

On Good Governance & the misconceptions thereof

Engineer Ghirma
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Good *governance* means *different* things to *different* people; who are in *different* walks of life. To the rural Ethiopian population who are almost exclusively farmers and herders, it means the prevention of starvation at the whim of global weather change. To them good governance are the policies that the government institutes to guarantee life after a drought as a *minimum*. Once the farmers are *over that hurdle*, then **good governance** may throw in **food security** to prevent food shortage permanently. This would demand a critical element by the recipient population; which is to safeguard their deserved gains by remaining vigilant against those who are determined to reverse those gains. The entities who are working very hard to reverse those gains are those living far from **home** with axes to grind.

The Ethiopian people will gladly take any *help* that they can get from those with means; in the way of investment from the Diaspora (vocal or otherwise). What the people don't need is continuing campaign by Ethiopia's *internal enemies*; and external enemies like Isaias Afwerki's Shaebiya, who are dead bent on keeping *our* people desolate forever. The Ethiopian government is working diligently to implement various policies in good governance to break the stalemate; by offering incentives to the *enemies* of **positive change** to mend their ways. The government has succeeded in changing some minds; but more needs to be done.

The problem that underlies the motives of the *internal enemies* of Ethiopia has become regrettably *very personal* indeed; to the extent that is depicted by the old Amharic saying about the donkey that uttered "**enye kemotku serdo aybqel**". **Would any sane group of people go to the extent of campaigning for the boycott of tourist visits to Ethiopia during the upcoming Ethiopian (African) Millennium Celebrations?** It is not that they hate the Ethiopian people so much. It is that they *love themselves* much more. What level of hate of their own people would drive them to the extent of aligning themselves with Isaias Afwerki, the number one enemy of Ethiopia/Eritrea? I have some *ideas* on "good governance" that would deal with people like that! Enough said.

At this stage one cannot afford to be passive about the different forces that are currently in a tug of war: Between the Vocal Diaspora CUD with Shaebiya under Isaias Afwerki on one side; and those who are struggling for their livelihood back home on the other. If the Vocal Diaspora CUD had their way with their *virtual lobbyist* **Anna Gomez** *in their corner*, Ethiopia's rural population may have long been evicted from their domain by now; thus triggering a civil war. If there is any one *positive* thing the DERG did during their reign of terror, was to turn over farm land to their rightful owners; and away from their **neftegna** oppressors The good

news is that the **silent majority** in the Diaspora and the majority at home, with the Government *in their corner*, are winning *that contest hands down*. Thanks to good governance, Ethiopian farmers, who since have *organized* themselves very nicely to become an economic force to reckon with, are fast becoming Ethiopia's new **middle class**.

The government of Ethiopia is providing land, complete with infrastructure, available for utilization in both agricultural and industrial investment. Whoever has the vision and the no-how to invest, the sky is the limit! The government's role in bringing about success in these ventures has resulted in the introduction of more varieties of cash crops for export; and the manufacture of a host of industrial products, which has substantially reduced imports. The effect of "good governance" in this case was both to bring-in much needed foreign exchange, and reducing Ethiopian dependence on foreign goods. Ethiopia's effort to become a *net exporter nation* is well under way. Tax revenue is being collected more efficiently *than ever before*, and in the process making *our own* **Gashye Samuel** happy! Yes, capitalism is alive and well in Ethiopia, thanks to good governance.

Development and good governance go hand in hand. The Government of Ethiopia at the outset recognized that fact. However, it lacked the manpower to put a leash on the runaway culture of corruption it had inherited from generations of governments that preceded it. In this respect Ethiopia is not alone. Corruption has virtually become a way of life in Ethiopia; as in other nations including USA! The government, recognizing the rampant nature of the corruption, is proactively making effort to *curb* it. A whole new *commission* to exclusively deal with corruption has been created. Corruption is an *ill* that can be reasonably controlled; but it is virtually impossible to effectively eradicate.

Corruption in government has mainly two *categories* in Ethiopia: The most predominant is that of actual exchange of money or property, for fair/unfair judgment rendered by government officials. This usually involves middlemen, who are also paid, to pull-off a deal. Under this category, several personalities were already alleged to have profited from unfair/illegal decisions in the transfer of houses and other assets. The second category involves *political favors for desired economic gains*. I could name some people who have been incarcerated for both crimes; but I am not in the business of naming names. Besides, it is all in the public domain.

In the case of **crimes against the State of Ethiopia**, good governance demands bringing people to trial on a timely basis; however, *with no stone left unturned* during the act of performing investigations. Cases in point are the reckless demonstrations, especially in Addis Ababa, by CUD supporters who demanded victory *unearned*. **President Jimmy Carter**, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, and his fellow **observers** were satisfied with the *fair* manner in which the elections were conducted. The Vocal Diaspora CUD would have *none of it!* They bankrolled the *chaos* which resulted in the loss of lives among civilians and the police, in the hope of restoring DERG and its cohorts (a.k.a. r'zraj). The plan was to stage a *coup*; which failed miserably thanks to the outstanding leadership of PM Meles

Zenawi; and the management of the situation by the Police Force. Good governance certainly does not mean *appeasing* Ethiopia's enemies at home and overseas; *least of all those who are sleeping with the enemy*. **Justice demands it.**

Good Governance is a **continuous process**. It is happening every day in Ethiopia; even as I speak.