



## Monthly Newsletter

| JUNE 2021 |

### Announcements

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#### **Message from AEPAC President:**

Dear AEPAC donors, supporters and stakeholders,

We are pleased to announce that we will be publishing a monthly newsletter - *AEPAC Update* - which will kick off on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The objective of the *AEPAC Update* is to report on the activities and progress of the American Ethiopian Public Affairs Committee (AEPAC) to the general public. I invite and sincerely encourage you to provide feedback and comments so that we may serve you better.

We are also pleased to announce that a sister 501 (c) (4) non-profit organization called the Worldwide Ethiopian Action Fund (WEAF) is established to “engage in fundraising, lobbying, public relations and communication activities related to Ethiopia.”

I take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our donors, supporters and stakeholders for your engagement and generosity. I hope that you will continue to support us by donating to AEPAC and WEAF via our website [www.aepact.org](http://www.aepact.org).

Best wishes,

Mesfin Tegenu  
AEPAC President

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# **AEPAC UPDATES**

## ***Worldwide Ethiopian Action Fund (WEAF) Established***

AEPAC has helped to establish a sister organization known as Worldwide Ethiopian Action Fund (WEAF) which is a 501(c)(4) organization and registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in May 2021. According to its bylaws, the purpose of WEAF is to *“engage in fund raising, lobbying, public relations and communication activities related to Ethiopia. Such activities are aimed at strengthening and promoting the historical relations between Ethiopia and the United States of America”*

Even though they are sister organizations, AEPAC and WEAF are independent of each other with their respective bylaws. AEPAC activities are governed and regulated by the laws and regulations of the US Federal Election Commission (FEC). AEPAC’s fund raising process is regulated and its activities are defined which is different from WEAF. AEPAC receives donations from US citizens and US legal residents or Green Card holders only. Donation to AEPAC is done on individual basis and maximum donation is \$5,000 in a calendar year. WEAF, on the other hand, is governed and operated under the laws and rules of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Contrary to AEPAC, individuals and organizations from the United States and other parts of the world can donate any amount of their choice to WEAF. There is no US citizenship or legal residence restrictions to donate to WEAF. All of the money donated to WEAF will be used exclusively to pursue the organization’s objectives. WEAF has hired a legal firm to help in managing contributions and disbursements. WEAF publishes timely financial reports and audit reports as part of its transparency and accountability commitment. WEAF Board of Directors and Executive Officers are responsible for overall management and other activities.

## ***AEPAC Makes Progress***

AEPAC has made progress in implementing its objectives since its formation in March 2021. Following the adoption of the bylaw, leadership, consisting of Board members and Executive officers were elected. AEPAC Board members have diverse business, technical, diplomatic and international experiences and are committed to promote and implement its mission and objectives. AEPAC has been officially registered under the US law of the Federal Election Commission (FEC) in the State of Pennsylvania in March 2021. As a registered organization, it has the right to mobilize financial resources as allowable by FEC to support the election of federal, state and local candidates that show interest in

supporting the vision and mission of AEPAC. As AEPAC strives to promote a healthy and mutually beneficial relationship between the United States and Ethiopia, those candidates who support the organization will be a vehicle to maintain and promote the common interest between the two countries.

AEPAC has kicked off its mission by creating a dynamic website ([www.aepact.org](http://www.aepact.org)) to connect with its members and the public in order to provide a platform for balanced information, researched, well-balanced articles, mobilize membership and raise funds. There is growing interest from Ethiopians, Ethiopian Americans and American supporters of Ethiopia to join AEPAC as members, associates, consultants, advisers, donors and volunteers so that we will be able to achieve objectives. Since the website has been live, we have received words of encouragements and messages of support from many people for which we are most grateful. To support its effort in educating the public about current and historical issues related to the Horn of Africa, AEPAC has also created a website called Horn of Africa Information Clearing House (HAICHA) with is in the process of being linked to AEPAC website ([www.aepact.org](http://www.aepact.org)).

## ***AEPAC Held Discussions with Stakeholders***

AEPAC has reached out to stakeholders including different civic groups in the US, Canada and Europe. A meeting was organized and productive discussions held with the representatives. During those discussions mutual understanding was reached to coordinate efforts to achieve better results. AEPAC officers and representatives of the attending organizations have agreed to forge a partnership and working relationship with each other and committed to encourage their membership to join and support the work of AEPAC. The representatives of the civic organizations formed an Ad-hoc Committee that will advise and assist AEPAC in lobbying, PR and fundraising activities in line with the vision and mission of AEPAC.

Executive members held meetings with US Senators and Congressmen to familiarize the work of AEPAC as well as to brief them on the current situation in Ethiopia. AEPAC has conducted discussions with some key Senators and Congressmen that have interest on Ethiopia and agreed to have working relationships with each other and their legislative offices. To promote its activities, AEPAC has produced two press releases and conducted interviews with selected broadcasting houses to provide information to the public on the establishment and mission of AEPAC.

## **NEWS & CURRENT EVENTS**

### ***International Webinar Conducted on GERD***

An international Conference entitled “the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: Challenges and Opportunities for a New Era of Regional Cooperation” was organized by a US based People-To-People recently. Among the participants Government officials, well-known academicians, water experts and invited guests were included. During this discussion many speakers indicated Ethiopia’s legal right to use its water resources including generating hydropower project to produce electricity for the benefit of its citizens and that Egypt has lobbied the international community to isolate Ethiopia and galvanize support for Egyptian Government design to undermine and destroy the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). Sudan which originally promoted the GERD and stood by Ethiopia to complete the construction of the Dam recently changed its position and joined Egypt to undermine the GERD as panelist told the participants that Sudan Irrigation September 2020, had declared that “GERD is safer than all dams in Sudan and Egypt.”

### ***The National Election Board of Ethiopia Statement on the 6<sup>th</sup> national election cycle:***

Initially planned for August 29, 2020 the election had to be postponed due to Covid19 pandemic and now will be held before the end of June, 2021. Of an estimated 55 million eligible voters about 36 million are registered (~78%) to vote. In this 6<sup>th</sup> election cycle 8,200 candidates from 47 political parties will be competing for the 547 House of Representatives seats. There are a total of 673 election regions with a total of 49,407 voting sites.

### ***AEPAC Supports Meronne Teklu for Alexandria City Council***

AEPAD Board had a meeting with Ms Meronne Teklu, a young Ethiopian-American campaigning for Alexandria City Council in Virginia. Based on her running platform, the Board endorses her candidacy. Learn more at [www.meronneforcouncil.com](http://www.meronneforcouncil.com).

### ***“Egypt is the Source of many Problems in Ethiopia”, a panelist on International Conference***

The international virtual conference was organized on April 17, 2021 by a US based international civil society organization, *Ethiopiawinnet*. The Conference entitled “*The Ramifications of Western Reactions to the Current Crises in Ethiopia*” was attended by distinguished and outstanding panelists composed of Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia like Prof. Jon Abbrik, Prof. Ann Fitzgerald, Major General Gregory Coplay, Prof. Rob Prince, Mr. Jeff Pearce, Laurence Freeman, Prince Asfa Wossen Asrate Kassa, Professor Demissie Alemayehu and many more.

In analyzing the current situations in Ethiopia, Lawrence freeman, a well- known political and economic analyst on Africa indicated that Egypt has been the sources of many problems that exist in Ethiopia today.

Major General Gregory Coplay also indicated that that Egypt’s objective is to weaken and dismember Ethiopia through its proxies such as TPLF and OLF in order to maintain its hegemony over Nile River.

The panelists noted that the West and the media never admitted that they have continued supporting the wrong side in a current conflict in Tigray and failed to acknowledge that the TPLF was the one that imposed this war on Ethiopia when it attacked Ethiopian Federal Army stationed in Tigray.

### ***Senator Coons Remarks on GERD:***

US Senator from the State of Delaware, Chris Coons said Ethiopia has the right to build hydroelectric power dam for the benefit of its citizens. He made these remarks during his recent visit to Sudan along with Senator Chris Van Hollen from Maryland.