

Pax Ethiopiana:

Ethiopia at Peace Through Dialogue and Her Enemies in Pieces (Part II)

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February 14, 2022

[Al Mariam's Commentaries](#)



Author's Note: On December 29, 2021, the House of People's Representatives passed [Proclamation 1265/2014](#) (Amharic version) "Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission"). There have been random speculations (no systematic written analysis I have seen) and observations on the Commission, its mission, organization and purposes and the scope of the authorizing legislation. [Certain groups](#) have declined to participate in the dialogue process claiming the Commission is "impartial" and "lacked representation". One of the two objectives in Part II of my commentary here is to explain the legal basis for the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission, its organization and intended objectives.

The second aim is to expound on the themes I introduced in [Part I of this commentary](#) where I discussed my dreams for Ethiopia at peace. I follow up on that commentary by introducing my concept of Pax Ethiopiana (Ethiopian Peace).

Many great civilizations in history have sought to proclaim and practice peace on a grand scale.

Britain, [4.5 times smaller](#) than Ethiopia in land mass, became a hegemonic power and styled itself as the world's policeman and imposed [Pax Britannica](#).

During [Pax Hispanica](#), Spain managed to avoid the European wars of religion and preserved its peace.

There was [Pax Romana](#) which purportedly sought to spread peace throughout the Mediterranean world (Roman Empire) of antiquity by military conquest.

And of course, [Pax Americana](#) discussed below.

I shall argue herein that Ethiopia as a [great world civilization](#) is capable of declaring its own “Pax Ethiopiana”, Ethiopian Peace, for itself.

The foundation of Pax Ethiopiana shall be *Peace Through Law*.

(Read more below...)

Clash of Civilizations: Pax Ethiopiana v. Pax Americana

Over the past year, our Ethiopian peace has been disturbed by the Terrorist Tigray People’s Liberation Front (T-TPLF).

Over the past year, the T-TPLF’s double-dealing, double-crossing Western government supporters and hired lobbyists gunslingers have tried to impose their [wicked peace](#) on Ethiopia from Capitol Hill, The White House, Foggy Bottom and The Berlaymont (EU) in Brussels.

Over the past year, the Princess of Darkness Susan Rice has left no stone unturned to impose [Pax Susana](#) on Ethiopia by restoring the terrorist TPLF to power.

The Biden administration has used threats, sanctions, aid cutoffs, arms embargoes, objections to loans by multilateral institutions and other pressures to establish ONE FACT: There will be peace in Ethiopia only if it is dictated, controlled, and arranged by the U.S. and the EU!

Five days after the Biden administration was inaugurated, [I laid out with prophetic certainty](#) what the Biden administration will do to impose Pax American on Ethiopia.

On March 18, 2021, I [warned](#) of an impending Pax Americana: “The Americans are Coming to Impose Their Imperial Pax Americana on Ethiopia and Eritrea.”

I followed up with my March 29, 2021 [commentary](#) proclaiming the U.S. will try to “strangle Ethiopian and Eritrean sovereignty by coordinating with the European Union by imposing illegal and outrageous demands and by waging a relentless campaign of demonization in the international media.”

On November 23, 2021, presidential special envoy Jeffrey Feltman said the TPLF terrorist barbarians were at the gates of the capital and Ethiopia is toast.

The only thing Americans and other expatriates must do, the State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Addis said with the fierce urgency of now, is to get the [hell outta Dodge City](#), Ethiopia.

A few American workers left under official pressure.

Now, those who left are begging visas to enter.

Just like PM Abiy Ahmed predicted they would!

Ethiopians were willing to oblige.

You want to leave Ethiopia, then dig this: “Hit the road Jack and don’t you come back no more.”

Ethiopian Americans and other diaspora Ethiopians gave a firm reply to the Biden administration.

You want Americans to get the hell outta Ethiopia, then Ethiopian Americans will go back to their motherland.

It was [Homecoming 2022](#) for diaspora Ethiopians. We came back to Ethiopia by the tens of thousands.

The fact of the matter is that Pax Americana (ordained/imposed American peace) is a long-standing core element of U.S. foreign policy dating back to the Monroe doctrine and the American Civil War.

Most notably, “Pax Americana (American Peace) manifested itself aggressively after WW II with the rise of a [new kind of American empire](#) birthed in the Cold War.

Simply stated, the essence of Pax Americana is this: If there is to be peace in the post-War world, it will be dictated and controlled by U.S. interests and demands.

The rebuilding of the war-torn economies of Western Europe through the Marshall Plan marks the [modern era](#) of “Pax Americana”.

To [enforce Pax Americana](#) globally in the post-WW II period, the U.S. has employed the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and [Foreign Aid](#) program with the principal aim of [controlling](#) the international political economy.

To create the illusion of global moral legitimacy to buttress post-War Pax Americana, the U.S. played a decisive role in the drafting and adoption of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

The U.S. became the moral policeman and self-appointed enforcer of the “inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” at the very time de jure (by law) segregation and discrimination were being practiced in the U.S.

Today, the Biden administration seeks to impose Pax Americana on Ethiopia using the U.N., the World Bank/International Monetary Fund, USAID, EU and certain Western European countries and by moralizing and pontificating about [defending human rights](#). The facts tell a different story about US concern for global peace.

In 2019, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo [talking about](#) covert operations, engineering coups against democratically elected governments, inciting revolts [said](#), “I was the CIA director. We lied, we cheated, we stole. We had entire training courses. It reminds you of the glory of the American experiment.”

Gross human rights violations by the U.S. in the name of defending and promoting human rights have been [amply documented](#).

Whether the U.S. has the moral authority to dictate terms of peace in Ethiopia depends on whether it has cleaned its own house before it can clean the Ethiopia house.

Professor James D. Hunter, author of “Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America”, [argues](#) that the issues that divide America (the family, education, media, the arts, law, electoral politics, abortion, women’s rights, gay rights, court-packing, police brutality, racism, inequality, injustice, etc.) are so interconnected and deep that they are part of a fabric of conflict which constitutes nothing short of a struggle over the meaning of America.

Joe Biden campaigned his presidency would be about the “[battle for the soul of America](#)”. America today needs Pax Americana given the deep divisions in the society and the brazen and violent attempt to take over the seat of the American federal government on January 6, 2021.

Pax American was indeed declared after the [U.S. Civil War](#) to extol the “supremacy of law throughout the length and breadth of the land.”

Can America dictate Pax Americana in Ethiopia while it battles to save its own soul?

Pax Ethiopiana, Ethiopian Peace

Pax Ethiopiana is about dialogue (not “battle”) to protect, defend and preserve Ethiopian unity, dignity, sovereignty, and prosperity.

Nothing is more important to Ethiopians than peace.

The words “peace” rolls off the tongue of every Ethiopian – all 115 million of them – ever day dozens of times.

All Ethiopians greet each other by asking, “Selam neh/nesh”? “Are you at peace?”

They bid each other farewell by saying, “Selam hun”, “Be at peace.” “Beselam enegenagne”. “Let’s meet in peace next time.”

Selam Le Ethiopia! (Peace be upon Ethiopia.) Selam lehulachinm! (Peace to all of us.)

They express their wish for their country by saying, “Selamun yistegn (May the Almighty grant us peace.”

Ethiopians have a long-lived reputation of being a peaceful “unwarlike people”.

When America declared independence in 1776, Edward Gibbon, author of the epochal six-volume “The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire” [wrote of the need to defend the Ethiopians](#), then called “Abyssinians, an unwarlike people from the Barbarians who ravaged the inland country and the Turks and Arabs who advanced from the sea-coast in more formidable array.”

Gibbon wrote the Abyssinians were interested peaceful people interested in a “rational project of importing the arts and ingenuity of Europe; and their ambassadors at Rome and Lisbon were instructed to solicit a colony of smiths, carpenters, tilers, masons, printers, surgeons, and physicians, for the use of their country.”

Ethiopia, like the other great civilizations of the past, is entitled to declare its own peace, PAX ETHIOPIANA.

Pax Ethiopiana is different from all others.

Pax Ethiopiana is not expansionist, imperialist or neocolonialist.

Pax Ethiopiana does not resort to war or violence to achieve its objective of national dialogue for peace through law.

Pax Ethiopiana does not seek to wage war in the name of peace.

Pax Ethiopiana does not undermine or denigrate the sovereignty of others.

Pax Ethiopiana is based on fundamental principles of dialogue, unity, consent, consensus, reciprocity, and give-and-take.

Ethiopians literally breathe peace every moment of their lives!

Pax Ethiopiana naturally rolls off the tongue of all Ethiopians in different languages and dialects.

Pax Ethiopiana is a universal phrase of greeting in Ethiopia.

When Ethiopians meet and greet each other, they invariably say, “Selam Neh/ Nesh?” “Are you at peace?”

Dialogue for peace is instinctive and second nature to every Ethiopian of good will and good faith.

So, formalizing what is natural by formal legislation takes the pursuit of peace to the next level and institutionalizes it.

Pax Ethiopiana (Ethiopian Peace): Creating and cultivating an enduring homegrown culture of peace in Ethiopia

Ethiopians must reject Pax Americana in Ethiopia and develop their own homegrown “Pax Ethiopiana” (Ethiopian Peace)

Pax Ethiopiana begins with full consideration of Ethiopia’s long-standing and underappreciated culture of peace.

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has laid out the basic principles in building a [culture of peace](#).

UNESCO promotes a culture of peace which addresses the root causes of conflict “through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations.”

A culture of peace requires creation and propagation of a “set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals groups and nations.”

The [Constitution of UNESCO](#) declares, “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.”

Peace must also begin the minds of men as it is the unpeaceful mind that is often the source of conflict and strife.

Ethiopians have always been about the three P's: PEACE, PROSPERITY and PROGRESS!

Unfortunately, over the past five decades, Ethiopia has been racked by cross border conflict, internal strife, and terrorism.

Border wars with Somalia and Eritrea, internecine conflict driven ethnic elites and terrorism by the Tigray People's Liberation Front and its henchmen have undermined Ethiopia's stability and prosperity.

It is now time to make history. Ethiopian history!

Peace Through Law: Proclamation 1265/2014 (Amharic), "Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission"

On December 29, 2021, the House of People's Representatives enacted [Proclamation 1265/2014](#). ("Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission").

(The discussion of the Proclamation is based on the author's Amharic translation. Mea culpa.)

It is a Proclamation that aspires to achieve maximum public accountability, transparency, and institutional independence in the pursuit of Ethiopian peace through dialogue.

The Preamble to the Proclamation declares the Commission is established to help build national understanding and consensus by harmonizing the diversity of views and opinions in society and among political, civic, and other opinion leaders.

The Proclamation is intended to promote and sustain dialogue around [fundamental national issues](#), build trust among competing stakeholders, facilitate close working relationships among diverse groups and resuscitate broken social values/principles.

The Proclamation prescribes the national dialogue to be led and coordinated by capable and independent individuals who will work to gain broad public legitimacy and acceptance for the Commission's work through transparency and accountability.

Mission of the National Dialogue Commission

The [mission](#) of the Commission includes:

Identification and establishment of circumstances to conduct dialogue over issues, problems, and differences between and among different elements/segments of society;

Conducting competently and independently led inclusive national dialogue and develop an actionable consensus agenda;

Engaging in dialogue that could improve the relationship between the public and the government, address age-old issues and help develop a new political system that inspires public confidence;

Seeking ways for practical implementation of core dialogue ideas to promote confidence in the political process and strengthen democratic institutions;

Developing actionable recommendations to resolve current problems and facilitate social and political conditions for a durable peace;

Promoting dialogue that could lead to national understanding and lay the groundwork for the establishment of a political process with strong legitimacy.

Operating Principles of the Commission

The Proclamation sets 12 operating principles for the operation of the commission including inclusiveness (all voices must be heard), transparency (no hidden agendas), tolerance and respect (civility in dialogue), reasonableness/rationality (reasoned discussion), consensus building and practical implementation of ideas (aim for balanced views that attract a broad base and can gain wide acceptance), independence of operation (not aligned with any group or point of view but maintain impartial perspective), democracy (commitment to democratic principles), depth and breadth of agenda (create a forum for expression of diverse views and concerns), supremacy of rule of law (respect for the constitution and laws of the land), national interest (give primacy to protecting and defending Ethiopia's national interest), use of indigenous knowledge (incorporate the wisdom, traditions and experiences of Ethiopia's diversity), national unity (promote the country's unity in its diversity) and sovereignty (no compromise on Ethiopia's independence and political, social and economic integrity) and any other principles the Commission deems appropriate.

Responsibilities and tasks of the Commission

The Commission is tasked with several responsibilities including:

Conducting investigation, research and analysis of issues and concerns of national importance;

Organizing meetings and conferences and other forums to conduct dialogue at the federal and regional levels;

Developing policies and procedures to be used in conducting dialogue and securing the services of competent professionals that can facilitate the work of the commission;

Ensuring commissioners meet all criteria for membership and performance of their duties as established in the Proclamation,

Preparing reports and documentation on the dialogue proceedings, key ideas generated and making recommendations for implementation of ideas generated through the dialogue process.

Number of Commissioners and Appointment

There shall be 11 commissioners selected from a pool of candidates recommended by members of the public, political organizations, and civil society institutions. The House of People's Representatives is required to make the first cut of candidates making sure it is gender balanced. The Speaker of the House shall discuss with competing political parties, civil society and religious institutions and recommends the final list of candidates and designates the Chief and Assistant Chief Commissioners to the House.

Criteria for Membership on Commission

The Proclamations list various membership eligibility criteria including Ethiopian citizenship, commitment to serve all Ethiopians equally, no political party affiliation, ability to contribute to national consensus-building, good moral character, no serious criminal record, competence to performs tasks and full-time commitment to the work of the commission.

Structure of the Commission

The administrative structure of the Commission consists of the Chief and Assistant Chief Commissioner, the Secretariat, committees, and staff. The Chief Commissioner shall lead the Commission's work, set agenda, call and preside over meetings, report to the House, hire staff and manage the administration and prepare the budget.

Commission Meetings

The Commission is mandated to conduct regular meetings. An extraordinary (emergency) meeting may be called by a simple majority vote. The Commission's is charged with reaching decision by consensus and in the absence of consensus by voting. The Chief Commissioner breaks tie votes.

Duration/Term of the Commission

The Commission has a set term of three years from the date of the Commission's formal inauguration and may be extended at the discretion of the House of People's Representatives.

Designated Activities of the Commission

The Proclamation mandates the Commission to undertaker a variety of activities in the performance of its work:

Establish committees and professional teams which will help develop ideas, undertake various research and investigation projects;

Study the outcomes of previous government and non-governmental efforts on dialogue and use beneficial practices and experiences in Commission's dialogue process;

Examine differences in ideas between different segments of society on national issues by undertaking research and analysis;

Draft dialogue agendas and harmonize issues for dialogue across different segments of society;

Conduct federal and regional dialogues to maximize inclusive participation and develop genuine national consensus;

Facilitate public participation in national dialogue by establishing clear criteria and procedures;

Ensure and monitor the national dialogue is conducted based on clear standards and criteria.

Assign professionals who can maintain careful, complete, and accurate records of dialogue proceedings and synthesize and present them to the Commission;

Establish procedures for internal operation, set dialogue agendas and process for participation;

Prepare a document that identifies a national consensus-based dialogue agenda and ways of implementing and publicizing the agenda;

Assist government institutions in implementing ideas generated in the national dialogue in transparent and concrete ways; and

Establish procedures to monitor implementation of consensus ideas.

Commissioners' Rights and Obligations

Commissioners are granted immunity from criminal prosecution except for serious offenses.

They have the right to full participation in the Commission's activities, access and obtain records necessary for the Commission's work and engage in committee service.

The obligations of Commissioners include properly discharging their duties, full time service to the work of the Commission, avoiding conflict of interest, maintain confidentiality of the Commission's work, and acting with independence, integrity, and dignity.

Removal and Replacement of Commissioners

A member of the Commission may resign voluntarily or be removed for health reasons, incompetence, major acts of unprofessionalism, unexcused absence for more than 10 days and defects in membership record at time of appointment. Replacement of commissioners shall be drawn from the original list of candidates. The speaker shall name the Chief and Assistant Chief Commissioner in the event of removal or resignation.

Secretariat

The Commission's Secretariat shall examine details of dialogue agendas, administer the annual budget, examine Commission's general report, establish branch offices, establish institutional process for tasks and activities, draft bylaws and maintain standards of professionalism for Commissioners.

Implementation of the Proclamation to date

On January 26, 2022, the Ethiopian Parliament [shortlisted 42 individuals](#) out of the 632 people nominated by the public to be members of the National Dialogue Commission.

It is expected that the Speaker of the House will conduct discussion on the candidates with political parties, civic and religious institutions, and others to solicit comments.