



HARARI ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY (H.A.J.E)

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From Harari Alliance for Justice and Equality (H.A.J.E)

H.A.J.E Article:

Tragic events in Motta & other cities in Amhara regional state and Harar, Harari Regional state and their implications on Ethio-Muslims & Ethio-Christians relationships.

February 02, 2020.

The recent tragic events in both Motta, in Amhara Regional State, the city of Harar, in Harari Regional State and other places in Ethiopia again highlight how some Christian extreme elements in the society are bent on destroying the fabric of the Ethiopian society which does not need many catalysts to cause harm to begin with. The current Ethiopian reality needs the utmost patience among the different segments of society to live in peace and harmony. Provocations of these extremist organized forces in different parts of the country will ultimately and eventually result in an intended consequence and the country will pay a heavy price both in human toll and property.

In the long history of Ethiopia stretching centuries, the lives of Ethiopian Muslims have never been an easy and peaceful one. Through -the successive reigns of Christian kingdoms, the Muslims were relegated to as second-class citizen and in some cases, they were not even recognized as one. The history of the Wollo Muslims during the reign of Yohanes II (1699-1769) who were forced to convert to Christianity and the massacre of those who refused to betray their faith is one example of the innumerable hardships Ethiopians Muslims endured. Considering what the Muslims have gone through in this long history, their very existence to this day is nothing short of a miracle. But far from disappearing, the hard fact is Ethiopian Muslims comprise at least half the population of the nation. The rulers of Ethiopia always referred to the nation as a "Christian Island", telling the world that the country is surrounded by Muslim neighbors and its entire population is followers of Christianity. But the phrase did not make any sense at all and it is just wishful thinking on the part of the rulers given the reality on the ground. But throughout their ordeal, Ethiopian Muslims never ceased their fight for justice and equality; on the contrary, they struggled without a pause and they are marching forward for their rightful place in the nation no matter the adversity. The perpetrators of the recent terrorist acts are in line to get rid of Ethiopian Muslims all together from the nation, and again, this is just a wishful dream.

Violently attacking innocent civilians and vandalizing Muslim businesses and properties are currently carried out in many parts of the country by highly organized Christian terrorist groups. Even though a great majority of Ethiopians, both Muslims, and Christians, have held high hopes for the peaceful and democratic transformation that the country is going through right now, some Amhara extremist groups are banking to disrupt this process in a vain endeavor to gain a status above everyone else in the nation. It is reported that individuals who brought their savings after working years and decades in a foreign land to start and invest in businesses saw their dreams and lifework squashed by these hooligans simply because they are hallucinating that the Muslims would just go away. Close to ten million US dollars' worth of damages were reported in the city of Motta, alone. Equally, in the city of Harar, Muslim civilians were threatened, and significant damages were inflicted on their properties while the authorities, both at the local and federal level, were looking the other way. Many Muslims and other observers are suspecting that they are in cahoots with the hooligans.

In this very difficult time for Ethiopian Muslims, one of the most perplexing phenomena is the reaction of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church that is totally silent on the matter, and in some cases actually fanning the flames of this hatred and violence to spread everywhere through its extremist priests who are brazenly speaking against the rights of Muslims in many parts of the country. Ethiopians are afraid that if this religious intolerance followed by organized violence against Muslims is not stopped on the part of the Christian establishment, the day will not be far to witness the nation engulfed in a civilian quagmire that might be difficult and impossible to repair. But as is the case most often, there is a shimmer of a silver lining to all that is happening against the Muslims. The outpouring support of Ethiopian Muslims as well as



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Christians, both at home and abroad, to address these challenges is nothing short of astonishing. Since the federal government is silent on the matter and is looking the other way, Ethiopian Muslims have taken the momentous task of helping their brothers and sisters on their own. Funds have poured in the millions in mosques around the nation and overseas, and hopefully, this show of support will help thousands of Muslims to stand on their own again.

Burning mosques, destroying properties and businesses and inflicting damages on unsuspecting Muslim citizens is becoming a routine and shameful episode of the Ethiopian political reality. Our Christian brothers and sisters should be the first ones to condemn and speak against such meaningless violence because no one will gain anything from it. To be fair, some of our Ethiopian Christians are just doing that. Just over a year ago when Christian lives and businesses came under attack in the Somali region, it was the local Somali Muslims who stood up help and defended their Christian neighbors to build their lives again. Even though it is not clear at this moment to understand what the motivation was for the cause of this heinous acts, the patience and political maturity exhibited on the part of the Muslim leaders and the rest of the population is exemplary, to say the least. Again, Ethiopian Muslims are playing a very important role to diffuse these unwarranted provocations to see the democratic process to attain its objectives.



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