

Thank You, Great Patriots!

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When I learned of the expected news of the “conviction” of the Great Patriots in Zenawi’s kangaroo court this morning, my initial reaction was not disappointment or sadness. It was a deep and overwhelming sense of pride in the personal sacrifices and extraordinary courage shown by these Great Patriots for their country and people.

As I thought about the Great Patriots, I began to imagine:

- the fortitude it took to say: “Zenawi, You can imprison our bodies and you can torture us, but you can never, NEVER, touch the Spirit of Kinijit.”
- the guts it took to say: “Zenawi, we are not afraid of your thugs and your goons, and your guns and tanks. We shall not be moved.”
- the virtuousness it took to say: “Zenawi, we will never give in to the dEvil, make a deal with the dEvil. No, we will always do the right thing, at any cost.”
- the audacity of hope it took to say: “Zenawi, we will languish in jail so that 75 million of our people will one day live FREE, and generations yet to come will one day experience the blessings of liberty.”
- the valor and heroism it took to stand face to face with the Overlord of Hell and say: “Begone to your Kingdom of Hell for there is no place for you in our paradise we call Ethiopia.”
- the courage it took to look The Beast in the eye and say: “Go take a hike!”

But soon I ran out of words. And so, I could only say: Oh! Great Patriots, never was so much owed by so many to so few!

I have no words or phrases to sing you praises or express my deepest gratitude. I only thank God that I was born on the same piece of His good earth that you now stand to defend to the end. My cup runneth over!

And then I thought of Zenawi and his pathetic judicial crew on the stage of justice.

On that stage, plain for the world to see, Zenawi made a travesty of justice. He perverted truth and glorified naked perjury. He dressed up falsehood in the garb of righteousness, and mocked the very idea of due process. He thumbed his nose at international law and the court of world opinion. He put on a theatre of the absurd, and what was on stage to see was only the monstrosity of his regime.

Now, with the news of this “conviction”, Zenawi hopes to break our spirits and hearts. He expects us to rant and rave. He hopes he will be able to distract our attention.

But let's not waste much time on him.

Zenawi is irrelevant to the cause of justice in Ethiopia. If we have anything to say to him, it is this: "Zenawi, Let the Great Patriots Go! Let our people go!"

So, what do we do now? There is plenty to do. But first, patriotic Ethiopians, let us put on a mighty celebration for our heroes.

Let us sing their praises. Let us thank them ourselves, and on behalf of generations to come.

Let us use their suffering as a testament to freedom, democracy and human rights in Ethiopia.

Let us carry on their message of hope and freedom to the four corners of the world.

Let us use their sacrifices as a memorial for the cause of freedom and justice in Ethiopia; and redouble our efforts and strengthen our commitment to Ethiopia.

Let us keep them in our prayers. Let's pray their courage of conviction and commitment to truth, justice, freedom and human rights will remain as solid as the Rock of Ages.

May God bless the Great Patriots!

May he keep them safe for that day of FREEDOM soon to come, when they will rejoin their countrymen and women and say: "Free at last, Free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last."

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As to the Kangaroo theatre, please refer to my 32-page analysis published last December, and excerpted below. See

<http://almariamforthedefense.blogspot.com/2006/12/keystone-cops-prosecutors-and-judges-in.html>
<http://www.addisvoice.com/article/keystone.pdf>

Here is partly what I wrote in **Keystone Cops, Judges and Prosecutors in Kangaroo Court**:
"Zenawi knows that the Kality "trial" is a "tale full of sound and fury signifying nothing."
Whatever his original plans were for having the "trial" -- intimidate the opposition leaders into submission, decapitate the opposition leadership, etc. -- those plans have failed. The "trial" has proven to be a colossal folly and backfired on him.

"The defendants are more emboldened than ever -- they are writing smashing bestsellers from jail -- and they can look into the eye of the Beast and say: "We don't negotiate our freedom. We are wrongfully imprisoned. Let's us go!" And so, Zenawi finds himself between the "devil and the deep blue sea" (no pun intended).

"The defendants are ready for the long haul, and no doubt Zenawi will do his best to make their lives a living hell in his stinking jails. But fortune has cast these Kality heroes this fate so they can become beacons of light and hope for 75 million of their people. From the darkness of Zenawi's prison, they will shine like the early morning sun. But let the whole world know that such uncommon

valor is in their blood; heroism and bravery is a tradition of their fathers and forefathers. This too shall pass! The defendants have already won. They have no illusions about the outcome of the kangaroo “trial”, or whether they will get justice in Zenawi’s court. It does not matter what happens on February 19, 2007. If they are “convicted,” ho hum, followed by a yawn! Everybody knows the “trial” is fixed. If Zenawi’s judges sentence them to whatever term of years of imprisonment, ho, hum followed by a yawn. Everybody knows that also.

“This “trial” was Zenawi’s to lose, and he has lost. He is the object of condemnation and scorn by the whole world -- Ethiopians, international donors and human rights organizations and groups, Ethiopians in the Diaspora, the European Union, the U.N., the U.S. Congress and the State Department, and others. But he has been a loser from the day he imprisoned the Kality defendants. Zenawi had only one card to play, and he played it the day he arrested the defendants. His ace in the hole -- his trump card --was his power to imprison the defendants, keep them in jail and make them suffer.

“Well, he’s kept them in jail for more than a year, and some of them even in solitary confinement. He tortures them, denies them medical care and the basic amenities of life in prison, and makes them suffer everyday. So what more can he do to them? Sure, he can take extreme action against them while they are in jail, and claim they died from one type of illness or another. Or as he did with prior groups of Kality prisoners, machine gun them as they sit in the jails and claim that they were shot while trying to escape. We know all his old tricks. But that will not solve his problem. Surely, Zenawi must realize that he can only oppress so much, kill so many innocent people, jail so many more and exile so many hundreds of thousands more before he must face justice himself!

“The longer he keeps the prisoner’s of conscience in jail, the more opposition he will generate internally and internationally. We all know he does not believe it; he said so himself.

“You may be surprised when I say this: The defendants have won, and Zenawi has lost! Yes, Zenawi’s political prisoners have won mightily. They have won the hearts and minds of the vast majority of the 75 million of their countrymen and women. And they have won their cases in the court of world opinion. They have even won in kangaroo court, hands down, as the prosecution piled perjured testimony over fabricated evidence.

“The defendant’s victory in the court of world opinion is as secured as is their conviction in Zenawi’s kangaroo court is certain. Amnesty International has declared that it considers that the CUD leaders, human rights defenders and journalists being tried are prisoners of conscience who have not used or advocated violence, and called for their immediate and unconditional release. The European Union has condemned the widespread violations of human rights in Ethiopia. At its 38th Ordinary Session held in Banjul, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in Ethiopia, deploring “the killing of civilians during confrontations with security forces” and requesting “that the Ethiopian authorities release arbitrarily detained political prisoners, human rights defenders and journalists...”