



Ethiopian-Americans ADHOC for Democracy

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PRESS RELEASE

Washington DC, 5 August 2010 – Launching the demonstration on Thursday, The Ethiopian-Americans ADHOC for Democracy urged the U.S. Secretary of State to take supportive steps to have a fair and equitable resolution in the horn of Africa Nile basin Countries agreement and to continue the long-standing global security relationship with Ethiopia in fighting terrorism.

A large number of Ethiopian-Americans and Ethiopians demonstrated in Washington DC in support of the equitable 2010 Nile Basin agreement and in support of the Ethiopian people and Ethiopian government development progress, and in opposition to the recent terrorist act in Uganda.

Ethiopia is in the middle of very important negotiations among the nine Nile Basin States which has the potential to escalate to a violent conflict if mishandled. Ethiopia believes that this age old problem can be resolved through negotiations that should produce an acceptable solution that protects the interests of all riparian nations of the Nile. We believe that the United States should play a supportive positive role in helping to resolve this controversy. A fair and equitable resolution of the issue will greatly assist Ethiopia in its efforts to make poverty a thing of the past and continue the momentum of economic growth.

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was formally launched in February 1999 by the Ministers of Water Affairs of the 9 countries that share the Nile River: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The NBI provides a framework through which its member states can cooperatively develop the resources of the Nile Basin to fight poverty and promote socio-economic development in the region. The Nile Basin encompasses an area of 3 million square kilometers and the countries of the Nile are home to approximately 300 million people.

The Nile has the potential to catalyze sustainable economic growth for all 9 countries with benefits far beyond those that can be derived from the river itself. On 14th of May 2010 opened the Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework for signature for a period of one year until 13th May 2011. After more than a decade of talks rejecting the outdated colonial era Nile water treaty signed in 1929 and 1959; Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Kenya signed the agreement in May without the other Nile Basin countries – Egypt, Sudan, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo – who have one year to join the pact.



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Although the flow of the Blue Nile varies considerably over its yearly cycle, Ethiopia is the main contributor to the large natural variation of the Nile flow by contributing approximately 80-90% of the Nile River discharge averaging 86%. Mean while, Ethiopia is stricken by Natural draught for decades and at the same time Egypt who have a veto power over the use of Nile, 90% to be exact, is the 35th largest food exporter according to the 2008 world census data. Such examples are the reasons for upstream countries such as Ethiopia to have fair and equitable agreement. We, Ethiopian- Americans and Ethiopians, are out in Washington DC today to request the US to take keen interest in diplomatic solution in order all NBI countries to sign the May 2010 NBI agreement.

While equitable share of Nile is our main reason to rally in Washington DC, We Ethiopian-Americans and Ethiopians would like to express our support for Ethiopian government progress in the economic development, democratization process, and human rights in Ethiopia. We believe such development can be witnessed by remarkable economic growth rate from less than 2% prior to 1991 to the current more than 10% continuously for more than 5 years, the multiparty governing system from single party governance prior to 1991, and the formation of Ethiopian Human rights commission after 1991 respectively. We support the free choice of our people in Ethiopia including the last May 2010 successful and free election.

God Bless and Long live USA and Ethiopia Friendship and partnership.

Sincerely,

Ethiopian-Americans ADHOC for Democracy.