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ETHIOPIAWINNET: COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENSE OF CITIZEN RIGHTS

Obama Administration's Ethiopia Policy: *Double-talking Democracy while Conniving with Tyranny*

April 25, 2015

On a recent visit to Ethiopia, Wendy Sherman, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, publicly made the following bold declaration: “Ethiopia is a democracy that is moving forward in an election that we expect to be free, fair, credible and open and inclusive. In ways that (sic) Ethiopia has moved forward in strengthening its democracy. Every time there is an election, it gets better and better.”

Ethiopians and Freedom House, among others, are flabbergasted by this blatant hypocrisy about the ideals of U.S. foreign policy and the implicit contempt for the Ethiopian people. Ms. Sherman must surely have read at the very least her own State Department's annual reports on the human rights situation in Ethiopia, including the frank account of the rigged 2005 elections, the draconian methods used to cede just one seat in parliament are controlled by the ruling party in 2010, and the ongoing witch hunt against the opposition just weeks before the May 2015 parliamentary elections which will surely produce an electoral outcome that would shame any “elected” dictatorship.

This has compelled us to release a letter we sent in October 2014 regretting the convenient omission of human rights abuses in Ethiopia in Mr. Obama's effusive praise of the Ethiopian regime for its record on economic growth and the fight against terrorism. Accompanying our letter is the generic recent response of empty rhetoric we received from the White House.

We remain unimpressed and deeply disappointed. The Ethiopian Diaspora must redouble its efforts to press the cause of the desperate Ethiopian youth at home and in the treacherous journeys of exile.

Attachments:

Letter to the President

Response by White House

Press Statement by the Undersecretary of State

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