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THE CROWN COUNCIL OF ETHIOPIA

HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ERMIAS SAHLE-SELASSIE HAILE-SELASSIE  
PRESIDENT

# An End to a Half Century of Massacres

*A statement by His Imperial Highness Prince Ermias Sahle-Selassie Haile-Selassie*  
President of the Crown Council of Ethiopia

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We, the Crown and People of Ethiopia, have endured our portion, and more, of the massacres of our kinsmen, by our kinsmen, over the past half-century. We can tolerate no more.

The latest known massacre, one-by-one in execution style, was of at least 102 innocent civilians — from infants to the most elderly — in the town of Merawi, in the Gojjam Region, on ፳፫ 20, 2016 (January 29, 2024, international calendar), by a uniformed battalion of the Ethiopian National Defense Force. This deliberate, savage, and unwarranted massacre took us past our final barrier of tolerance. The only crime of the people of Merawi that day was that they were Amhara, of Christian and Muslim faiths, and their attackers were primarily not representative of what a national army should be; they were led and largely manned by Ethiopians of a different ethnicity.

We have witnessed a nightmare of unconscionable and frequent massacres over the past year: perhaps as many as a million people have been killed, and countless more rendered homeless. In the two years before that we saw even more killed in inter-ethnic warfare, by both extremist ethnic groups and the government of the day.

Our stable, peaceful, and rapidly-progressing society was shattered on መስከረም 2, 1967 (September 12, 1974), when a coup by a small group of military overthrew the Emperor, His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I; later to kill him, and to instigate the first of the massacres: the Massacre of the Sixty. That occurred on the morning of ጸደቅ 14, 1967 (November 23, 1974), and saw 60 imprisoned former government officials executed by the coup leaders — the Dergue — at Kerchele Prison. It began the Soviet-supported communist Red Terror and the Ethiopian Civil War, neither of which, arguably, have yet ended. Many members of the Ethiopian Imperial Family were either killed or imprisoned for decades.

These past 50 years have seen the Terror take from all Ethiopians their illustrious historical identity as Ethiopians when these revolutionaries have attempted to divide us in order to conquer us.

We have been robbed, too, of our lands and properties, of our rights to our self-defence, our freedom, and — for a half-century — we were robbed of our future. No more. We can no longer allow others to impose identities upon us. We are, as the Gift of God, free people who also have been known as Ethiopians and kinsmen to each other across all regional lines.

The repudiation of this 50-year reign of terror, imposed over several different administrations, is well underway, as the uprising of Ethiopian peoples of many ethnicities and regions occurs to seek justice. But this can only be justice if the rule of legitimate laws is restored. We cannot replace violence and injustice with a different variation of violence and injustice.

The Ethiopian Crown was never destroyed during these past 50 years, and it is ready, as always, to help restore peace, justice, and friendship among all Ethiopian Peoples. And we urge the Fano groups of militias which have arisen around our nation to remain conscious that their mission is to restore justice and accountability; to restore the unity and prosperity of our various peoples; and not to seek vengeance.

The adoption of the 1966 (1974), draft Constitution, proposed by Emperor Haile Selassie, is critical to us today. It alone can create the legitimacy of governance required to impartially achieve justice for victims of Merawi and the Sixty, and the millions of our dead, displaced, and impoverished in the intervening half century.

We must memorialise this half-century of tears; this half-century of wasted time and wasted lives; this half-century of unwavering nobility of suffering by our People. And we will do so, just as we have memorialised the great triumphs of our united People during the two great Italian invasions and the many invasions by regional forces. We must recall that the great Emperors, Menelik II and Haile Selassie I, began putting Ethiopia on the path to economic and social progress. And this progress was interrupted solely by the greed for power of individuals whom history will forget.

It must now be our common goal to end the present conflict with as little bloodshed as possible, and commit ourselves to being above revenge and in favour of impartial justice. And to seeing not only the restoration of a trustworthy democratic process, but the dawn of an era when our interrupted path to prosperity and prestige is resumed.

God Bless Ethiopia! May it become, again, a nation of peoples committed to justice.