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NEWSLETTER

Reflecting on 2023 Challenges and Shaping a Positive 2024

January 2024

Dear <<First Name>>,

As we embark on the journey into 2024, I extend heartfelt wishes for a blessed New Year on behalf of the AEPAC board. May it bring tranquility, peace, and justice to our beloved motherland.



Undoubtedly, 2023 was a challenging chapter in Ethiopian history. The government's military campaign to disarm the Amhara region resulted in immeasurable damage, loss of life, and widespread suffering. The deployment of heavy military artillery in cities and high-tech Turkish-manufactured drones on civilian targets led to the devastation of schools, hospitals, churches, and bus terminals, causing the loss of innocent lives.

In the face of this crisis, the international community has largely remained silent about the escalating assault on millions of Ethiopian citizens in various regions. Documented drone attacks, deliberate destruction of food stocks, and displacement of hundreds of thousands (primarily ethnic Amhara) have created a humanitarian crisis of massive proportions. The attack on Ethiopia's oldest institutions and orthodox Christians has continued.

Three years ago, when the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) posed the greatest threat, the diaspora provided unprecedented united international support in diplomacy and media with intensive lobbying. This was alongside Ethiopians from all over the country who came out to defend the nation by organising as local and regional militias, including the praised and recognized Amhara militia - Fano, who fought together with Ethiopian armed forces to repel the TPLF rebellion. However, the truce agreement signed with TPLF in 2022 shifted the government's focus to disarm Ethiopia's regional militias, particularly the Fano. This move faced resistance from Amhara civilians who view it as irresponsible and ethnically motivated, leaving the region unable to defend against ongoing violence.

Unfortunately, as we usher in 2024, the situation remains dire. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and UN agencies report over 5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), an active ethnocentric war, a state of emergency on Amhara region of over 50 million people, rampant corruption, arbitrary arrests, and homelessness for over 700,000 people in the capital due to arbitrary home demolitions. Additionally, 30 million citizens are exposed to hunger, with some reportedly succumbing to it. Attacks on Ethiopian identities, including its national flag and religious institutions, mosques, monasteries, monks, priests, and the perishers, persist. Due to a sadly failed foreign policy, Ethiopia finds itself in total turmoil, both internally and internationally.

As a result, AEPAC had to rearrange its 2023 priorities of advancing private-public investment and democratic processes in Ethiopia to address the changed political environment. We have initiated congressional and US administration discussions regarding the new crisis to contribute towards a peaceful resolution. Over 50 meetings with US government officials culminated in a successful October 17 briefing in the United States Congress, followed by a November 30th, 2023, US Africa subcommittee hearing, which highlighted weaknesses in the US-Ethiopia policy in addressing the humanitarian crisis. Currently, both the US Congress and State legislators are actively working to fulfill their responsibilities to stop the carnage in Ethiopia.

The AEPAC board and its leadership team are finalizing their 2024 goals with a focus on:

- a) Electing Ethiopian Americans or Pro-Ethiopia legislators in the 2024 US elections,
- b) Advocating for pro-Ethiopia legislations,
- c) Supporting pro-Ethiopia elected officials at both the US Congress and state houses,
- d) Advancing pro-Ethiopia US administration policies at the State Department and the White House,

e) Advocating for the human rights of all Ethiopians, including the application of the Magnitsky Act to combat corruption,

f) Rallying US and international support to combat starvation and provide medical support to people suffering.

AEPAC was born with enthusiastic member support when Ethiopia was at a crossroad, with the hope of moving the motherland from the dark days of TPLF to a brighter future. The Ethiopian people are once again at a crossroad, and this ancient nation still needs the same diaspora enthusiasm and collaboration to survive the current unforeseen crisis. We must remain engaged, optimistic, and at times pragmatic. Understanding our strengths and limitations, we must effectively advocate for the motherland and actively work to build bridges that unite all Ethiopians.

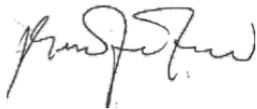
We value your opinions as we finalize the 2024 goals and encourage your active participation in shaping a better future for Ethiopia.

Wishing you a year filled with hope, resilience, and positive change

Yours Sincerely,

Mesfin Tegenu

Chairman



AEPAC News

The Ethiopian born US congressional candidate.

The American Ethiopian Public Affairs Committee participated in a fundraising event organized by the Republican Party in Washington, D.C., supporting the Ethiopian Israeli American candidate Mazi Melesa Pilip from Long Island, New York. The event garnered attention from several dignitaries, including the Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson.



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