

An ad hoc Coalition of Adversaries!

Separatist OLF Vs Anti-diversity/federalism



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Many political parties/organizations or groups around the world, including in Ethiopia, find coalitions to be a useful way to stretch resources and increase power that enables them to further their agenda and ultimately win a political power. There is nothing wrong when blocs of political parties with a common political objectives and goals agree to work together. This does not mean that parties necessarily agree on every issue; but they should have at least one or more important political issue that hold the coalition together. But does a coalition of parties that have entirely opposing political agenda make sense?

In the Ethiopian political arena, this is not the first time that we saw two or more forces of antagonistic political views stand together. We witnessed several unholy alliances formed in Addis Ababa, Asmera, European and the US cities with much fanfare. But how realistic and sustainable is the unity among these actors? Not much; because “The enemy of my enemy is my friend” has always been the characteristic of the alliance of these unprincipled political groups. Obviously, they lack all elements of unifying factors, nor have a fertile ground to grow within the people.

OLF pursues with a failed separatist ideology of carving an independent state out of Ethiopia on the one hand, and Ginbot-7, remnant of the Derg regime, EPRP and a bunch of some die-hard chauvinist groups along with some misguided priests on the other represent an anti-diversity force devoted to dismantle the present federal system in its entirety. Although the latter group openly deny the existence of the

many nations and nationalities in the country, which is contravening the prime position of the former, both appeared in public as allies. The grim fact is that they have uncompromising and irreconcilable political agenda and it is very obvious that there is nothing that unifies and holds them together. In other words, Ethiopia with a unitary state and one language-religion-culture does not unite them; an independent state of Oromia that entirely quash the aspirations of the other group does not either.

Apparently, these wannabes have conflicting priorities and divergent agendas, which hold incompatible and non-negotiable political ends – one desperately strives to secede perhaps using Article-39 of the existing Ethiopian constitution or otherwise, while the other is anti-diversity and federalism hell-bent on abolishing the very constitution that granted an absolute right to nations and nationalities as a means to hold the nation together. And since this sharp difference is not hidden to each other there is nothing that ties the ad hoc together. Thus, such coalition is destined to fail time and again. However, the absence of long-term unifying factors between the parties does not prevent them from forming a coalition. They forge one whenever something pops-up in the country; it can be an election or any sort of political upset.

Of course, some characteristics these forces share in common is that both have unrestrained hate towards TPLF and its social base – the people of Tigray - though the present phenomenon has nothing to do with them. If anything, the TPLF and the people of Tigray have played an important role in overthrowing the brutal military regime that owned the second biggest army in the African continent. And this certainly has created resentment on the losers' side as well as among other adversaries who aspired to dominate Ethiopian politics.

Moreover, the fact that these forces have boundless desire for a political power, God knows where to assume that, both are ready to sacrifice the lives of innocent people anyway. These terror groups not only vowed to change a government through violence means, but also call to torpedo the ongoing nationwide development scheme, including halting and destroying the Hidasse dam in favour of Egypt as well as Eritrea- the two self-declared zealous supporter states that continuously sponsor and mentor all sort of extremist groups to destabilise and disintegrate Ethiopia.

As we watch and read in their own media, leaders of these forces consistently boast to overthrow the government by hook or by crook, including using violence and by destroying the country's growing industries, infrastructures as well as major public and civil institutions, which are feeding millions of citizens. Not only that, hate speech is also used as a tactic to incite violence. ESAT, an Eritrean funded television based in Washington DC., and a bunch of affiliated social media networks for instance have always been promoting endless hate and racist propaganda that recently culminated in a call for genocide against ethnic Tigrayans.

To implement this heinous crime against humanity, the anti-Ethiopia terror groups along with some corrupted government officials in the Amara region and the OLF aggressively engaged in fabricating misleading rumours intended to incite and inflame violence among brotherly people. As a result of such sinister act, we witnessed a shameful pogrom that took place in the region, particularly in Gonder zone where ethnic Tigrayans who lived there for generations were targeted. This further aggravated the unrest and led to vandalism, destruction of properties, the loss of unknown number of civilians and the expulsion of eight thousand innocent ethnic Tigrayan to neighbouring Sudan. Similarly, these terror forces worked hard to intensify the protests in the Oromia state in the guise of defending democratic rights of citizens, which also led to the death of many people and destruction of factories and countless properties.

Regrettably, many innocent people, members of the security force as well as illegal protesters have been killed in the violent riot, infrastructures, public and private properties have been destroyed, schools have been closed and transport has been halted for weeks. And the more troubling is that other ethnic groups were targeted and displaced in both Amara and Oromia regions resulted in a growing nationwide instability. This is what the anti-peace forces have to deliver to the poor people of Ethiopia. This is what they dream for the people they aspire to rule.

As opposed to that awful and unpatriotic venality, the Oromia residents succinctly described the violent act and destruction as "a journey to backwardness". Hence, they vowed to stand for peace and apprehend the anti-peace elements. Similarly, the representatives of the Amara people who recently visited Mekelle expressed their

disgust and regrets. They condemned the racist and chauvinist elements who are trying create rift by sowing seeds of distrust among the peace-loving people of Amara and Tigray. Of course, there are daunting challenges that lie ahead and the behavioural shift of leadership in the ANDM, which is the source of the problem in the region, will determine the situation in the Amara region and beyond.

As to the Oromo people in general and those living around the capital in particularly, we must underline that they have a legitimate concern. Hence, it is appropriate to peacefully struggle for their constitutional rights. The same is true for the rest of the peaceful Ethiopian people who obviously have genuine grievance related to bad-governance, poverty, corruption and cronyism as well as other frustrations, hence the people are demanding a government they deserve.

Moreover, it is essential that the government never lose sight that transparency and accountability are fundamental tenets of effective governance. And most importantly, it is crucial to understand that democracy is about meaningful involvement of the people in planning as well as decision making; thus, any development scheme should not be planned and materialized without consulting the people on the right time. In other words, citizens have rights to be involved in the decisions and processes which affect their lives. It is increasingly clear that the country is facing complex problems and the solution is to have a responsive, efficient, accountable, transparent, inclusive and above all a government that ensures law and order. This is the only politically correct way to win the hearts and minds of the people.

By actively linking citizens and the state in the process that affects their lives, trust and cooperation between all stakeholders can be built. Ultimately, these destructive forces will have remote chance to achieve any of their evil intentions though they will leave no stone unturned. The Oromo, Amara and all peace-loving people of Ethiopia should not allow these mercenaries to hijack legitimate demands of the people and hurt the nation now and again.

Peace and prosperity for the Ethiopian people!

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