

## **Statement from the Council of Ministers of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (Aug 21, 2012)**

### **Honorable Peoples and Friends of Ethiopia;**

The Council of Ministers of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, with deep sorrow and grief, regrets to inform the Peoples of Ethiopia that, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who has led our country for the last 21 years with great wisdom and far-sightedness, passed away on August 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:40 pm at the hospital where he was under medical treatment.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi had been undergoing medical treatment for the last two months. He had lately been showing remarkable improvement, but unfortunately had to be admitted back to hospital two days ago when his condition worsened due to a sudden infection. All attempts by his physicians to treat this was unsuccessful, and he died at 11:40 p.m. on August 20<sup>th</sup>.

It is with deep sorrow and heartfelt grief that the Council of Ministers announces the news of the passing of Prime Meles Zenawi, who gave his all to the cause of extricating Ethiopia and its peoples from poverty and backwardness. Prime Minister Meles was a far-sighted and visionary leader who above all had great love and clear vision for Ethiopia and its peoples.

The Prime Minister was a successful and visionary leader who built a party and a government that had started to turn his aims and vision into reality, raising Ethiopia's stature high in the international arena. He was instrumental in drawing up the right mix of policies for the country and had by his leadership placed Ethiopia on the path of democracy and development, ensuring that the renaissance of the nation was realizable and was within reach.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi made relentless efforts to put in place a constitutional democratic system that could guarantee peoples' equality and citizens' human and democratic rights, good governance and improvement for the livelihood of the millions living in poverty, in sum charting a bright future for Ethiopia based on a firm democratic foundation. Today, Ethiopia and indeed Africa has lost a great son and an apostle of change. A far-sighted leader who championed Ethiopia's and Africa's renaissance has been taken from us.

Prime Minister Meles was the chief architect of the 5 year Growth and Transformation Plan, to the successful implementation of which he fully dedicated himself, despite nursing a serious medical condition for the past two years.

Under his great leadership not only has the country's peace and stability been maintained, Ethiopia has also made tremendous contributions towards sustainable peace and stability in Somalia, on Sudan and South Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi and Liberia. History and Africa as a whole will always remain grateful for his contributions.

Prime Minister Meles, along with other African colleagues, created the NEPAD Program in order to allow Africa's voice to be heard and for the continent to take its rightful place in global trade and development, democracy and good governance, as well as peace and stability. He made sure that Ethiopia would be the first to implement these ideas and play a responsible role in Africa.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, as the voice of the developing world, successfully fought for a just and equitable economic system. As a great leader who believed in safe and balanced use of global natural resources, he made Ethiopia a show case of Green economic development. His wisdom and vision rightly received international recognition and acclaim. He was a example to all people of Africa, a great leader who lit the bright candle of hope in Ethiopia.

The Council of Ministers of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia wishes to say that not only Ethiopia but indeed the whole world has lost a farsighted leader and a force for real change and progress in the passing of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

### **Honorable Peoples of our Country and Friends of Ethiopia,**

The Council of Ministers of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, while expressing its deep sorrow and grief at the untimely death of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, nonetheless takes comfort and solace in the fact that he has left behind a solid democratic and developmental constitutional system. Today, his ideas and vision of change have become the ideas of change for 80 million Ethiopians. His initiatives on behalf of a democratic developmental system have ushered in new hope and a determination for change and a better life for all Ethiopians and indeed for Africa.

Prime Ministers Meles' policies and strategies, implemented through the determination and tireless efforts of his colleagues in party, government, and throughout the country, have clearly shown their capacity to provide for rapid change and development of Ethiopia. The constitutional developmental democratic system that has been left to us by a great leader is built on a firm foundation. We will always be proud of

his achievements, remain confident in ourselves and nurture the unshakable belief that the efforts at making Ethiopia's renaissance a reality have indeed become irreversible.

Despite the great loss that Ethiopia has suffered at the death of this great leader, the basic policies and strategies that are the fruit of Prime Minister Meles' intellect will continue to be implemented. The individual and group rights enshrined in our Constitution will continue to be consolidated. The efforts already begun for the building democratic institutions will continue along the path and vision set by Prime Minister Meles.

The constructive and peaceful role that Ethiopia has been playing in the Horn of Africa and in Africa at large, to ensure mutual benefit for all will continue with vigour, and Ethiopia will remain, today as in the past, an example of good neighborliness. Ethiopia's constructive role within the African Union and the international community will continue to be based and strengthened on the vision and directions laid out by Prime Minister Meles.

#### **Honorable Peoples and Friends of Ethiopia,**

The Government of Ethiopia has observed with admiration the outpouring of heartfelt love of the peoples of Ethiopia for Prime Minister Meles as they learnt of his illness and the fact that followers of all faiths have been praying for his recovery. It is deeply appreciative of this tremendous outpouring of support during this tragic period and for the dedication of the peoples of Ethiopia to the peace and stability of the country. The Council of Ministers calls upon all Ethiopians to endure these trying times with traditional Ethiopian fortitude and unity and asks them to work hand in hand to ensure Ethiopia's sustainable development, peace and the interests of its peoples for the future.

Furthermore, the Council of Ministers would express its appreciation to all world leaders, who over the last two months have expressed their best wishes and support for the Prime Minister. It would like to take this opportunity to renew its assurances that Ethiopia will remain committed to the excellent relations it has established with all its partners and friends.

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia expresses its heartfelt gratitude to all medical personnel who have done everything in their capacity to provide Prime Minister Meles with all necessary medical support during his illness.

The Council of Ministers of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia will announce the details of the funeral arrangements for Prime Minister Meles in the near future. In the meantime, His Excellency Deputy

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn will, in accordance with the FDRE Constitution, continue to carry out the responsibilities of heading the Council of Ministers.

**Honorable Peoples and Friends of Ethiopia,**

While the loss of our visionary leader is a loss too many, Ethiopians today more than ever are duty bound to act together to implement Prime Minister Meles' vision for change and for the building of a developed and prosperous Ethiopia.

The Council of Ministers calls on all Ethiopians to redouble their efforts to endure this difficult moment and ensure that Ethiopia indeed achieves the goals charted out for it by its visionary leader.

The Council of Ministers would like to take this opportunity to express its condolences to the Peoples of Ethiopia and to the bereaved family of our great leader, Meles Zenawi.