

Ethiopia's Policy Logjam and Unintended Consequences

----why willful ignorance should be combatted now----

Part II of an III Part Series

Aklog Birara, DR

"A good leader can engage in a debate frankly and thoroughly, knowing that at the end he and the other side must be closer, and thus emerge stronger. You don't have that idea when you are arrogant, superficial, and uninformed." Nelson Mandela

Governing a complex, ethnically federated and polarized society is difficult but not impossible. It is vital to remember that polarization is initiated, created and propagated by elites. Elites who created the problem in the first place cannot therefore be the solution. At a federal level, authorities minted by the system cannot transform the institutional policies and structures of state and government unless and until they extricate themselves from ethnic politics.

History tells us that changing the most difficult policy and structural issues in any country takes **morally and ethically courageous leaders**. Mahatma Gandhi of India against British colonialism, Abraham Lincoln, Harry Truman and Dr. Martin Luther King of the United States against racism and Nelson Mandela against Apartheid come to mind. The common denominator that binds these courageous leaders is humanity, human worth and human dignity. Their ability to think and act beyond ethnicity, race, fame and income sets them apart from the rest.

I argue in this commentary that, at the **federal level at least**, each and every policy and decisionmaker including the Prime Minister must be appointed or selected on the sole criteria of **unbridled loyalty** to Ethiopia and **impartial service** to all Ethiopians. Seventy-one years ago, on July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman issued Executive Order 9981 to abolish exclusion and discrimination on the basis of "race, color, religion or national origin" in the U.S. armed forces.

Ethiopia has gone backwards and is allowing segregation of its institutions and lands. The governing party is on the verge of implosion because of tribal politics. It is not the disintegration of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRF) that worries me. Rather, it is the implication on Ethiopia's future as a country; and the wellbeing of 110 million people. This time, core institutions such as Defense, Federal Police, Intelligence and Security are no longer national. So, who defends Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people?

I recall that under the Dergue, leaders and members of the above-mentioned institutions were totally loyal to Ethiopia. They did not identify themselves by their tribe.

The vast majority identified themselves as Ethiopians. They trusted and supported one another. Loyalty to Ethiopia and national identity as Ethiopian are determinants in defending Ethiopia's territorial integrity, sovereignty and national interests.

Failing this, it is inevitable those forced to disengage or those who are not part of the policy and decision-making process would have no incentive to “be closer” or to trust the government system. Dual loyalty or loyalty to tribe on the one hand; and seeming loyalty to country and the rest of the population on the other is a barrier to national security. In my view, the overriding loyalty of federal leadership and authority must be loyalty to Ethiopia and unfettered and nondiscriminatory services to all Ethiopians. This is how strong nations are defined.

It is this distinction that elites are unable or unwilling to admit and promote. I shall illustrate this failure with a concrete example that persists today. The Ethiopian left and ethnic-nationalists propagated Amhara “chauvinism, oppression of nations, nationalities and peoples,” exploitation and cruelty for half a century. This utterly absurd and false narrative was imposed on school children who have now reached the age of maturity hating, suspecting and denigrating, in some cases killing and of course arresting and jailing Amharas. Amharas are not the enemy.

The false narrative echoed even by Amhara intellectuals has consequences. The founding of the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) dominated by the Tigray People’s Liberation (TPLF) and its ally the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in 1991; and the language and ethnic-based Constitution of 1994 were both established by excluding the Amhara. At the time, the Amhara population constituted a majority of the Ethiopian population. The exclusion of Amhara reflects the false ideological and political narrative of the left, external powers and ethnic fronts. Ethiopia lost its sea coast because of ethnic hatred and a false narrative.

Subsequently, horrendous crimes against humanity targeting Amhara took place without let up. The current wholesale arrests, jailings and accusations of Amhara for “terrorism” under Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed mirrors the false narrative I underscored. You can’t mask or camouflage the onslaught singling-out the Amharas by deploying varying tools, for example, defending the Constitution, Federalism, Revolutionary Democracy or the reform process that begun more than one year ago. Amhara youth gave their lives and brought change. The Amhara demanded genuine democracy so that they can live and work in any part of Ethiopia that their forefathers defended with their lives. They have much to gain from the devolution of policy and decision-making, from freedom and genuine equality and from the protection of human rights.

They have nothing to gain from an alleged coup d’etat of a regional or a federal government for which they sacrificed untold numbers of young people before the Prime Minister took power. After all, aren’t the majority of those assassinated by plotters Amhara?

The culprit is the false narrative accusing Amharas of “chauvinism,” nefteгна, oppression and other abusive and marginalizing terms to describe Amhara culpability and guilt. Tragically not only for Amharas and others whose dedication to Ethiopia is irrefutable, the false narrative is deep, wide and corrosive. It will take decades of reeducation to erase the narrative due to ignorance and inability to change, especially among political elites, intellectuals and activists.

The Great Wall of Lies

Historical, political, socioeconomic and cultural ignorance among Ethiopia's intellectuals, political and social "elites" is at its peak. It is guided by relentless misinformation, hatemongering and by identity politics that has no boundaries. Deliberate ignorance and misinformation concerning the historical and nation-building roles of the Amhara is amongst the most damning, unsettling, destabilizing and dangerous phenomenon in the world. The TPLF uses Cyber warfare as a primary tool of misinformation. So does Jawar and his club of admirers. Unfortunately for Ethiopia and its 110 million citizens, 85 percent of whom depend on agricultural economic activities to sustain their lives, destructive and misinformed elites drive and influence dysfunctional and corrosive public policy. Just think of what happened in Bahir Dar, Addis Ababa, Sidamo and earlier in Burayu and change yourself to change others.

Ignorance leads to deaths and massive incarcerations. Ignorance keeps Ethiopia poor, backward and vulnerable to external threats. Ignorance deters development. Ignorance leads to the destruction of investment properties.

The root source of Ethiopia's problem is not its diversity. It certainly is not the Amhara. The Ethiopian people are among the most gentle, humane, spiritual and welcoming on the planet. In their deeds, they demonstrate to the rest of the globe that humanity originated in Ethiopia. Elites can learn from ordinary Ethiopians. They don't. This is why they are the core problem.

Ethiopians harnessed their diversity and defeated Italian invasion at the Battle of Adwa. Differences such as language, religion or economic status did not deter Amhara, Gurage, Oromo, Somali, Tigre, Wolayta or other ethnic group from contributing its part to unite and defeat colonialism. Ethiopia became a beacon of freedom. It paved the way for the rest of Black Africa and the rest to rise up against colonialism and imperialism. It is this narrative that distinguishes Ethiopian diversity and unity from the rest of the world. The Amharas are a core part of this splendid narrative. Yet, political elites are unable and unwilling to come out of their shell and speak this truth.

Ethiopia's future prosperity depends on at least two assets: tapping into and harnessing its diverse population, especially its youth; and developing to the fullest its untapped land and water resources as well as its strategic location. The former is more critical than the later. Ethiopia can develop faster if it overcomes its politics of ethnic hatred, suspicion and division in order to defeat poverty and technological backwardness in the same way it mobilized itself to defeat external enemies over and over again.

Ethiopia's diverse youth is a strategic asset. Sadly, this social capital is being wasted. The country's youth bulge must be empowered and enabled to convert this immense capital into productive capital; its lands and water assets must be converted into increased incomes and to generate employment opportunities for 3 million people each year for decades. Peace and personal safety and security are essential prerequisites.

Dependence on foreign and migration out are not strategic options. It is when citizens; and not elites are empowered and encouraged that Ethiopia would establish a solid foundation to become a middle-income country.

Why make the abnormal normal?

Ethiopia's abnormal behaviors should no longer be entertained as normal. Ethnic hatred, suspicion, unbridled identity and divisions counter social cohesion and deter Ethiopia's capacity to produce goods and services in order to meet the basic demands of its growing population; and to modernize its economy. This is especially true in a world where the opportunity to migrate out to earn a living is scarce and is restricted by growing xenophobia.

Xenophobes should not blame outsiders for xenophobia. I find it ironic and tragic for Ethiopians to resort to any form of tribalism and ethnic based xenophobia within when world reality compels us to do the exact opposite. Political elites and their intellectual allies must recognize the notion that man-made hurdles that revolve around ethnic identity, hatred, suspicion and division prevent Ethiopia from realizing its full potential. Regardless of ethnic affiliation, the heaviest burden will be borne by youth. Even if it modernizes, Addis Ababa will serve as a magnet for world capitalists and "good doers" instead of serving its own huge population.

A cursory review of our political past over the past 40 years alone shows that the human, economic and environmental costs of domestic political intrigue is incalculable.

We have to grow trees in order to replenish what we lost. Why not also replenish our minds and souls so that we can make Ethiopia desirable and livable?

External plots and intrigues sharpen our ethnic-differentiations and divisions. The combination of internal ethnic hatred, suspicion and division combined with external plots is lethal.

Animosity towards a unified Ethiopian society in which citizenship as an Ethiopian override ethnic identify is as old as Ethiopia itself. The country's external enemies promote and finance ethnic and religious hatred and suspicion in order to pit one ethnic group against another. They do this solely to serve their own national interests at the expense of Ethiopians. This diminishes gains for Ethiopians.

African nations paid an enormous price because of the colonial system of divide and rule. The ramifications of divisions persist to this day. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (the DRC) is potentially one of the richest countries on the planet. Bedeviled with conflicts, the DRC remains poor. Ethiopia is a "water tower in Africa." Yet; it is unable to feed itself. Most people live in huts and use wood or kerosene to cook and to light their homes.

Today, Ethiopia and Ethiopian identity are cherished, coveted and celebrated more by Jamaicans and other blacks in the Caribbean, in some parts of Latin America and in the United States where **Rastafarians live and work** than among most Ethiopian young people born under the EPRDF.

The TPLF and the OLF and other ethnic fronts have done an extraordinary job degrading Ethiopia and Ethiopian national identity as an Ethiopian deliberately and systematically over a period of more than 40 years.

The TPLF will long be remembered as the front that:

1. Issued a political Manifesto in 1968 declaring that the Amhara are the mortal “enemies” of the Tigrean people;
2. Conducted systematic ethnic cleansing of the Amhara; and persuaded and encouraged other ethnic parties to do the same in Arab Gugu, Dire Dawa, Arusi, Kaffa, Jimma, SNNP, Gambella, Beni-Shangul Gumuz, Northern Shoa, Wolkait-Tegede, Armachiho, Setit Humera, Wollo and other localities;
3. Imposed ethnic federalism with the intent of divide and rule;
4. Abandoned Ethiopia’s sea coast;
5. Stretched Tigrean boundaries far and wide by incorporating huge tracts of land annexed from the Amhara region;
6. Captured state power, plundered Ethiopia and committed atrocities for 27 years;
7. Cordoned itself off in Mekele and provided shelter and immunity to those who committed crimes against humanity and those who siphoned off billions of dollars from the Ethiopian people;
8. Uses the billions of dollars it stole from the public purse to finance lawlessness and terrorism throughout Ethiopia;
9. Rejects peaceful democratic change; and
10. Issues a narrative accusing the Amhara Democratic Party (ADP) and the Amhara of “chauvinism” reinforcing its 1968 Manifesto and calling for the dismantlement of Amhara institutions and exposing the Amhara to genocide.

A party that does these and more does not demonstrate empathy to Ethiopia and Ethiopians. It has no qualms about the long-term adverse consequences of its narrative and actions on the people it claims to represent let alone on what it considers to be “others.”

For almost three decades, Ethiopia was and still is governed by an ethnic coalition of four super ethnic parties: Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Amhara Democratic Party (ADP), Oromo Democratic Party (ODP) and Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM). This ethnic coalition known as the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) is part of the problem. The expectation that the EPRDF will transform itself in fundamental ways is flawed. This is the reason why the Ethiopian people should be relentless in pushing for fundamental and not cosmetic policy and structural changes.

The dominant party that ruled Ethiopia with an iron fist before Dr. Abiy Ahmed became Prime Minister in April 2018 is the TPLF. It literally commanded all policy and decision-making

bodies. For example, Ethiopian Defense, Security, Judiciary, Federal Police, Election Board, Media, Ethiopian Airlines and Ethiopian embassies across the globe were staffed by Tigreans. The ODP has now taken its turn and begun replacing policy and decision-making personnel with Oromo nationals. Embassies are among the beneficiaries of this dangerous principle of “**my turn to eat and or my turn to rule.**” Taking turns to eat and rule is not the way to manage Ethiopia.

This is the reason for my argument that federal authorities must be selected on merit rather than on the basis of tribal and party loyalty. Twenty-seven years of ethnic hegemony is enough.

The most recent TPLF narrative of “**Amhara chauvinism**” is especially chilling and sinister. It comes at a trying time when the Amharas and the rest of Ethiopia are grieving the loss of innocent lives following the assassinations of irreplaceable leaders in Bahir Dar and Addis Ababa on June 22, 2019. This huge loss shadowed a wholesale onslaught of arrests and incarcerations of hundreds and hundreds of Amhara civil, political and intellectual leaders, members and activists of Amhara organizations. No matter the severity of punishment, the Amharas will no longer allow their subjugation and oppression.

Subjecting the Amharas to wholesale jailing and incarceration following the assassinations is an excuse. It is intended to diminish Amhara resurgence for freedom, the rule of law, genuine equality, democracy and the protection of human rights from which everyone would benefit.

Wholesale and targeted arrests and incarcerations of Amharas, accusing victims for crimes they never committed in the first place, especially Amhara youth, by the federal authorities in collusion with regional authorities are unwarranted, unjust and unfair. They reinforce divisions, diminish trust and degrade Ethiopia’s capacity and capability to defend its interests.

I do not assess Amhara arrests and incarcerations in isolation from other unintended consequences for Ethiopia and its 110 million people. It is vital to recall the impacts of draconian state and non-state measures including the burnings of churches on Ethiopian society. I do not see the degradation of Amharas in isolation from others. What happens to Amhara today will happen to others tomorrow. In fact, it is happening already. Ethnic hatred is a virus.

What happens to Amhara or any other ethnic group today strengthens the resolve of external forces to harm Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people. However difficult it might be for intellectuals, political elites and the EPRDF to contemplate, inability to draw lessons from past mistakes is a **strategic and callosal mistake.** I draw your attention to the notion that the TPLF degraded Ethiopia’s national security and economic prosperity by abandoning its sea coast. This national betrayal became a boon for Ethiopia’s adversaries. Egypt is among the beneficiaries.

I suggest that Ethiopia’s traditional adversaries welcome the current onslaught singling out and targeting the Amharas. Why? Because of the Abbay River as a primary driver. Because of Amhara dedication to **Ethiopia and Ethiopiawinnet.**

From time immemorial, Egyptians manifested a “love and hate” relationship with Ethiopia. In his classical book, **The Cross and the River: Ethiopia, Egypt and the Nile**, Haggai Erlich provided us with a rich dose of historical facts that show a constant struggle between Ethiopia and Egypt over the Nile. Egypt depends entirely on the Nile in general and the Abbay or Blue Nile in particular.

“At the heart of the matter is the fact that **86 percent of the water irrigating Egypt** comes from Ethiopia and that Ethiopia itself intends to use a part of it.” The new flare up begun when Ethiopia begun constructing the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in April, 2011. This massive Ethiopian icon is one of the largest projects in the world. Financed by Ethiopia, it is a source of national pride for Ethiopians; and a “threat for Egyptians.” Successive Egyptian governments claim “historical and natural rights” over the Nile. This Egyptian claim does not take into account substantial changes that have taken place since the collapse of colonialism and imperialism; and since the emergence of Black African states as competitors.

Ethiopia and other Sub-Saharan Africa riparian countries offer a compelling argument that they have a legitimate right to harness water resources within their own borders to feed their growing populations and to modernize their economies. Accordingly, the most plausible and workable solution is to come up with a win-win solution for all parties.

Egypt and its allies feel strongly that the GERD poses an existential threat for Egypt. It is true that “Egypt was not only born of the Nile, it also lives by it, and its dependence increases in accordance with the pace of its modernization and population growth.” The counter argument I suggest is that Ethiopia must harness waters within its borders in order to achieve food security through irrigated farming, to provide electricity to tens of millions of its citizens who live “in darkness” and power its fledging industries. Ethiopia must defend its huge investment.

It is vital to remember that the GERD or its equivalent was conceived under Emperor Haile Selassie, one of the most insightful and forward-looking leaders in Ethiopian history. “In 1964, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation published the results of a five-year study, *Land and Water Resources of the Blue Nile Basin: Ethiopia*” commissioned by the Emperor. The study “**envisioned twenty-six projects in Ethiopia**, including four dams designed to turn Lake Tana and the Abbay’s gorge into the primary all-Nile reservoir and to supply electricity and irrigation for Ethiopia while significantly enlarging and regulating the amount of water flowing to Sudan and Egypt.” So, what is the harm of storing and regulating the waters of the Abbay River?

This ambitious project did not materialize for a number of reasons, including the unfavorable global environment, lack of capacity, the conflict in Eritrea and Egyptian dismissal of Ethiopia’s rights. “Gamal Abdul Nasser’s Nile strategy” was based exclusively on a “blunt dismissal of Ethiopia’s relevance to the river’s waters, and his decision to erect the Aswan Dam.” Ethiopia’s determination to reassert its rights occurred under the Dergue during the period 1987-1988.

Ethiopia’s decision to build the GERD is therefore a legitimate national policy. However, realization of this principled national objective depends on national consensus, **inclusion**, peace

and reconciliation. Wholesale arrests and incarceration of Amharas is an **exclusionary public policy**. It counters the national determination and resolve to defend Ethiopia and all Ethiopians from foreign adversaries and internal plotters. It is antidemocratic and anti-human rights.

The Amhara population resides near, uses and harnesses the tributaries of the Abbay and Lake Tana. Its wellbeing is therefore paramount to the implementation and defense of the GERD. Wholesale arrests and incarcerations of Amhara, especially, ex-military officers, thought leaders, political, civic activists and journalists and relentless harassment of business people sends the worst signal possible to Ethiopia's adversaries. The signal is the chronic disease of ethnic divide and rule that makes Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people weak.

Never forget achievements of the Amhara

The Amharas are in better shape today than at any time since the Dergue. Internally, the **ADP, the Amhara National Movement, Fano, Amhara academics and civil society**; and externally Amhara Diaspora by themselves and wherever they reside; and in cooperation with others have done a superb job by organizing themselves and by raising awareness. Brotherhood, solidarity and cooperation among Amhara and Oromo, the two largest ethnic groups in Ethiopia, shows a marked improvement. However, in terms of overall representation, for example, federal budget allocation, the Amhara region does not receive its proper share. As a result, unemployment among Amhara youth remains dangerously high. Other social and infrastructural services are inadequate. This requires a policy remedy.

In the foreign relations front, U.S Congress H.R 128 would not have been possible without Amhara and Oromo activism and advocacy. This effort needs to be sustained.

Domestically, it is critical to remember that Amhara youth sacrificed their lives and played a vital role in dislodging the TPLF. “የአሮሞው ደም ደማችን ነው፤ The blood shed by the Oromo is our blood too” is not an empty rhetoric and should always guide our beliefs and actions. I genuinely believe that tomorrow's Ethiopia will never be the same as the Ethiopia the TPLF and its ethnic allies wanted to create. Tomorrow's Ethiopia will be inclusive, democratic and prosperous if we act wisely.

For the Amharas, the key path going forward is to consolidate and institutionalize existing organizations; support one another; speak with one voice; create solidarity with non-Amhara organizations at home and abroad; change the political narrative; and create new tools to protect Amhara interests everywhere and anywhere. I **underscore inclusivity**.

Amhara institutions must expand their reach in order to protect all Amharas wherever they live, building on the outreach and embrace that begun over the past five years. In this regard, I commend the ADP, Fano, the ANM and the Addis Ababa Trustee's Council (የአዲስ አበባ የባለአደራ ምክር ቤት) for their resolve and dedication in changing the Amhara and the Ethiopian narrative and urge each and every one of us to pull in the same direction. The Amhara struggle is a just struggle for survival and for a just and democratic society.

Addis Ababa defines and represents Ethiopia's diversity. It projects the country's future. For this reason, I consider the Addis Ababa Trustee's Council (የአዲስ አበባ የባለአደራ ምክር ቤት) as a civic organization that defends and promotes the electoral, economic and residential rights of the city's residents. The undemocratic norm established by the EPRDF to dictate appointments of the city's administration is unprecedented in any country. The EPRDF cannot advance democracy while subverting basic rights.

At a country level, I urge Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed to use a different lens in assessing Ethiopia's multiple policy and structural problems. It certainly is not the Amharas who pose a threat. It is time for the Prime Minister and for the EPRDF leadership without exception to change their paradigm of **thinking and narrative**. Among other things, they need to provide national narratives that represent historical and political facts as they occurred and evolved; and a promising future that is empowering. They need to dispel or counter the misrepresentation of history regardless of political correctness. Equally, the so-called opposition (**ተጭካሬ ፓርቲዎች**) needs to rise up and play a different role that mirrors unfettered inclusion.

The harm of repeating a false narrative

When falsehoods are repeated over and over again, they become facts in the minds of millions. This is the case in Ethiopia today. The TPLF wrote its own "Bible" in the form of a Manifesto in 1968. It singled out the Amharas as a "mortal enemy of the people of Tigray." It propagated ethnic hatred, vitriol, suspicion and division and spread its virus during its 27 years of hegemony. It invited and cajoled other ethnic groups including the Oromo to distrust and to dislodge the "chauvinist and neftegna" Amhara wherever they live and work. It reduced Ethiopia's 6,000,000-year history to 100 years. What leadership allows or encourages such a narrative?

By demonizing the Amharas and by reducing Ethiopia's distinguished history, the TPLF and its ethnic allies reduced Ethiopia's status in the world. The Amhara narrative of history is inseparable from Ethiopia's history. The distinguished thought leader, Ato Taye Bogale put the problem succinctly when he uttered the following eternal words in front of a packed audience.

“ያልተማሩ ምሁራን ያቆዩዋትን ሃገር፤ የተማሩ መሃይማን አያፈርሷትም”

“A country whose uneducated citizens defended and passed on to us cannot be Balkanized by the deeds of ‘educated’ illiterates.”

In summary, I recommend that Amharas and others within Ethiopia and in the Diaspora:

1. Recognize and celebrate Amhara achievements and victories; use the current onslaught on Amhara institutions and especially their youth as an opportunity to solidify their resolve and determination to protect their survival in unison; and desist the temptation to fall into the TPLF the disinformation trap of regionalism---Gondar, Gojjam, Wollo, Shoa etc.
2. Always recognize that Amhara survival depends on ironclad unity.

3. Acknowledge publicly that the current leaderships of the Amhara Democratic Party, the Amhara National Movement, Fano, the Addis Ababa Trustee's Council (የአዲስ አበባ የባለአደራ ምክር ቤት), other civil society organizations, academics, business people and others are important; they must strengthen their organizations and pull resources together, support one another and work in sync.
4. Accept the notion that Amharas are essential for Ethiopia's durability; and Amharas and others can no longer afford to disengage; and must operate as a unified voice in numerous fronts in support of the struggle for humanity, justice, the rule of law, genuine equality, inclusion, ultimately democracy, Ethiopia and the prosperity of all Ethiopians.
5. Focus energies, creativity and resources to fight digital TPLF and its disinformation arsenal.
6. Set the tone and change the narrative by distinguishing between parties and authorities that run them on the one hand; and Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people on the other.
7. Dispel the allegation of direct linkages between the assassinations in Bahir Dar and Addis Ababa as well as the alleged coup d'état on the one hand; and wholesale arrests and incarcerations of Amharas, especially more than 500 members of the Amhara National Movement on the other.
8. Demand the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners of conscience; defend the restoration of human rights, media freedom and political pluralism.
9. Meet our collective moral obligations and campaign against Apartheid in any form; dismiss the ethnic-elite narrative of Amhara "chauvinism, oppression, neftegna" that trigger attacks of Amharas and other ethnic groups; and petition against ethnic federalism; and offer a better federal alternative that **preserves the good** while changing the bad, for example, Article 39.
10. Demand that Ethiopian authorities at the federal and regional levels implement the core constitutional principle of the right of any Ethiopian to live, own property, vote and be recognized in any part of the country.
11. Urge the government of Ethiopia to recognize that the current Constitution is a barrier to citizenship rights; and should soon consider establishing a National Constitution Commission of global and Ethiopian experts and empower it to come-up with a new Constitution that will be presented to the Ethiopian people for consideration.

12. Urge the government of Ethiopia to delay the next election by a reasonable period of time; and to focus instead on the restoration of peace, stability and national consensus.
13. Urge the government of Ethiopia to craft and issue a medium-term roadmap focusing on critical political, socioeconomic and other strategic priorities, including a specific time table concerning the transition.

Part III of III will diagnose the question of whether or not Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed's government is reverting to the TPLF model. This commentary will also provide a set of recommendations for change in Ethiopian government policy as well as public discourse.

7/2019

