

May 24, 2002; Remembered by the Sidama Nation as ‘Sacrificial Blood’ day

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I. The Sidamas’ patience and the Rulers’ Arrogance

The Sidama is the nation that does not violate the rights of others, be it in its region or outside. It values others ways of lives as it does its essence of democratic systems that lingered to this day despite continued pressure of brutal rulers to make them abandon their centuries old values. The rulers have tired to regard Sidamas ways of life and culture as back warded and barbaric whereas they are implementing the policy of barbarism. They kept dehumanising the Sidama nation as well as other subjugated nations for their rapacious egocentrism.

The Sidama nation contrarily proved its wisdom, patience, forgiveness, and far-sightedness when it protected the rights of those who brutally treated the nation for the past century when the right time arrived during the 1970s revolution. The then ruler’s received harsh reprisals and retributions in various parts of the country for their dreadful acts towards other nationalities. But not at all were they treated inappropriately in Sidama region. Instead, the Sidama nation harboured and showed them great mercy and fraternalism; in practice to its fundamental enemies. The Sidama elders didn’t allow angry young Sidamas who have been infuriated by the immoral acts of the Emperor’s representatives towards the Sidama people, to act against the values of the Sidama patience and truth ‘Halaale’. By doing so, the Sidama nation maintained and proved their innocence and democratic system throughout the century to this day.

Although the Sidamas innocence was considered as cowardly and weakness by the successive rulers; they always showed the enemy about their heroism in a practical action in a number of occasions including during the Italian attempt to colonise entire country including their colonies and during the Derg regime. The Sidama people liberated almost entire districts apart from Awassa and some other towns with ferocious hand to hand battle with Derg military, and indeed, during the Italian attempt to invade the horn of Africa. During the emperor’s regime intra-and-post Italian war, at least 30.000 Sidama patriots have been sacrificed their lives for the sake of liberating Sidama land from Emperor’s invading army. Since the said period of time, the successive regime kept an eye on Sidama nation for their resilience and disobediences to their brutal systems.

To suppress the movement of the Sidama people, the Emperor’s successor, the Derg regime (which is based on its predecessor notion and principle), slaughtered at least 50.000 Sidama children, elderly, pregnant women and other citizens in day light in Boricha and Wotara-Resaa, villages in Awassa district in 1981/82. The Derg regime additionally beheaded many thousands of Sidamas in entire region during these periods of times and showed their dreadful acts toward innocent Sidama nation that neither violate the rights of others nor gives its own land. The Sidama nation, however, didn’t

surrender its liberty under such militarily superiority. In stead, they continued their resistance movements in various forms although at the later stage the leadership surrendered its values and worked in the contrary. The later leadership that served the Emperor, the Derg and at the moment serving EPRDF's regime is the key player in neutralising the spirit of Sidama resistance for a while. It's Mr Woldeamanuel Dubale Hankerso, former SLM leader, who purposely surrendered Sidamas liberation struggle for which hundreds of thousands paid precious sacrifices of lives. He is at the moment playing the same music with slightly different tune and serving the regime for his own advantage.

II. Systematic exploitation in the era of EPRDF's regime

Since the current regime enthroned on power, there have been signs of democracy. The regime dictated that they were sorry for the past injustice that has been done by its predecessors and promised not to repeat their legacy. By promising this, the EPRDF/TPLF recruited their loyalists from all nationalities of Ethiopia supposedly to be their nation's representatives. However, such game shortly proved deadly. Instead of representing their peoples of given regions, the cadres virtually become equal enemies with the colonisers and they directly or indirectly slaughtered, tortured and indiscriminately arrested their own nation's to promote the interest of Meles's regime.

Meles's regime on the other hand enjoys the scene behind the curtain by exploiting resources of the nations and sharing for the cadres' fractions of their nation's assets so that the cadre's can run their agendas effectively by dehumanising their own nations'. For example, Sidama provides about 50-60% of export coffee from which it receives almost none. Instead, the current rulers directly or indirectly through their cadres make some Sidama's flourishing coffee businessmen to undergo bankruptcy by letting them to sell their businesses back to the ruling party companies or their own individuals businessmen. In their land and soil, the Sidama people can't have any say in any issues that affects them.

III. The Sidama Nation Let-down by its immoral Children, 'Historical Failure'.

The Sidama cadres such as Melese Marimo (who's appointed an Ambassador to South Africa for his anti-Sidama act recently), Shiferaw Shuguxee, (who is appointed a president for southern Ethiopian regional state for his part in ordering the slaughtering and suppressing the Sidama people), Galalicha Janje (who was an architect of the practical order of the May 24, 2002's massacre and who was the body guard of Woldeamanuel Hankerso who is still kept ordering the killings), Dr Kebede Kanchula; Akie Hidana (current Sidama Zone President), Hailemariam Desalegn, (non-Sidama, former southern Ethiopia regional state president who directly ordered the killing of and the removal of Sidamas from Awassa city and played pivotal role in displacing the Sidamas to replace by his nation, Wolayitas); and others Sidama children let the Sidama people down. The Sidama nation didn't have such immoral children who sell the interest of its people in its history.

The Sidama nation, that hasn't surrendered its liberty to the rulers despite their brutality for the past century, more than 7000 Sidama elderly, students, women, civil servants and Sidamas of all walks of lives staged out on peaceful demonstration on May 24, 2002 after they have fully exhausted constitutional procedures against the decision of the government on administrative shift of the their capital city Awassa; and further asking for full regional autonomy. They were expressing the resentment against the eviction from their own city and other harmful measures of the government. However, the Sidamas who were carrying leaves of olives [as a sign of peace and non-violence] and banners were indiscriminately responded with live ammunition from the army and security forces of Meles's regime that is directly ordered by the above cadres. More than 69 innocent and armless civilians have lost their precious lives for this noble idea.

IV. We never forget you forever!!

No one is brought to justice to this date. Contrarily, the killers were promoted to the higher authority level and some of them appointed as ambassadors ministers and vice ministers. The Sidama kept resisting the regime's unconstitutional and undemocratic acts towards the nation where they are still receiving brutal treatments by the cadres as well as the security forces of the regime. More Sidama are dying on daily bases claiming their basic and constitutional rights whereas the cadres are enjoying the lives of abundance at the expense of entire Sidamas.

Therefore, the Sidamas in Diaspora as well as in the country remember May 24 2002 as 'Sacrificial Blood' day and remembers its martyrs as icons of liberation struggle who innocently scarified their precious lives for the Sidama land. We never forget you our beloved brothers, sister, fathers and mothers forever, even after the liberation!!

May God almighty bless your souls eternally!!

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