

PRESS RELEASE

Election campaign at federal and regional level is on high gear in Ethiopia in general and Afar Regional State in particular. This election is due to be held on May 23, 2010.

The election process according to the Federal Election Commission law is to guarantee a plain field to all participant political parties and provide opportunity for the citizen to elect their representative to the federal and regional parliament seats without fear, intimidation and reprisals for supporting and campaigning for candidates of their choice.

In the Afar Regional State, the main political parties who are challengers to the currently ruling party, the Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP) are Afar Revolutionary Democratic Union Front (ARDUF), Afar National Revolutionary Democratic Union Movement (ANRDUM) and Afar Liberation Front (ALF). These political parties harness strong support among Afar people and are registered to participate in the general election.

Unfortunately, ARDUF and ANRDUM last week announced that they are pulling out of the election and decided to boycott the election citing the current regional ruling party made their campaign effort impossible and further participation in the election could lead in bloodshed among the Afar. ALF has also decided not to participate and boycotted the election. Based on this circumstance, it is now evident that ANDP is the only one political party who will stand for election.

The Afar Forum regrets to see such alarming situation to develop particularly, in a country where the constitution guarantees the right to form political parties and elect freely candidates of their choice without intimidation and retribution.

The Afar Forum calls upon all political parties to resolve their differences in an amicable environment to serve the interest of the Afar people.

We also call upon the Federal Election Commission to investigate the claim and to enforce the electoral law.

Afar Forum Executive Committee
May 18, 2010