

Medrek Support Group North America (MSGNA)

February 22, 2010

We re delighted to announce the formation of Medrek Support Group North America (MSGNA) whose skeletal work has been going on for sometime now. Now that we have put the flesh on the skeleton, we are determined to support Medrek or the Ethiopian Federalist Democratic Forum, also known as Forum for Democratic Dialogue (FDD) that we consider as beacon and hope for our beloved country Ethiopia. As far as we are concerned, supporting Medrek is tantamount to paving the way for the establishment of a democratic and prosperous Ethiopia.

Our country Ethiopia is rich not only in its glorious history and civilization, but also in its tradition of maintaining its independence for so long, thanks to its patriotic children who unflinchingly defended its sovereignty and territorial integrity. While the EPRDF regime, more than often, has attempted to erode Ethiopia's sovereignty by compromising its territorial integrity through un-mandated conventions such as the Algiers Agreement and the secret negotiations between Sudan and the Ethiopian Government on "border demarcation" and subsequent loss of Ethiopian land, the main opposition Medrek consistently and steadfastly advocated for Ethiopia's territorial integrity, including its right for an outlet to the sea. Medrek struggles to continue the legacy of Ethiopian patriots.

The EPRDF and the Meles regime represent a corrupt system and they preside over patronage politics that have ignominiously devastated the Ethiopian political and social milieu. Medrek, on the contrary, represents an ideal of a democratic transformation of Ethiopia through the democratic process and not by the barrel of gun as the EPRDF does. While the EPRDF regime enjoys at suppressing freedom of expression and jails journalists and politicians of the opposition, Medrek, as its name implies, favors democratic dialogue.

While the EPRDF, true to its police state, suppresses contending ideas especially of the opposition, Medrek truly believes that only legitimate power, earned through a democratic process, can guarantee a democratic system in Ethiopia and it is committed for such a viable undertaking. Indeed, the democratic process in Ethiopia cannot be rooted meaningfully unless the basic principles of democracy such as universal suffrage, freedom of citizens to register and run for office, freedom of speech of candidates without restriction or precondition is permitted. Moreover the following rights must accompany the democratic process:

- Freedom to assemble and hold rallies, demonstrations, and campaigns without preconditions and restrictions
- Freedom from fear and harassment
- Freedom of voters and candidates to have equal access to polling stations

- Freedom of candidates to have equal access to and obtain feedback (vote outcome) from an impartial board or committee of elections

At a time when we have a muzzled parliament and an appallingly weak judiciary in Ethiopia, the EPRDF government is trying to deflect the pro-democracy sentiment in Ethiopia through its end-justify-means ideology.

We call upon all Ethiopians to support Medrek for the sake of Ethiopia's bright future and we leave you, for now, by quoting a part of Medrek's political program that deals with Ethiopian unity:

የኢትዮጵያ ዳር ድንበር፡ ነጻነት፡ አንድነትና ሉአላዊነት የተጠበቀና የተከበረ ይሆን ዘንድ በጋራ እንቆማለን። እያንዳንዱ ብሄር፡ ብሄረሰብ ለኢትዮጵያ ዳር ድንበር፡ ነጻነት፡ አንድነት፡ ሉአላዊነት፣ የሌሎች ብሄር ብሄረሰቦች መብት ጨምሮ፡ የጋራ ለሆኑት ጥቅሞችና እሴቶች እንዲቆሙ እንታገላለን። በኢትዮጵያ አንድነት ለሚደቀኑ ፈተናዎች መፍትሔው በአንድነት ዙርያ ሆኖ ይሞክራሲን ማስፋት እንጂ መገንጠልን እንዳልሆነ እናምናለን። በዚህ መሰረት ሁላችንም ለኢትዮጵያ አንድነት እና ለብሄር ብሄረሰቦች መብት መከበር በጽናት እንቆማለን።

The English version of the Amharic statement reads: We will stand in unison so that the Ethiopian territorial integrity, independence, unity, and sovereignty are respected and safeguarded. We will struggle so that each and every nationality stands for the territorial integrity, independence, unity, and sovereignty of Ethiopia. We believe that the answer to any challenge vis-à-vis Ethiopian unity is the intensification of democracy in unity and not secession. Based on this principle, thus, we will tenaciously stand for the unity of Ethiopia and the rights of nationalities.

Please send all feedback, including support, information and criticism to mderek.support@gmail.com