

# Factors of Change and the Transformation of Politics in State of Gambella, Ethiopia

By Duach R. Mach 04/17/13

*The Gambella Peoples' Democratic Movement (GPDM - አማርኛ: የጋምቤላ ሕዝቦች ዲሞክራሲያዊ ንቅናቄ*

On April 16, 2013 (8/08/2005 Ethiopian Calendar!), the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) issued a statement that Gambella governor Omode Obang Ulam is no longer the Chief administrator of the State of Gambella. In “an extraordinary session held by the Gambella Regional State Council, the council decided to appoint a new Governor. The party unexpectedly removed the former governor Omode Obang Ulam from his governorship, and appointed his Lieutenant Ato Gatluak Tut Khot as his successor until further arrangements are made. The former governor is expected to work in federal post.

According to the decree broadcasted by State spoke person on April 16, 2013 or 8/08/2005 EC. The decree did not cite any reason as to why the elected governor was removed and no official statement from either the office of the federal government or office of the minister of information of Gambella State. In addition, the federal government appointed Engineer Ato Olero Opiew, as Lt. Governor and chairman of Gambella Peoples' Democratic Movement (GPDM). Ato Olero Opiew was the head of agriculture bureau in the state.

Thereafter, residents of Gambella have welcomed the decision that have been made and describe the decision as one of the wisest and decisive actions ever taken by the state council in consultation with EPRDF. The citizens of Gambella have accepted and congratulate the new leadership and are celebrating this new development. The decision by the federal government is one of the sensible and significant action the federal government has ever been taken. Former governor Omode Obang Ulam is an Anuak by tribe and his successor, Ato Gatluak Tut Khot, is Nuer by tribe. Nuer has come in a long way fighting for governorship; a political struggle which has been ongoing for decades. Today, the Nuer's dream it has come true. The Nuer (Naath) live in two countries; South Sudan and Ethiopia. The state of Gambella of Ethiopia is where Nuer live. These two countries can benefit from each other in many areas such as security, trades, and developments.

Henceforth, it is important to honor and welcome new appointed Governor Ato Gatluak Tut Khot. Mr. Governor, congratulations on your appointment and wish you a successful leadership. We look forward to having a governor as loyal and proud as the communities he represents, who believes in Gambella State, who does his due diligence to support the development of local Woredas (Counties), who champions lasting peace in the region through diverse policy, and sustainable future for Gambella. For instance, as we know, Gambella is a State built on hard-working peoples from across its all citizens, languages and cultures.

Now, you have been appointed as Governor, it is a time to govern and thus, let us get to work together. Mr. Governor-appointed, we support you as you will strive for a local Woredas

(Counties) development for Gambella State and hope that your new administration also shall usher in a new era of the social welfare and open-minded in politics. Quite frankly, let us continue the legacy and vision of great leader, late PM. Ato Meles Zenawi! Let us pass down the legacy of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to the public at large and share of good ideas so that we can develop our country and our state in particular.

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