

Get out of a vicious cycle: Stop repeating the same mistakes

By D. Befekadu

In the late 1980s, the then decaying regime of dergue army was defecting and surrendering to woyanne and shaabia in mass. Those who dared to fight woyanne/shaabia were slaughtered in mass too. Due to the level of brutality and oppression by the dergue regime every citizens of Ethiopia wanted to see its collapse sooner than later and denied it support.

Meanwhile, on the one hand, woyanne and shaabia formed many ethnic organizations (liberation fronts) by using those defecting/surrendering dergue soldiers and on the other hand Isayas and Meles realized that the independence of Eritrea could not be realized without the support of Ethiopian political party and eventual pro-Eritrean independence Ethiopian government. So, to give an Ethiopian face to their planned "Ethiopian front", they were growing an organization called Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM) led by Tamrat Lyene in their anti-Ethiopian laboratory. By using this organization they formed the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Despite giving the front Ethiopian tag, members of EPRDF kept their political programmes and objectives unchanged. However, by including EPDM and including Ethiopia in their front's name, they managed to gain diplomatic support as well as deceive the Ethiopian people. The Ethiopian people, who have been languishing in the hands of dergue cadres and those who lost their children to the regime's fascistic repression, felt that EPRDF would deliver democracy and wouldn't be a threat to the Ethiopian sovereignty. It was assumed that their ethnic liberationist approach was a political and military tactic only to weaken dergue.

Some Ethiopian political parties such as Ethiopian People's Democratic Alliance (EPDA), which was financed by the USA, propagated that the defection of the dergue army was great news. It even broadcasted how many Ethiopian army was killed by and surrendered to shaabia and woyanne. Most of Ethiopian political parties with exception of EPRP, gave a tacit approval (passive support) to TPLF/EPLF (EPRDF) offensive against dergue. The EPRP was attacked by both dergue as well as woyanne/shaabia militarily and by EPDA politically. Regardless of support from political parties to its offensive against dergue, EPRDF excluded all pro-Ethiopian unity political parties from London peace/mediation conference that paved the way for woyanne/EPRDF/EPLF to enter Addis Ababa and shaabia exclusively to enter Asmara. Despite all the positive thoughts about EPRDF, soon the people found loss of access to seaport. The EPRDF converted the TPLF political program into Ethiopian constitution. Soon after that, EPRDF government wrote a letter urging the UN to recognize Eritrea as an independent state. Anyone advocating Ethiopian unity and sovereignty was chauvinist, neftegna and thrown into jail or killed. It was a deadly miscalculation both by the Ethiopian political parties and the people to assume that EPRDF wouldn't aim to disintegrate Ethiopia.

The 15 years rule of woyanne/EPRDF proved to be no difference from the dergue's repression and brutality, and posed a serious challenge to the very existence of Ethiopia as a country. Meanwhile, shaabia's boasting of giving 100 years of homework to Ethiopians failed and it has come up what it thinks more effective and hard homework to Ethiopians. Shaabia started its old strategy, organizing pro-Eritrean forces. For this activities the ground was so fertile, OLF, ONLF, SLF, etc are available to fulfil its long-term agenda of weakening Ethiopia. Shaabia also knows that woyanne/EPRDF is hated by the Ethiopian people. So, finding some Ethiopian political parties to back its agenda was easy. The most

important development was willingness of Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front (EPPF) to work from Eritrea. However, shaabia/woyenne were disturbed to see the re-emergence of Ethiopian nationalism that flooded the country in pre- and post- May 2005 election. The OLF too was shocked to see the pro-Ethiopian oromo political parties gain a commanding support from the people of oromia region.

All anti-Ethiopian forces, shaabia, woyenne and other ethnic liberation fronts started panicking. TPLF/EPRDF already infiltrated kinijit and assigned its agents within Ethiopia and in Diaspora and jailed committed leaders of the party. In far north, shaabia was busy crafting some sort of front by using Ethiopian political parties and liberation fronts. Here it comes; the Ethiopian saying: "ye-telate telat wodaje newu". For all shaabia, woyenne, and liberation fronts, the targeted enemy is Ethiopia. So, all liberation fronts formed an alliance with participation of some Ethiopian organization, again in an attempt to deceive the Ethiopian people. Woyenne is represented by its agents assigned to destabilize the Diaspora movements and divide and kill kinijit. Now we have AFD in the same way we had EPRDF over 15 years ago. The same as formation of EPRDF 15 years ago, there is an organization that carries Ethiopia in it's party name and once popular Ethiopian party, kinijit, currently led by woyenne agents is a member.

Now the woyenne regime is crumbling and its army is defecting in the same way dergue's army did 15 years ago. Good news to all of us who want to see the removal of woyenne sooner than later. The question is are we going to have an Ethiopian democratic government or another anti-Ethiopian government? Are we going to get out of the vicious cycle of replacing a dictator with another dictator?

The architect of the whole drama, Shaabia, is experienced user of Ethiopian organizations to achieve its ultimate goal, creating a state of Eritrea. To legalize this, shaabia was a chief consultant and took part in the conversion of the woyenne political program into Ethiopian "Constitution." This process armed OLF with a substantial experience how to manipulate the game. Especially, observing the way Isayas manipulated (creating pro-Eritrean government in Ethiopia) to realize the dream of Eritrean independence provided OLF with important political skills.

The OLF thinks that an independent state of oromia cannot be realized without pro-oromia government in Ethiopia. So, it decided to play the same game that was played 15 years ago by shaabia. In May 2006, with help of shaabia, OLF formed the so-called AFD to use it as a political means to create an independent ethnic states, oromia and possibly others. This time again the membership of the alliance was largely separatist movements, liberation fronts, and included parties with Ethiopian names. The latter are only to give the alliance an Ethiopian face. In the same way TPLF changed EPDM to ANDM, these AFD members with non-Ethnic party name would be asked to identify themselves with ethnicity after AFD overthrows TPLF/EPRDF. Due to a shared value, it is believed that TPLF too would realize its goal, creation of an independent republic of Tigray.

The defection of woyenne army to ethnic liberation fronts is alarming as the rule of woyenne itself. Ethiopia is trapped by anti-Ethiopian fascist regime in hand and anti-Ethiopian coalition of liberation fronts backed by shaabia on the other hand. Woyenne structured its army in ethnic lines. When this army crumbles it is likely to become ethnic militia, and result in collapse of TPLF regime. This is in line with woyenne's mission and objectives. Woyenne has moved most of air force to Tigray and allotted most of senior defence positions hardline TPLF members. Woyenne has induced enough fear in the people of

Tigray and it will move with well-organized and mechanized army in the name of “defending Tigray”.

I believe that TPLF/EPRDF is a pack of poison and must be removed and buried safely, so its poison cannot affect Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people. A force capable of removing and burring TPLF/EPRDF safely with its poison is all-inclusive united front that accepts the UNITY OF ETHIOPIA. TPLF/EPRDF is a poison against Ethiopian unity and cannot be removed by another anti-Ethiopian poisonous pack, AFD, which is alliance of separatist movements that refuse to call themselves Ethiopian. The defection of woyanne army is good news. However, it is bad news when one looks at the end result, where they (the defecting woyanne officers) are ending up, ethnic army. This is a warning sign that ethnic militia is taking shape and it is in line with TPLF/EPRDF ultimate goal, disintegration of Ethiopia. With its naivety, kinijit appears too excited about bourgeoning of ethnic militia. If kinijit continuous in its current position, it is letting woyanne's poison to spill all over and destroy Ethiopia. This is simply because kinijit does not have the capacity and expertise to handle this pack of poison, TPLF/EPRDF. This danger can be avoided by a united Ethiopian front that is committed to the sovereignty of Ethiopia and democratic principles.

Fortunately, the refusal of major political parties to join the shaabia and woyanne sponsored AFD offers some hope. Alongside this position, the recently leaked charter of citizens strengthens this hope. I believe if the charter is backed and adapted by all pro-Ethiopian political forces, it would bring political parties together and force them to commit to those universal principles of human rights and justice listed in the charter. It will also expose those forces with a hidden agenda against the Ethiopian sovereignty. The charter is a test case for AFD to make its position clear in regards to Ethiopian sovereignty. Accepting the charter would make AFD stronger and truly Ethiopian people political party.

God bless Ethiopia!