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Ethiopian Border Affairs Committee

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November 3, 2011

President Umar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir
President of the Republic of the Sudan
Khartoum, Sudan

Your Excellency:

The Ethiopian Border Affairs Committee recalls its letter of June 2, 2008 addressed to Your Excellency concerning the border situation between Ethiopia and the Sudan. We trust that Your Excellency's Government has given our letter the serious attention that it rightly deserves. We are again bringing it to your attention and to the attention of your government. The extremely dangerous and precarious situation facing the two neighbouring countries is of deep concern to us all and requires immediate action.

In light of the gravity of the matter, we are utterly dismayed to learn that the Ethiopian and Sudanese Governments have signed an agreement that is detrimental to the long-term interests of the two countries, and to the peace, stability, and security of the region. Wiki Leaks, a new popular site that has established a credible reputation for publishing highly sensitive and secretive documents of various governments, has now confirmed beyond any shadow of doubt that Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has, on his own accord, handed over a "good chunk" of Ethiopian fertile farmlands to the government of the Sudan. We challenge the basis and legitimacy of this illegal transfer of Ethiopian lands to the Sudanese government and reject it without any reservation.

As stated in our previous letter, Prime Minister Zenawi "has no authority to cede any Ethiopian territory without the consent of the people of Ethiopia." The Ethiopian Premier is fully cognizant that his government would face unprecedented opposition and public uproar if he discloses the contents of the deal to the people of Ethiopia. This is why Prime Minister Meles and his government carried-out this treacherous deal with the highest level of secrecy, and without the knowledge of the people of Ethiopia. Given the closed political space and the absence of meaningful opposition both imposed by the governing party, the Prime Minister himself is in a position to make controversial policy decisions and to arrive at deals behind closed doors. For the record, Ethiopia's rubber stamp Parliament that the single party state dominates did not even have the opportunity to deliberate on this issue of national importance. Incredible as it may seem, the Prime Minister went on record, and categorically denied the existence of the agreement with you, and claimed, "Not a single Ethiopian is displaced from his ancestral farmland." This is not true.

The Ethiopian Border Affairs Committee has been and will continue to be relentless in exposing any attempt by the Ethiopian Prime Minister and his government to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country. We register our strongest protest that any secret deal reached by your government, and by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) led government in Addis Ababa to redraw Ethiopia's boundaries or to cede any Ethiopian territory to the Sudan will neither bind the rest of the country nor contribute to stability and peaceful coexistence between the two countries. On the contrary,

any harmful settlement that affects Ethiopia's sovereignty and territorial integrity adversely will exacerbate tensions and frictions for generations to come. It will undermine prospects for deepening and broadening bilateral and regional economic cooperation, and for enhancing peace and security.

Once again, we categorically reject any attempt that infringes upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia. We denounce Meles Zenawi's government for evicting hundreds and thousands of Ethiopians by force from their lands where they had been farming for generations. In this regard, the Sudanese Government will bear full responsibility for invading Ethiopia and for the suffering of our people and for all the damages and destructions it brought about on the economy of the victimized territories. We believe that such acts are inimical to the long-term interests of the Ethiopian and Sudanese people.

As your Excellency knows, the peoples of the two countries have lived in harmony as good neighbours on the basis of peaceful co-existence. To our best knowledge, no party had, in the past, registered any territorial claims or raised substantive border issues between Ethiopia and the Sudan. Consequently, continued good neighborliness had offered the peoples of the two countries peace and tranquility that are essential for the development and prosperity of the Ethiopian and Sudanese people. It is therefore, the responsibility of the government of the Sudan to contribute its due share and uphold such peaceful relationship between the peoples of the two countries. Failure to adhere to the fundamental principles of state sovereignty and territorial integrity will have far-reaching and adverse consequences in the years to come. It will bring instability and unnecessary confrontation not only between the two nations, but also throughout the entire region. We trust that your Excellency appreciates the importance of mutual respect between nations for preserving peace and stability.

In this connection, we would like to believe that the Sudan still adheres to the 1964 resolution adopted by the African Heads of State Summit in Cairo on the inviolability of state frontiers. In our view, this vision has saved Africa from endless interstate border wars and costly conflicts.

We, therefore, call upon the Government of the Sudan to strictly adhere to the cardinal principle of the continental organization so that future conflicts may be avoided.

On behalf of the Ethiopian people and the two million members of the country's Diaspora around the globe, the Ethiopian Border Affairs Committee urges you once again to refrain from implementing the secret accord signed with Prime Minister Zenawi. The people of Ethiopia will never accept any secret deal reached by the current treasonable and treacherous regime in Addis Ababa or any regime that undermines Ethiopia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Only the Ethiopian people have the right to decide, and to ratify any border demarcation and *readjustment*. The current government led by Prime Minister Meles has no legitimacy let alone a mandate to cede Ethiopian territory to the Sudanese government or to any government for that matter.

We trust that Your Excellency and your government will give utmost and immediate consideration to this urgent matter.

Respectfully yours,

1. Ethiopian Border Affairs Committee
2. United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF)
3. Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP-Democratic)
4. Ethiopian Democratic Hibre Hizb Unity Movement (EDHUM)
5. Ethiopian Medhin Democratic Party (Medhin)
6. Gambella People's United Democratic Front (GPUDF)
7. Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front (EPPF)

8. Ethiopian National Congress (ENC)
9. The Legitimate Holy Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in Exile
10. Ethiopian National Priorities Consultative Process (ENPCP)
11. Solidarity Movement for A New Ethiopia (SMNE)
12. Gasha for Ethiopians
13. Ethiopian Air Force Association
14. Tensae Movement
15. March 4 Freedom
16. Ethiopian World-wide Civic Action Movement (BEKA! Movement)
17. Mahdere Andinet Ethiopian Association
18. Anuak Justice Council (AJC)
19. Back to Ethiopia for Freedom (BEF)
20. Citizens Charter (CC)
21. Constituents for Democracy (Dejen LeDemocracy)
22. ESKEMECHE
23. Ethiopian Forum for Peace, Democracy and Development (EFPDD)
24. Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association (EFPJA)
25. International Ethiopian Women's Organization (IEWO)
26. Network of Ethiopian Scholars-Scandinavian Chapter (NES-SC)
27. Solidarity Committee for Ethiopian Political Prisoners-Canada (SOCEPP-Can)
28. Workers Voice of Ethiopia

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