are writing extensive grievances. \*In stead of seeing problems from different angles, they seem to have an elusion of taking charges. In my view, problems are products of our way of thinking, not our emotional state. True proactive ness should come from seeing how we contribute to our own problems. Hence, we should stop waiting for someone else to do something, and we should solve the felt problems before they grow in to crises.

### **4) Fixation on event.**

Wise adults that we are, we say, "**Now, now children –Just get along with each other.**" But are we really any different in the way we explain the entanglements we find ourselves caught in? From the responses I got, I understand that we seem that we are conditioned to see life as a series of events, and for every event, we think there is one obvious cause. It is to be believed that such explanations may be true as far as they go, but they distract us from seeing the longer- term patterns of change that lie behind the events and from understanding the causes of those patterns. The irony is that, to day, the primary threats to our survival both of our organizations and of our societies come not from sudden events but from slow, gradual processes. As a result, generative learning can't be sustained in an organization if our thinking is dominated by short-term events.

Over all, the above mentioned trends are noted from the short reflections of the Diaspora I gathered. I can imagine that a lot of Ethiopian Diaspora in general and

Tigrians Diaspora in particular are coming here with the assumption that everything here is a “bed of rose” and when they find this does not work, they get disappointed and go back wrapping up the money they make over sea. Of course, problems are existing’ **here’ and ‘there’**. This can’t be denied, but the process of development in our county is multi-faceted, entailing a full political transition to developmental and democratic state, a full security transition to peace and stability, and a socio economic transition to sustainable economic growth.

A lot of positive aspects are also existing, It should be noted that prominent members of the Tigrian Diaspora are well represented in the recent state-building process and, emerging as the most active and vocal groups of the Diaspora and they tend to be on the forefront of organized Diaspora activities. A large number of Ethiopian Diasporas are also acknowledged the potential roles that they have and to varying degrees and via diverse mechanisms, members of our Diasporas are also involving in activities of preservation or reconstruction of their country of origin.

Finally, it should be noted that, in a tangential manner, contributions are also made through efforts to build unity of purpose and vision with Diaspora communities, to maintain cultural and social links between members of the Diaspora and the country of origin.

We know that everything here is not a bed of rose but if we go hand in hand, for sure, we can scrap our problems, and let’s unite together for the better tomorrow