

DOCUMENTS OF THE 11th PLENUM OF THE CC WPE

REPORT BY
MENGISTU HAILEMARIAM



RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED
BY THE PLENUM

March 1990
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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of 13 8/11/94
Dear Members of the Central Committee.

The primary guideline in the efforts which our Party is making in the discharge of the responsibility entrusted to it is the will and benefit of entire Ethiopian people. Although, the desired goal has not been fully attained due to man-made obstacles and ecological imbalance, particularly drought, as well as due to weaknesses in plan implementation, a great deal of effort has been made in the interest of the welfare and progress of this country. This effort continues. We have now reached a stage where, on the basis of assessments made in the past, we have to determine the direction of our country's future path of progress with its sovereignty and integrity kept intact, and in view of the present situation in the world. Therefore, since the proposals made in the report which I will be presenting in this very minute will have a serious bearing on the integrity and future path of progress, I strongly urge that all citizens give them their utmost attention.

As the main protagonists and participants of events, the entire Ethiopian people realize only too well that there is nothing to which we have given more priority than the integrity of our country and people and that during the last few months too, our major attention and effort has been in this same direction. As the security of our country is the primary concern of all true citizens, it is extremely necessary to make periodic assessment of events and developments and take appropriate measure.

The other basic issue which cannot be denied our constant attention is the question of our social progress. We have planned a great deal and have made enormous effort on the basis of the ambition of our people to see the country's rapid freedom from backwardness. What have we achieved in

the development activities we have undertaken within the framework of the objective situation in our country, our surroundings and the world at large? And what is to be done? It is appropriate to find answers to these and other topical questions.

Our Central Committee's meeting will accordingly focus on two major issues. The first is to assess our country's security situation and create awareness which will help future efforts; the second is to examine the strategy which the Political Bureau has devised after assessing our country's overall political and socio-economic situation.

Comrades,

With regard to the disruption of peace in our country, it is no secret to anybody that the "EPLF" and "TPLF" have been committing, with unprecedented arrogance and conspiracy, the preposterous act designed on the one hand, to break Eritrea away and on the other, to bring about the disintegration of the country.

One is aware too of the large-scale offensive which the "EPLF" and the "TPLF", emboldened by the arrogant act of predatory campaign in certain parts of the northern part of the country, have launched.

Our main attention has been devoted of late to the tasks of containing the offensive which the "TPLF", in disregard to the peace call made by the Ethiopian people, has launched to dismember the country and the EPLF's new offensive launched on realizing that the former's offensive had failed to achieve its goals easily.

The response we had to the call which we made to the Ethiopian people after weighing the danger created earlier and making public the conspiracy hatched by enemies of Ethiopian unity far and near, and after declaring that we had to choose between watching our country disintegrate and saving it by

mobilizing the resources of the masses, not only made us highly proud of being Ethiopian but also enabled us to repulse the enemies of the country's unity. However, the arrogance and offensive of our enemies has only intensified and not abated.

External enemies, deeply inimical to Ethiopia's traditional commitment to freedom and to its growth and strength, with huge arms and logistic supplies shipped through the port of a neighbouring country and through preparations and command issued from the operation headquarters centered in that same neighbouring land are bleeding our country profusely.

While the war declared on the already known fronts was in progress, the enemies of Ethiopia's unity have caused destruction through the offensive which they opened in western Ethiopia two weeks ago with major armed support. Especially at Assosa, numerous compatriots were murdered, development infrastructural facilities destroyed, public and private property plundered and taken to a neighbouring country. Worst of all, some 200 nationals including some patients were shot or burnt alive behind closed doors merely on account of their nationality groups. Measure was taken promptly to stop this atrocity.

While we were countering aggressions launched on this and other fronts, the "EPLF" opened another offensive by deploying all its forces to Massawa, the gateway of our northern regions. Amid round-the-clock effort to thwart this dangerous attack, the "TPLF" created another dangerous situation by launching large-scale offensive on the Debre Tabor front which disrupted the road link to the whole of Gondar.

The war is conducted by Ethiopian traitors bent on destroying their own country and as such a difficult one. Those who stand for national survival must get clear insight into this evil design and join hands to frustrate it speedily.

Our enemies did not stop at these horrendous and

destructive activities they had perpetrated previously and in the past few weeks. They have also inflicted another damage to Ethiopia and its people during the last few days.

They have grossly violated the freedom and unity of this ancient country and nation by launching an all-out attack on Bahr Dar using the "TPLF" as their accomplice. What all citizens of Ethiopia, at home or abroad, workers, peasants, intellectuals, students, office workers, merchants and Christians or Moslems should realize is that the destructive spree of our enemies is not limited to obliterating development structure and institutions of health and education only. It is also geared to destroying this country of ours which, alone in Africa, had managed to preserve the independence, identity, dignity and unity of its society.

Compatriots,

The different units of the Revolutionary Army and the People's Militia as well as other determined and committed countrymen have quickly mobilized themselves to translate into deeds their firm resolve of safeguarding the country's unity, upholding the entity of the Motherland and defending the honour of every citizen.

This quick response testifies that the tradition of national unity and heroism did not die with our forebears who had died with their shoes on but is rather very much alive and that it is and will be evocative of their memory. Our just indignation, fueled by the deep consciousness of our Ethiopianness and the sense of common destiny has once again demonstrated our perception of the Ethiopian identity to those who underestimated or are ignorant of its significance.

The Ethiopian people know fully well from experience the sacrifices demanded by war, and this experience is an outcome of the price they alone had paid for centuries in blood for the defence of their freedom. It is thus not a product of the desire to

capitalize on the failure of others in this region of the world. Hence, the Ethiopian people can never be accused of war-mongering, and the entire world can never miss this fact. However, there will never be an alternative to a greater degree of preparedness to ward off arrogant aggressions. Whatever the form of solution we shall agree on with our opponents, it is evident that there can be no alternative to ensuring, at any cost, the continued existence of the country.

We cannot sit back and wait to savour the news of the exploits of the different units of our Armed Forces and the People's Militia who are making sacrifices at the forefront. Rather, each and every citizen must show in deeds what he or she can do for the country until the united might of countless Ethiopians is felt by the enemy. An enemy committed to the destruction and disintegration of the country cannot be forced to retreat by sheer condemnation. No peaceful solution is conceivable without a position of strength; we must by no means be caught unawares.

Compatriots,

The escalation of fighting or the absence of peace in our country is cynically attributed by some to the Revolution. It was not the desire or conscious effort of certain groups that gave rise to the Revolution. On the contrary the Revolution was a historical phenomenon that came as a result of the grievances of the Ethiopian working people who had been denied of their right for a just and equal treatment as citizens.

However, some groups both at home and abroad viewed the Revolution as constituting a danger to their vested interests. Their attempt to reverse it by force entailed unnecessary problems and conflicts. There is, on the one hand, the earnest desire of the Ethiopian people to build a just society by safeguarding their unity and freedom, while on the other there are external forces and their internal accomplices who were

bent on benefitting from the decline and fall of the people. This has led to the present situation of no peace.

Had we been ready to allow others to violate our freedom and disrupt our national unity as well as countenance the submission of our compatriots to their will, there would obviously have been no need for a resolve to defend our integrity. To accept to co-preside over our own demise is to admit that we have no rights and freedom to defend. Writings of classical antiquity including the Holy Scriptures have eternally documented the identity of this country and its people. It would be sheer delusion, therefore, to expect that this generation would allow the destruction of its historic identity, hence, the need for us to face up and ultimately counter the attack against us. The Ethiopian people are jealous of their entity and unity, and this had been tested at difficult times.

As has been repeatedly explained, attempts are being made to ascribe various confusing meanings to execute the current plot of trying to plunge this ancient country of ours into compounded difficulties in order to bring about disintegration. However, looked at its overall perspective, it should be clear that it is a plot hatched by forces that do not wish to see Ethiopia's progress and strength, and particularly those who use secessionists in Eritrea to this end. It is the present and main strategic characteristic of the plot of the secessionists to try to pit Ethiopians against one another along tribal lines in order to bring about their objective which had hitherto failed to materialize despite the various means they had used.

Their strategy envisages the destruction of Ethiopia as a necessary precondition for the secession of Eritrea and as a lasting guarantee for the security of a future Eritrea.

With their accomplices in neighbouring countries, they are infiltrating into the country members of various nationalities in order to pit one nationality against another and thereby create hatred and friction among nationalities. They have even

managau to undertake sabotage activities in the western, eastern and southern parts of our country where they destroyed economic infrastructure and shed the blood of innocent citizens.

When the anti-Ethiopian activities of "TPLF", (the off-spring of "EPLF") failed to bring about their objective at the desired tempo and speed the latter launched a fresh offensive in disregard of the on-going peace effort—an act which is a sure sign of what they are striving for.

In general, they are engaged in creating seeds of discord among nationalities, pitting one against the other and dividing them in order to destroy Ethiopia—a hostile act which they set themselves as their permanent task. With this dastardly act which history shall not forget, they have been belabouring day and night to plunge our country into dangerous precipice so as to bring about their long-held objective of separating Eritrea, thereby destroy Ethiopia and wipe her out from the map of the world.

The secessionists have made a habit of giving the impression that the fighting in Eritrea is one between themselves and our Armed Forces. The truth of the matter is, however, that they are also up against Eritrean-born genuine Ethiopians. There was no dastardly act they did not perpetrate particularly in their attempt to use the people in the battle zones as pawns. They have been engaged in inhuman and genocide acts against rival groups favouring settlement within the context of national unity.

They have been subjecting a large number of people from the region, who lead a difficult life as refugees in foreign lands to untold life of misery by forcing them to pay part of their meagre income as contribution to an objective which they are opposed to. In addition, they have left a lasting scar of destruction on the integrity and history of the people. In short, there is nothing which they did not commit to destroy human

relations and perpetuate hatred and deep-ingrained divisiveness.

The "TPLF", as the off-spring and appendage of the Eritrean secessionists, is engaged on its part in numerous activities at home and abroad aimed at undermining Ethiopia.

It has become common knowledge, more than ever before, that the destructive activities of these groups opposed to Ethiopia's unity and peace, constitute presently the key causes for the political, economic and social problems of our country. As if this were not a reality, these messengers of destruction nevertheless try to draw attention away from the problems our country faces while at the same time make immense efforts to compound these problems created by themselves.

While they themselves are engaged in a separatist war, they ask the Ethiopian people as to why their sons are being plunged into the war, simply to detract them from their resolve to withstand the anti-peace attempt being made against them. While they themselves destroy and disrupt development infrastructure and are the cause for the economic downfall of the country, they say the Ethiopian people are faced with difficulty. While they themselves expand the war and create various obstacles to prolong the time needed to bring about peace, they try, without success, to convince us so that our government, which has stretched its hands of peace, is ostracised for anti-peace stand.

Among the various means they use to bring about their objective, particularly in the propaganda aspect, is to present a distorted version of history in a manner that suits them as they have no regard for historical objectivity and facts. This has always been their characteristic.

The Eritrean secessionists claim an entity different from that of Ethiopia. They try to legitimize their claim by putting forward arguments based on unfounded "historical" source-

es. All this of course is to give credence to the abound claim that relation between Ethiopia and Eritrea is a colonial one .As if they were the defendants of the interest of the Ethiopian people, the secessionists have of late began to regret that the Ethiopian people are victims of war and that had it not been for the war their progress would have been advanced and their livelihood improved. The group is also trying to agitate that if the people want to live in peace, they should rise up against their own government. The agitation is conducted on the arrogant assumption that the level of consciousness of the Ethiopian people is so low that it would very well enable them to go ahead with their plan while the people are locked in an infighting.

Both the "EPLF" and "TPLF" claim with no legal basis and with the force of arms to represent the people in Eritrea and Tigrai while at the same time trying to dismantle the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, whose structure was laid on the basis of the constitution approved by the people. To assume that the Ethiopian people are unthinking of realities only proves that it is not really the people but the baraggarts themselves who in fact are unthinking.

The "TPLF" group on its part had claimed that Tigrai had always been a separate entity and that the Axumite civilization was confined to the boundaries of Tigrai and that consequently a Tigrai republic had the legal and historical legitimacy for its establishment. Despite these claims and the statement that Ethiopia as a country was created by the Amharas and Menelik only 100 years ago, an individual who claims to be the leader of the "TPLF" stated last January that "although the stand of the Ethiopian people on their unity is unquestionable, they should nevertheless declare this openly. We shall continue to wage the war until this intent is declared."

The "TPLF" boasts, among other things to have convinced the people of Tigrai to endorse the secession of

Eritrea. Besides, it has forced the youth of Tigray to be deployed brazenly in the war in Eritrea and fight against our Revolutionary Armed Forces and Eritreans that stand for the unity of Ethiopia. Is this really in the welfare and interest of the people of Tigray?

Is the pledge to set up a Tigray republic a feasible goal and in the interest of the people of Tigray?

While it is true that problems of the Ethiopian people are the outcome of the long drawn out war of resistance against the waves of external expansionists and of feudal and backward legacies which left no room for development endeavours, is it really right to attribute these problems to the unity of the people? Can these problems be resolved by internecine fighting and mutual destruction?

On the basis of our conviction and the cause we intend to fight for to the end we say "no they cannot and should not!"

Unity is strength.

Unity is peace and love.

Unity is greatness and prosperity.

This was a fact which generations of this country have been certain of for centuries ago.

When the earlier objective for which the lives of so many were lost had failed to materialise, what useful purpose did forcing the people of Tigray to march on neighbouring administrative regions serve under the pretext that the vanguard-revolution of Tigray should also benefit the rest of Ethiopia?

Can it be imagined that the secessionists who have through narrow objectives made war a regular practice expect to make any historically-supported popular achievement other than to add destruction and subvert Ethiopia's progress? If this internecine fighting ends in the defeat of one by the other, can it be imagined that there can ever be peace on this soil of ours?

It is to be highly regretted that the Ethiopian people have been unable, due to various pretexts and reasons, to secure

peace and attain their long-desired goal of progress and free themselves from backwardness although they have the potential for doing so. It is with a deep sense of dismay that I say that we engage in war in the name of "liberation" and never in constructive activities beneficial to the nation, find ourselves in a situation where we are unable to work so as to attain the longed-for development and progress of our country

Even so, since the attainment of peace through peaceful means is the ardent desire of the people and since peace holds the sole key to the nation-building process, we have been making major efforts in this direction particularly following the New Peace Initiative adopted by the National Shengo last May.

The opening of peace dialogue with opposition groups should be welcomed as a positive process, it is regrettable that numerous obstacles should be created by our opponents to sabotage the initial moves.

The "EPLF" instead of considering the peace process constructively, has from the very beginning been engaged in obstructive propaganda claiming that the government took the initiative because of domestic problems. It is obvious that since the important point and the crying need of the people is peace, disseminating obstructive propaganda will have been out of place. The government, ignoring the abusive and vicious propaganda of the secessionist group has been making efforts with great patience for the peace talks to continue. As pointed out on various occasions, conditions were created during the second round preliminary talks in Nairobi to wrap up procedural points in order to proceed to the substantive talks. However, the "EPLF", finding that its proposal that the UN be included as observer at the next round of talks was not accepted, began making false allegations and baseless accusations not only against us but also against former US president Jimmy Carter who had volunteered to chair the meetings. It

even went to the extent of refusing to cooperate in setting the date for the start of the main talks. It was not difficult to see what this presaged. Its launching of a large scale offensive recently in order that bloodshed and death will continue has shown unequivocally that it does not believe in peace.

The group which has been claiming to struggle for the "liberation" of Tigray also created difficulties by provocatively insisting during the two rounds of preliminary talks in Rome that it be accepted as representative of the Ethiopian people. However, it attempted to spread malicious rumour even against the Italian Government representative who supported our stand that in the agreement reached in London the "TPLF" represented no one but itself. This group, like its patron, the "EPLF", was trying to subvert the talks and after attempting to have them postponed to next September, finally agreed, through the major effort of the observer, to have the dialogue resumed at the end of this month. What this group, trading as it does in the suffering and blood of the people, has been and continuously doing is too well known to merit detail.

It is thus clear to anyone that the discontinuation of the peace talks and the resumption of the war due to the weak arguments raised by the two groups will not accrue to the benefit of the people. On our part, our hand of peace will continue to be stretched so that the suffering of the people will end and conditions of peace which the entire world supports will prevail in our country. We will not refrain from seeking peace through peaceful means while countering the aggression of the arrogant groups.

They have been falsifying Ethiopian history in the various capitals of the world, and have been spreading adverse propaganda about the life of the Ethiopian people. They have caused problem by dislodging the people from their homes and subjecting them to persecution and famine. At the same time,

they had posed as trouble-shooters using the name of the people and country as a means of amassing alms. Such a state of affairs must cease. At a time when in the presentday world much effort is being made to relax tension and to make nations forge closer relations and co-operations, the bloodletting of the Ethiopian people must not continue. The Ethiopian people today are making a constructive endeavour for mutual benefit based on equality and a spirit of brotherhood and committed to the principle of common existence. To attempt to divide the people for self-interest on narrow grounds under the pretext of "Eritrean Liberation," "Tigrean Liberation," and liberation of what not, is an injustice which history can never forgive. Therefore, it has to end. Is it not ironic that it is we the children of this country, the lode-star of freedom in Africa, that happen to have a wrong perception of freedom? No one rules or is ruled in Ethiopia today. There is no liberator and no one needs to be liberated in Ethiopia today.

It is clear that the absence of peace in one region of our country has grave consequences for the entire Ethiopia. For this reason, the problem that had particularly been sweeping through the northern part of our country is a problem that had deeply bled the people and stunted the country's progress.

Any sane person would realize that were it not for this fact, our country would have advanced considerably in line with the targets we had set and the efforts we had made. The prospects for development for which we had rallied enthusiastically had been hampered. It is quite obvious that this had created a situation which we regret for generations. While a portion of whatever we develop or build is destroyed daily by our detractors, we are also continuously being challenged by the onslaught of drought. However, we are heartened by the fact that the development infrastructures laid down during the years of the Revolution by the Party, the Government and the people within the prevailing condition have by no means been

minimal.

Uppermost in our minds at the present moment is undoubtedly the defence of the unity of our country. Allied with this decisive struggle is our social policy which must be reviewed and adjusted to new realities. If all had gone well in line with our aspirations and desires, our attention would have been fully devoted to the struggle of extricating the country from backwardness. In the light of the deprivation facing the majority of our citizens in any region or part of our country, there would have been no other question more worthy or onerous of preoccupying the mind of the present generation. Accordingly, it is self-evident from the very beginning that our objective is to hand over to the succeeding generation not only a country whose unity is kept intact but which makes headway along the path of progress.

Nevertheless, like our forebears, we too have not been fortunate to devote the full scope of our capability, our resources and attention to the struggle of improving the livelihood of our society. There is no choice therefore, today as in the past, other than waging an all-round struggle. In the economic reality of today's world when social progress has assumed a complex character, it is not difficult to realize the extent of the struggle that is waged to defend the country's unity on the one hand and to enhance its progress on the other. The form and method of accelerating our economic and social progress within the context of the objective situation is a fundamental question.

When we talk about social progress, we are talking about the life of our society. Since the acceleration of social progress is the improvement of the life of our society, its retrogression means the deterioration of its social problems. Hence when we speak of the problems of social progress, we are speaking of the day to day problems of life in our society. Unless we realize the nature of these problems and make the society realize accurate-

ly how they can be overcome it is impossible to achieve progress. This being the case, what are the problems hampering the acceleration of our social progress? What are their causes? Which problems originate from implementation and which ones from organization? These and other questions dealing with our national economic administration hover in the minds of our society and need to be deeply analyzed.

Nor is this all. As endeavours had been made on various occasions, although the decisive factor for the acceleration of our social progress is our own endeavour, immense pressure is also exerted by the condition prevailing in the outside world. Accordingly, what shape have been taken by the changes manifesting themselves in the world's economic order and the ideas forwarded with regard to social development?

It is quite in order to analyse at this juncture what positive or negative impact they will have on the path of development we have chosen.

Hence, the holding of frank and open discussion on the issues to be raised during this session of the Central Committee regarding our social development is timely for a number of reasons. Naturally, the questions we raise, basic as they are, may involve detailed and wide-ranging discussions. But the very fact that we have begun discussing them enables us to concentrate on situations that facilitate the tackling of problems by distinguishing the negative from the positive and the temporary from the permanent ones as well as differentiate the aspect of implementation from the content.

On the basis of this, being in a position to enrich common understanding and adopt the right orientation on what we must elaborate, correct, improve and elucidate or change will take us one step ahead in further strengthening unity of purpose between the leadership and our members as well as between our Party and the entire people.

Comrades,

In order to make the necessary analysis in this spirit, it becomes pertinent to have a correct understanding of the history of our Revolution. One lacking a clear understanding of its starting point cannot properly conceive its destination. Thus, it is quite logical to ask ourselves once again as to how we have chosen the path of development we are pursuing.

A glance back from the point of view of social development shows that our country is one of few ones where ancient civilization flourished. Historical records show that in ancient times Ethiopia had built a viable economy in agriculture, trade and basic technology. It was a country where urban centres sprouted and grew and where an indigenous literary culture, quite unique in the African continent, thrived.

Nevertheless, our country could not advance with the civilization it had earlier embarked on and make the necessary transition to modernization. Various factors account for this.

It is obvious that our country, located as it is in a strategic area, had attracted the attention of the then leading powers to be reckoned with. As a result, a number of wars had been fought against expansionists, colonialists and aggressors. In this connection, it is obvious that in our efforts to guarantee respect of our legitimate rights in the Red Sea littoral-gateway to the outside world—we were involved in numerous wars. The fire ignited in this area often engulfed and endangered the very existence of our country. It can be asserted that our country's long history is characterised by wars waged to safeguard national unity and sovereignty.

This is the basic reason for the backwardness of our country which at one time attained a glorious civilization. Accordingly, agriculture remained the mainstay of the livelihood of the Ethiopian people over the ages making little contribution to the national economy. Likewise, there existed no favourable situation for employment and the development

of new methods of work and creativity. It is to be recalled that handicraft was lowly rated and artisans were held in low esteem. In general, backward technology remained a characteristic feature of the culture of our society.

A cursory glance at our recent history in particular shows that in pre-revolution days the place individuals held in society remained by and large static with hardly any visible social mobility. There also existed a wide disparity in the levels of wealth and income. Whereas a handful of individuals occupied a position of supremacy, the vast majority were wallowing in abject backwardness and as such could not participate in running the affairs of the state. The political structure was also backward, essentially based on family ties and inheritance. Due to the prevailing low level of development of the country, people inhabiting different areas, besides being denied the opportunity of participating in the affairs of the state stifled by the feudal system, could hardly intermingle and communicate with each other.

As bragging on the basis of land ownership, authority and claim of high birth played a dominant role, giving low priority to economic activity remained a characteristic feature of our society.

In view of the fact that such a state of affairs stunted national development, the working people put up tenacious struggle to bring about the demise of feudalism. Although this struggle reached a climax and erupted in a specific historical episode, it had been going on for quite a long time involving various strata of society. In short, the Revolution of February 1974, which unfolded itself in the absence of an organized political leadership, emanated from a genuine desire for change and popular revolt.

As is well-known, the popular motto we have upheld right from the time the entire working people rose in quest of a radical change is to build a united Ethiopia wherein all citizens

enjoy genuine equality, progress and development. Although the path to social development of a given society may be varied, the focus and rallying point for Ethiopian intellectuals, workers, men-in-uniform, students and other sections of the working people was no doubt the socialist path of development. In fact, the outstanding question during the initial stages of our Revolution was: who is more of a socialist than the other? Thus, I do not think all of us would deny the fact that there was apparently no heated debate between genuine revolutionaries and those who called themselves revolutionaries on the issue of the socialist and other paths of development.

There were a number of reasons as to why the overwhelming majority of those who stood for radical change espoused the socialist path of development. The fact that the Soviet Union, China and various other countries that made socialism their guiding ideology managed to overcome economic backwardness in a relatively short span of time offered a vivid practical example. Moreover, the desire to redress the economic injustices imposed upon the people by the feudal system, particularly resolving the land question on a just basis, as well as the strong desire to cement the unity of Ethiopian nationalities on the basis of equality, made due contribution to the choice of the path of development adopted by the forces of the Revolution.

On the whole, the choice was basically made from the ardent desire to lift the nation from the quagmire of backwardness as quickly as possible.

It is to be noted that the choice of the path of development we have made is part of the general pattern that characterized social development in the developing world. By the time of the upsurge of our Revolution during the 1970s, the struggle of the youth, intellectuals and generally the working people in Africa, Asia and Latin America, similar as it was to that of ours, was to embark upon the socialist path of development. It should not

be forgotten that during those years, the progress of social justice meant to most social scientists preoccupied with the choice of socialism or at least the non-capitalist path.

The choice of socialism as the path of our development was made by taking these internal and external factors into consideration. The rationale for the choice of the path of our development was the written correspondence addressed to us and the popular expression manifested in mass demonstrations in Addis Ababa and other parts of the country. Hence, as erroneously claimed by certain quarters, this choice was not the personal conviction only of a few of us.

In view of the fact that it is impossible to build socialism directly from feudalism, it is to be recalled that the Programme of the National Democratic Revolution had wide and popular acceptance. In line with the Programme, the efforts exerted to ensure national sovereignty free from external dependence as well as guarantee the active participation of the working people and their decisive role in running the affairs of the nation had been witnessed in real life. On the basis of the NDR Programme, various measures have been taken to ensure the rights of the people. These measures have abolished the disparity in wealth and land ownership among the working people and thereby the differences in political and social positions. Thus, thanks to the measures taken in line with our NDR Programme, the rights of the working people to actively participate in the political, economic and social affairs of the nation as well as guaranteeing the equality of nationalities and their equal chance of collective prosperity have been ensured.

Based on these radical measures, concerted action was taken in various fields to accelerate the tempo of our social development. In the economic sphere in particular, vigorous efforts were made to develop the agricultural sector, including the training of skilled workers and the application of modern technological know-how in the rural areas. No less strenuous

efforts have also been made to develop the industrial sector of the national economy. In addition to the studies undertaken to identify the mineral potentials of the country, work to harness some of these resources is making encouraging progress. The development of energy resources, which is vital for accelerated growth of the economy, has been given due attention and, hence, it has been possible to study the nation's resources in this respect. The results already achieved in developing our hydroelectric power resources can by no means be underestimated.

Generally speaking, the measures taken in various aspects of life towards promoting the socio-economic wellbeing of the society have laid a solid foundation for the future progress of our country. Of fundamental importance in this regard is the fact that such development ventures have not only been implemented but were also undertaken with a view to achieving balanced development of the different parts of the country.

From the point of view of promoting the spiritual wellbeing of our society, mention should be made not only of the ability of the people to read and write but also the enrichment of the level of their involvement in discussion of national issues. The fact that social development undertakings in our country are today carried out with the active involvement of the people is very significant indeed. In the same vein, attitudinal change towards work had witnessed big improvement.

Viewed at from this perspective the achievements already scored in the revolutionary process are praise-worthy. It is worth noting that an elevated state of spiritual condition is in itself a vital ingredient for accelerated pace of economic construction.

It is true that we have not been able to score achievements at the desired scope. But I think all genuine citizens do recognize the fact that this is so not because we lacked the will

or failed to devote sufficient attention to social development. The main impediment to the development of our country, a problem which should be repeatedly emphasized, is the absence of peace.

In the first place, there were the sacrifices we had to pay in the eastern and southern parts of the country to ensure the defence of the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity. On one hand there was the task of re-building infrastructures destroyed during the war such as schools health centres, bridges, roads and residential houses while on the other we had no choice but to wage resolute struggle in the northern part of the country to safeguard national unity. I have already dwelt at length on the war being fought in the north which has come to assume bigger scope reaching its present stage, in defence of the nation's unity. The immediate sacrifices that this war requires of us in terms of human, material and financial resources is, I believe, obvious to each and every citizen with a clear conscience. On top of this, the repeated cycles of drought that hit the country aggravated the problem vis-a-vis endeavours to promote social development.

Natural calamity causes great damage to life, production and to animals. Besides, it should be noted that the tasks of withstanding the effects of drought heavily competes with the investments needed to create additional capability for production.

It is logical that one should make an appraisal of the world economic situation in order to correctly evaluate the level of social development in a given country. Accordingly, one should ask; How did the overall picture in the world economic situation look like, particularly, over the past 15 years? How did it affect the developmental aspirations of the third world countries, including that of our own?

Admittedly, it is outside the scope of the present report to extensively dwell upon and analyse these questions. Neverthe-

less it is appropriate to at least underline some specific indicators in this connection.

First and foremost, if we take a look at the situation in Africa, it is clearly evident that with the exception of a few countries, the economy of the continent is heading for total collapse.

If we look at the economy of Nigeria which at one time was heading towards a high stage of development, its per capita income plunged from 800 dollars to 380 dollars between 1985 and 1987 alone. It is not difficult to see the magnitude of the crisis that follows as a result of such sharp decrease in the income of a society within two years. The crisis faced by other countries is in fact even more worse. As assessed by the World Bank and other organizations, it is expected that the per capita income of most of the African countries in 1990 will be far less than that of 1960 when they attained independence.

The prospects for the development of Latin American countries is hardly encouraging. Even there, the economic situation indicates a downward spiral rather than accelerated development.

As indicated by the UN Economic Commission for Latin American countries, the per capita income of the countries in the region in 1990 will be reduced to the level of that in 1980.

In general, the economic development of African and Latin American countries has been retarded by 30 years and 10 years, respectively. As can be perceived from this downward trend of development, poverty and the resultant problems such as unemployment and housing shortage have worsened instead of being alleviated. Moreover, schools and health institutions in many African countries are being closed. Factories and production establishments are already not in a position to operate at full capacity due to shortage of foreign currency earnings. As a consequence of this downward spiral, the number of governments in Africa that are in difficult position

to pay salaries to their employees is on the rise. Although they have not faced total collapse like the African countries, the economic situation of Latin American countries is also alarming. Generally speaking, it is not an exaggeration to hold the view that the chances of development of developing countries is bleaker more than ever before.

The main causes for the downward trend of development of African and Latin American countries are the continued fall in the price of raw materials they produce on the one hand, and the soaring prices of technological products on the other. The increase in the debt burden developing countries have borrowed from developed countries is also the other main cause for the downward trend of their development. These problems of falling prices and debt payments have made their presence felt in the world economy and as such have had a grave impact on our national development efforts which are to be viewed with the obstacles of development we are presently facing.

It is evident that this fundamental problem has a greater magnitude and put a brake on our development. Besides these obvious problems, our own other shortcomings have impeded the economic development of the country. How far is the structural setup and management of the economy suitable for the acceleration of development? While the problem we have faced to increase our productive capacity is well known, have we been able to fully utilize productive capacity? Which, in this regard, are our shortcomings in the mode of our operation? These and many other similar questions can be raised with regard to economic management. It is fitting and proper to elaborate on the situation in the light of these problems.

At present, the organizational setup of the economy is such that the state, cooperatives and private sectors are operating hand in hand. In the national economy the share of state and cooperatives sectors is 35 per cent while that of the private sector is 65 per cent. In the agricultural sector which

occupies the leading place in the national economy, the combined share of the state and cooperatives is 10 per cent while that of the private sector is 90 per cent.

As noted in our 9th Regular Plenum of the Central Committee of the WPE, our failure to give due attention to the private sector which occupies an important place in the overall economy, has had negative impact on the national economy. Especially, the peasantry could not properly carry out its productive activity with full confidence by properly exercising its rights to the use of land. It must be pointed out here that this will negatively affect production. Similarly, we have been unable to make a balanced and proper use of economic instruments which can serve as an easy directive for the private sector. This has for long been one of our shortcomings.

As regards the state economic sector and management, it should be noted that there are strong points inasmuch as there are shortcomings which stand in the way of our chances for growth and development.

It is well known that at the outset of the Revolution, numerous means of production and distribution as well as service rendering institutions were nationalized. In light of the capital they operated and the number of workers they employed, those placed under state control are indeed important components of the economy. Extensive efforts have been made in the past 15 years to increase our development capacity and consolidate the state economic sector. But how effective has this sector been? This is a question posed by many. It can be safely assumed in this regard that the experiences we have drawn are different from those developing countries which are on the same level of development with our country. The profitability and productivity of most of those enterprises put under state control is satisfactory. Banks, insurance organizations, Electric Light and Power Authority, Telecommunications, most of our industries, communication infrastructures

and others are state owned enterprises which have come up with satisfactory results compared with those in other countries similar with ours in their level of development. The profitability and productivity of banks, airlines and sugar factories are at higher level. In general, the annual amount of revenue transferred to the treasury from the state sector is over 600 million Birr—a fact which goes to clearly show the benefit accrued from this sector.

On the other hand, there are organizations characterized by operational loss, organizational inefficiency and wastefulness. Besides, the modes of keeping property in state organizations are exposed to embezzlement and wastefulness. Nor is work discipline satisfactory.

There are some encouraging features in connection with the work of cooperatives. However, grave problems have also surfaced in this sphere. Those cooperatives which were properly organized, since their establishment had consolidated effective leadership and attained high levels of development which indicated that they can be solutions for transforming rural Ethiopia. These are cooperatives which have been organized and developed in such a way that they show some rays of hope. Nevertheless, the situation obtaining among many of these cooperatives is far from satisfactory. From the outset full confidence and willingness were lacking when these cooperatives were established. They were faced with organizational, operational, leadership as well as production and distribution problems. Consequently, the level of productivity of many cooperatives could not surpass that of the individual peasants. Because of this, the organizational activity of cooperatives has drastically slackened. Moreover, some trends of dissolving cooperatives have surfaced in certain areas during 1988-89. As is the case with the state-controlled economic sector, wastefulness and embezzlement are clearly visible problems in cooperatives as well. It can be said that the problem, resulting

from loose work discipline has been a typical obstacle for the development and consolidation of cooperatives.

Besides the problems in each of the aforementioned sectors, there are numerous problems in connection with economic planning and management. By and large, these problems have emanated from our low level of development. However, the fact that these problems stemming from management and administrative shortcomings will bring about great damage in a system in which important economic establishments are put under state control is quite obvious.

In all our Central Committee plenums we have at no time failed to deliberate on problems we have faced in accelerating our social development and work out directives and strategies to alleviate these problems. It is to be recalled that during the 9th Regular Plenum of our Central Committee which made an in-depth assessment of the overall activities of our national economy, resolutions were adopted with a view to encouraging the state and private sectors to be engaged in spheres that can make them more profitable and productive and also enable the private sector to create employment opportunities.

Laws, regulations and directives have been formulated and put into effect to implement these resolution.

By taking stock of our social development at various stages, we have been formulating directives that will help speed up our progress. Although the needs of our society is the point of departure for devising directives, there are two basic factors with decisive role.

The first is the objective condition obtaining in our country while the second constitutes the everchanging regional and international situations. Accordingly, there were conditions over the past years that were conducive to the efforts we have made for the development of the country and improving the lives of our society. On the other, there were certain adverse conditions that obstructed our efforts in this direction.

Attempts were made to take all these into consideration. However, in the light of our present level of development and the objective conditions, it is hard to say that due attention had been given to these factors.

In the process of carrying out constructive activities, shortcomings may crop up. In similar vein, conditions which are at one time favourable for the development of the production forces can, at another time, be obstacles. It is therefore appropriate to take measures that will buttress development efforts by making proper assessments that are required from time to time.

In light of the special political trends in the world of today, we find ourselves in quite a unique situation. As a matter of fact, conditions cannot remain static for ever. Our era is characterized by quite fundamental changes. Formerly established thoughts and outlooks regarding social development are in the process of change. In short, the world today is far different from the world when we mapped out our development strategy over 15 years ago.

Since our development is inter-related with the rest of the world, it is necessary to give due consideration to this changing phenomenon in the assessment of the path of our social development.

The growth of a country like ours, which is at low level of development, is supported by assistance secured from developed nations. There is therefore no alternative to giving due attention to the changes that have surfaced at international level. As our people are part of the international community, it is necessary to make sure that the direction of our development is in line with the prevailing outlook and thinking of our society.

By taking the objective condition of our country on the one hand, and giving due attention to the changing international situation, on the other, it is all too clear that there is a

need for charting new development plan that will be to the advantage and benefit of our country and people.

Any development plan is not a lasting one but rather it should be changed, perfected and be made effective in time with internal and external changes as well as with the general objective conditions prevailing in the country. It is impossible to argue that a plan of action which was used at a given condition will necessarily be workable under different conditions. Hence, there should be change or corrective measures in the process of social development.

In this process there is one important thing that we learn from our experience and that is the fact that there can never be a perfect formula or model for social development. This being the case, we shall give due priority in our development plans to our Ethiopian identity, the unique culture and history of our people, and the close examination of the special features of the region where our country is located. This, I think, is a matter which we have arrived at from our own experience. Under the prevailing world realities, the better alternative is to develop and consolidate our own by adopting the positive attributes from each and all. To face such realities, it entails boldness, determination and tact. When we engage ourselves in the struggle to bring about accelerated development to our country, I believe that we have sufficient understanding of what is expected of us.

Dear Comrades,

I believe that we have properly realized the problems encountered in the course of devising our development plans. In addition to our experience, the prevailing conditions in socialist countries which have attained high level of development shed light for us. As seen from all angles, the transition to the socialist system guided through the programme of the

National Democratic Revolution has proved difficult and unattainable.

To make such a choice, we should be guided by our present level of development and the level of consciousness of our society which is a reflection of its level of development. Our past shortcomings clearly indicate the necessity of inter-relating these basic realities. In this respect, the need for taking stock of the world situation does not need further elaboration.

Basing ourselves on these criteria, if we consider our present level of development, it is not difficult to realize that the transition to the socialist or capitalist system is quite a long-term objective. The main objective of a development plan worked out in a situation where market forces have hardly developed and where most of the producers are small-scale ones should, as a matter of priority, be to extricate the country from backwardness.

This struggle against backwardness does not lie in the individual or collective effort of private entrepreneurs alone but also calls for the cooperative effort of governments and individuals by mobilizing their energy, knowhow and capital. Above all the struggle against backwardness also calls for attracting foreign capital in various ways and making it participate in development. As shown by the experience of numerous developing countries, even with all these in place it would not be easy to achieve growth.

With this in mind, it has been suggested that our new economic structure be a mixed one built on state, private and cooperative ownership as is the case in other developing countries. In this kind of mixed economy, the government will have direct participation in not only directing the economy but also in the development process. In this way government participation will not only be in the leading and strategic sectors which assist in promoting the internal interdependence of the national economy and determine the direction of the

economy for continuous progress as well as advance the technological system but also in the production of essential consumer goods for the public. The major reason for state participation is the absence of a strong capitalist class capable of mobilizing the financial resources necessary for economic growth. Because of this enduring problem, the state will have a positive role in the economy of any developing country. Even in countries in higher stages of development, state-owned production enterprises have a role in opening the way for the private sector by experimenting with new technologies or developing new areas.

While for these reasons direct state participation is necessary for the growth of our economy, basic changes will be made in the work and management of state economic enterprises. While the management of state enterprises will henceforth be based on competition, profitability and productivity, they will be made to have management autonomy in order to achieve this goal. In order that the proliferation of enterprises that fail to show improvement through administrative measures will be turned over to cooperatives, private concerns or individuals on contractual, lease or sales arrangements. They may even be closed down altogether should all these measures fail.

The other participant in the mixed economy is the private entrepreneur. One of the major aims of this economic policy being to assist and promote small-scale producers to attain higher stages of production along the path they choose, the private sector will from now on be encouraged and strengthened in all ways. According to our new economic policy, any Ethiopian national will thus be able to participate, without any capital limit, in any field privately, in partnership or through share companies. The private entrepreneur will therefore work side by side with state enterprises and cooperatives in the industrial, agricultural, mining, transport, trade and other fields.

While, because of many practical reasons, land will continue to be under state ownership, individual use of land will be sanctioned by law. The land used by the individual peasant cannot thus be transferred to another without legal i.e. judicial authorization or his own free will. Land administration will therefore remain under the government in order to forestall the repetition of wrongs suffered by the peasant. Just as individual peasants grow perennial crops on their private plots, the trees and plants existing on or to be grown on their holdings will be owned by them. Individual peasants may employ farm labourers. Individual peasants may also transfer the ownership of their land to their legal heirs who also derive their livelihood from farming.

Land outside that set aside for forestry and grazing in each kebele Peasants' Association will be administered by the state. The state may put such land at the disposal of those who do not possess land or use it in any other way. At the kebele level, however, land put aside for forest development and grazing will be administered through Kebele Peasants' Associations.

In the agricultural sector, the other feature of private capital participation will be the appearance of private investors who will establish large modern farms. The participation of such private investors will be determined on the basis of concessional contracts given to them by the government to use land not under peasant holding .

In the trade sector of the economy, private entrepreneurs will be able to compete with state-run trade enterprises in agriculture or industrial commodities as well as in import-export trade. In the area of trade in grain products in particular, trade exchange will henceforth be conducted on the basis of free market pricing while grain control stations and the quota system will cease to exist and the Agricultural Marketing Corporation (AMC) will enter the free market and operate as a state trade organization

In the field of housing construction, individual developers may without any limitation on capital investment build, rent, sell or give in contract residential houses, production and service facilities or offices.

While the above-mentioned areas of activity are meant to clarify our future direction, private entrepreneurship will be able to participate in any other field we have not mentioned in accordance with the aforementioned procedure and without any hindrance. As has been done in the past, as private entrepreneurs create new and additional means of production they will be given the necessary encouragement and support. Starting with the initiative to promote the capital participation of private entrepreneurs, the income tax now in force has been improved in a way that will ensure balanced profit. Through this and other incentives, the productivity of private investors will be enhanced and the groundwork for the growth of government resources and the national economy will be laid.

The third partners in the mixed economy are cooperatives. While the private sector of the economy is being expanded, some may ask why this growth strategy is necessary and whether we can keep the momentum in view of our past experience. Nor are they few who may choose to project it as a model copied from the socialist countries but which has no relevance to our country. There may even be those who will describe it as a strategy devised and applied not to benefit but harm the Ethiopian people.

As is known, working through cooperatives is a long established tradition in our country, particularly in the agricultural field, practiced under the names of "Wonfel" "Debo", "Jige", "Guza" and other appellations. It is not necessary either to observe that organizations similar to today's service cooperatives and others like loans and savings associations existed in pre-revolution Ethiopia. It is to be recalled that in accordance with the proclamation on the

establishment of cooperatives issued in 1966 before the Revolution, such groupings emerged in areas where coffee, oil seeds and other cash crops were grown. Loans and savings associations were also formed in Ethiopian Airlines, Ethiopian Highway Authority, the Telecommunications Authority and other modern establishments before the Revolution.

In general, seen from the historical perspective cooperatives were first established in the capitalist system. Essentially, carrying out development work that is a burden to the individual or effect service collectively is not a typical characteristic of this or that country or of this or that order.

True, the form and organization of implementing cooperative activity can differ depending on the situation. Organization, guidance and operation as well as the system of payment vary in line with the development path followed by each country.

Cooperative work in its varied form irrespective of being in the East, West or developing countries is a sector of ownership that contributes significantly to economic activities, for example, in Britain, the United States, Sweden and in other countries, be they advanced or in a stage of development. In this respect, our country is no exception. The fact that today small producers found in handicraft, agriculture, cottage and scale industries and the like have organized themselves under cooperatives and have reached an expanded form of accumulation could by itself be considered as one alternative path for development. The organizational strategy, however, could in many ways be different from what we know today. The organization of the cooperatives will be based on the absolute democratic decision of the members. The system of exchange, however, will be of such a form as to do away with the existing lack of discipline and negligence evident in the societies today. The directives needed to organize the cooperatives in a new form would be prepared in future.

Meanwhile, appropriate support would be offered to solve the problems of the existing cooperatives, to strengthen them and to make them earn better income for their members. We would like to reaffirm that in this process if their members have no confidence in the organization of the cooperatives owing to the fact that they had not proved beneficial for them, they could abolish them in an orderly way based on their democratic decision and embark on working individually.

The foreign economic relations of the new economic policy will be based on equality and mutual benefit in its dealings with all countries and international organizations. They will thus make contribution to investment, trade credits, aid and transfer of technology. One of the major concerns in our economic relations is the flow of foreign capital into the country either privately or through joint ventures. Our current decree on joint ventures will be amended in such a way that it would allow foreign capitalists to embark on joint development ventures with Ethiopian private investors.

In general, the administration of the new economic policy will be guided by the mixed economy legislation. These laws will be guided in consonance with the present stage of the economy to accelerate the development of the productive forces properly by co-ordinating the methods of economic and administrative instruments.

It is imperative that the economic management strategy in which the types of ownership in the mixed economy contribute to economic development must be simultaneously governed by the planning and marketing laws.

It is difficult to guide the economy entirely in line with market laws in a situation where the productive forces have not developed and where the economic and social infrastructure have not expanded. By contrast, in a situation where the composition of ownership is mixed to attempt to guide the economy solely on the basis of a plan would not be successful.

Therefore, to lead the mixed economy correctly, it is self-evident that a comprehensive national plan that would reflect both the planning and market laws would be required.

The national plan will cover the main productions and service of the state sector and will set the targets for the required investment that go towards these productions and services. In this section, too, the applications of administrative and economic instruments as required would be useful for plan implementation. Attention would be paid to making competitive the economic activity of the state sector by creating management autonomy and using market laws.

Private, cooperative and other holdings will be guided under an indicative plan. By using economic methods it would be possible to monitor the distribution, exchange and consumption of production and generally the distribution and composition of investment by following closely the progress of the economy within those holdings.

I have briefly outlined above the main features of the policy of our new economic order. The content of the policy is considered to be in keeping with our present stage of development and the trend of economic progress in the world. We therefore believe that, in this regard, our new economic policy will contribute not only to the country's advancement but also to the maintenance of its unity as it embraces all sections which had previously not been fully participating in our development endeavours.

However, it is important to bear in mind that all sections that have a role in making contributions to economic progress cannot bring about much change through mere participation. The main point is the rallying of all compatriots behind the new trend and to change the country's present reality by having confidence in it and deriving a source of encouragement from it. In this direction also, there is no alternative to bracing oneself up for work with the intention of speeding up economic

growth. It is necessary to note, particularly at this crucial time when our country's unity has been placed in jeopardy, that the day-to-day activities of officials engaged in any production and service fields, as well as those private owners and workers have a direct bearing on the defence of our country's unity.

Comrades,

Today, on the eve of the 21st century, science and technology have made gigantic strides and production and economic activities have become more and more international. For this reason, international relations have expanded and changed. The belief that joining the antagonistic camps is tantamount to permitting the heightening of tension and condemning the world to total destruction has opened up possibilities more than ever before for coming together, defusing conflicts and working for the well-being of mankind. These are objectives that are being pursued on a higher scale.

We find ourselves at a time when international phenomena and changing trends are perceived in the world. These changes exert considerable influence be it for good or bad not only on inter-state relation and character but also on the direction and process of development of many countries.

Particularly in the relations of the two camps many transformations have been observed. This is because of the increasing recognition that the relation of countries should not be determined by balance of power but by a spirit of peaceful competition and mutual interest guided by a political approach that is free from the pressures of ideological differences.

Moreover, the effort made to resolve conflicts in different regions with political and peaceful means had been deserving primary attention.

The approach to international relations is being based more and more on dialogue and negotiations. Consequently, the areas of cooperation started between the two superpowers and between the socialist countries in general, in the economic,

commercial, scientific and technological fields and in tourism are showing marked development.

Although the beginning of change, its speed and the ensuing results as well as complexities may vary from one country to another, there are common trends which are more or less applicable to all.

The establishment of a free government representing the Namibian people liberated from South Africa's illegal rule, the lifting by South Africa of the ban on democratic organizations fighting for freedom, the release from prison of Nelson Mandela and other South Africans, the development of the situation which lead to negotiation and other new international trends are phenomena which have emerged from the process taking place all over the world .

Great efforts are being exerted to bring about better international relations. As a result of the change which socialist countries are undergoing, there hardly exist tension in East-West relation today. The removal of such tension has further strengthened world peace.

At a time when international relations have shown drastic change for the better, the condition for developing countries is still critical. In terms of economic development, they are in a far worse situation. The limited mutual support trend emanating from the establishment of friendship is practically phasing out. And this state of affairs is confounding constructive work through trends to cooperate with everybody in a spirit of mutual benefit is assuring greater dimensions, the place of developing countries does not seem something to relax on. Developing countries should, besides making efforts to work within the general framework of international relations, establish and consolidate their mutual cooperation.

Despite the fact that they are at low-level of economic development, it is our belief that their close cooperation can afford them political power and enable them to negotiate from

a position of strength. They should, therefore, persevere in this area of endeavour

The overall East-West relations and the relations between developing countries are presently not similar to those of the past. New vistas of relations and diplomatic conduct are widely visible. Different development strategies and trends are in the limelight. In order to have the rightful place to work for mutual benefit and cooperation and to contribute her share for guaranteeing world peace, our country must improve her policy of international relations in consonance with demands of the day.

Since we chose the socialist path of development with the support of the people, we had indicated that we would transform our country to a better stage of development in the shortest time possible with the necessary support of unity of purpose of socialist countries. However, as I have indicated earlier, socialist countries are undergoing profound changes. International relations have also shown pronounced change. Since it is impossible to continue under the former conditions, it is necessary to chart the nation's foreign relations attuned to the changing situation.

Accordingly, the Political Bureau of our Central Committee has proposed that the foreign relations policy of our country be based on the basic principles of cooperating with other nations for mutual benefit and peace, respecting the principles enshrined in the charters of the U.N. and the OAU and in general, cooperate with all democratic forces committed to peace and social development.

Comrades,

In the historic struggle waged to liberate our society from the archaic feudal system, one political task to which we gave priority was creating conditions favourable for the establishment of an organized political leadership that will unite the entire people of Ethiopia. The strategy devised in this regard

was clearly indicated when the programme of the NDR was made public in 1976. This programme made it clear in no uncertain terms that various political organizations could participate.

However, as was shown by the experience drawn in the first five to six years of our Revolution, these political organizations were involved in creating unnecessary problems instead of uniting the people and doing constructive work through democratic competition among themselves. Although there were some among these organizations which had made constructive contribution, most of them were involved in factional strife so much so that quite a lot of harm was done to society. Some of the organizations used force as a tactical means to emerge victorious and dominant over others.

It is to be recalled that at the time when our country's very existence was jeopardized by external aggressors, extremely serious problems cropped up at the war front as a result of such outgrowth of inter-organizational strife. The assassination campaign unleashed with the adventurist notion that power can be assumed through armed struggle waged in urban centres resulted in a lot of damage well known to the people.

There were numerous instances where members of the same family had joined different organizations and got involved in bloody feuds that were indeed saddening acts.

Repeated appeals were made by allies of the people to put an end to the tragic situation and the shedding of the blood of innocents so as to bring about unity and restore peace. It is evident that the establishment of the Commission for Organizing the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia, COPWE, enjoyed popular support. Tranquility was restored in the country soon after the formation of COPWE and there were those groups who took to the bush bent on bringing about the realisation of their objective through the use of force. Through the continuation of this process, the Workers' Party of

Ethiopia was established and it had been exerting ever since immense efforts to speed up national development within the limits of internal and external situation.

This was a struggle waged through popular participation with the conviction that by ensuring the equality of all, the nation can be led along the path of justice and prosperity.

As was pointed out in the earlier section of this report, we find ourselves at a unique period, when the internal situation and international development are appraised, they indicate different characteristics that require a different approach.

It is believed that internally this new approach should embrace and involve the various sectors and classes of society in an indivisible spirit of being all Ethiopians. At the international level, too, it has been accepted that it will help ensure that relationships are anchored on mutual benefit and the interests of peace.

In the context of the newly devised economic system and the theory of international relations, the WPE should change its nature and even its name. The move of this change will be towards representing all the different classes and sections of the society on the basis, in particular, of the Ethiopian people's democratic unity. This means that the Party will embrace all nationals irrespective of their class and religion, tenets, group or a follower of this or that faith — all those that are genuinely committed to Ethiopia's unity and progress will be represented in it. In regard to goals and tasks, the Party will have a framework which will coordinate a doctrine, programmes and similar other attributes while it may not be necessary that members follow identical ideology.

This Party will have a broad popular base and will be organized on the basis of the nature and content mentioned earlier to serve, above all and in the spirit of representing the whole society, the interests of our country's unity and progress,

the exercise of democratic rights by all nationals and development of their human personality.

On the basis of its aim, content and nature, the Political Bureau has proposed that the party be renamed the Democratic Unity Party of Ethiopia and that both its content and mission be submitted to the public for democratic discussion and approval.

Opposition groups accepting the democratic unity of Ethiopia can come forward for peace dialogue and on the basis of agreements reached and consequently approved by the people can participate in the political life of the country.

Dear Members of the Central Committee.

During the last years of the Revolution, beyond defending our country's unity various efforts were made to undertake numerous basic tasks in the economic, political and social fields; these are not only known but have also been reviewed earlier. I appeared before the Party and the Ethiopian people today not to say that this or that has worked but rather to submit the result of the Political Bureau's assessment of the tempo of social progress which calls for the balanced judgement of the people as to what has and has not worked and what therefore should be done.

Today the Ethiopian people are not in a servile mood as was the case during the feudal era or forced to hear what those who claim to know what is good for them say. Today is a time when they are expected to take a stand and decide on what is good and not good for them through in-depth analysis by participating in the country's affairs and exercising their rights. Today is a time when all nationals, in a new spirit and a new outlook, and proud of their nationality and benefitting themselves, are expected to discharge their responsibility to the country and to fellow countrymen.

Let us therefore, examine the issue rationally, unlike the way those with narrow ends present everything by misconstruing facts to serve their taste and objective and unlike the way our enemies who claim, and fear that Ethiopia's progress and greatness will run counter to their interests pervert the truth.

Let those groups who are responsible for bleeding Ethiopia and calling themselves "EPLF", "TPLF" or by any other names, together with certain citizens who had alienated themselves from the law for personal, transient and ephemeral reasons examine themselves deeply whether it is their real interest to see the disintegration and destruction of Ethiopia. Let them calm down and begin to think rationally.

In all certainty, Ethiopia is an ancient country and an ancient polity. Like many other countries, it acceded to its present distance by pausing through many historical vicissitudes. There is no force in Ethiopia today which has assumed supremacy by its own will or is exerting pressure on others as a foreign colonial power. We are all Ethiopians irrespective of our differences in terms of nationality, belief or other factors. Like any other people in the world who are living in peace today, we have undergone both joyous occasions and sorrows together, and ultimately reached the present period like many other peoples of the world. In the present epoch many countries and peoples are thinking far into the future. Their preoccupation is to achieve a better life. But in our case, limitless effort is being wasted in terrorism and self-destruction. The life and property that are thus being lost are deplorable, and greatly damaging. How much is the damage caused as one individual plotted against another and as compatriot conspired against compatriot in collusion with foreigners. How much sacrifices have indeed been paid as one side attacked the other and the other side defended the country and its unity.

What a pity it is to note that Ethiopia once mentioned as the sole independent country in the whole of Africa and serving as a refuge and beacon of hope for freedom fighters, today finds itself in a state where its very existence and independence are in jeopardy?

What is the sense in seeing ourselves running against each other's throat motivated by group feeling while today the civilized world is racing against time to draw benefits from space with the help of science and technology and by taking indulgence in massive co-operative ventures. Are the sabrerattling and fratricidal feuds the sort of traditions that should continue under the pretext of bringing about the victory of one ethnic group at the expense of the other?

We have a virgin country which experts have described as "the bread basket of the region" and which has been endowed with rich natural resources. How long will others continue to provide us with food supplies as we remain unextricably locked in conflict? And for how long will the name Ethiopia be synonymous with dependence and alms-seeking?

And for how long will guns and bombs be transported to undermine the country's unity, while knowledge and technology could profitably be imported from abroad for the country's development and the benefits of its people?

Should exile be the continued choice of an incalculable number of citizens because of the disturbances imposed on the peace and entity of the country?

There is no gain-saying the fact that safeguarding our territorial integrity and defending our independence have from ancient times been the hallmark of our indentity. The fact that we are dying for the entity of our country and are singing in favour of our freedom cannot be described as meaningful

unless it expresses itself in terms of the development of our country and the improvement of the life of our people. Our freedom has to be respected and we have to ameliorate our livelihood and be able to produce in a condition of peace. This is a prerequisite for enabling our children overcome a life of panic and build a better Ethiopia worthy of being handed over to the succeeding generations.

This has been precluded by the fact that the problem is not purely domestic. What were being hatched externally have been a cause for great damage and have characterized one facet of our trouble. The basic reason for this is the belief that if Ethiopians have peace they would focus on development and tap their natural resources, our detractors claim that their interests would be affected if we use our natural resources to realize our development objectives. They think we would gather strength to contest their presence in the region. Thus their outlook is grounded on the thinking that is expressed as follows: Let them be tied up in a perpetual fighting against each other and be immersed in an endless state of war so that there could be no opposing force challenging our interests.

It is not because we have adopted this or that political system that gave rise to such an outlook and precipitated the attacks that had been directed against us. It is because we aspire to build an independent, strong and respected Ethiopia.

As a matter of fact, there is not a single country in the contemporary world that attained development in conditions of total isolation and all by itself. By the same token, we are prepared to work jointly and cooperate with all those countries that stand for mutual benefit. We are willing to work together and collaborate with others for mutual advantage on the basis of international law. It is not legal and humane to aspire for exclusive peace and security while providing weapons to

mercenary elements, thereby encouraging perpetual fratricidal strife.

As there cannot exist personal relief while causing harm to others, we expect goodwill for common good of others in line with the new thinking in international relations. We wish all parties to understand and view us in this light.

As I have already tried to elaborate, development model in one country cannot be replicated in another. That is not all. The limitations in capacity or experience in the political, economic and social aspects on the part of those who serve others on one hand, and the inability of those being served not clearly understand their rights and defend their rights on the other, are also another dimension of the problem. On top of all these, we have been subjected to a lot of harm by enemy campaign that gives a distorted version of the real situation which does not allow for timely correction or rectification. Hence, the task of promoting national progress should be viewed within this overall framework.

In view of the fact that social development objectives are conceived and developed on the basis of a specific historical episode, it has become necessary to review our development strategy taking into account the changing international situation. This will be put into practice on the basis of the choice and decision of our people.

We do recognize that different quarters have different views and opinions as regards the development of our country. These views and opinions can be summed up and placed under two categories. First, there are those who hold the government responsible for their day-to-day problems and with the tendency of expecting relief to these problems solely from the government. Secondly, there are those who want "free competition" without social justice which would allow those

with wealth and know-how to pursue unlimited personal gains.

Giving the objective reality in our country, both viewpoints do not argue well for the resolution of progress and social justice. Rather than making the responsibility of the state more burdensome and allowing unbridled liberty for people to pursue individual gains at the expense of societal benefit, it has become preferable to opt for a mixed economy. The necessary efforts will be made in the spirit to improve situations and make them more favourable, as had already been elaborated. The content of our Party, its mission as well as its renaming will be decided upon by the people and its structure would also be readjusted.

On the basis of these and related measures, the political, economic and social order in our country will be reorganized in such a way as to incorporate the interests of the entire Ethiopian people. In addition, it will duly accommodate the changing situation in the international scene.

Let us all strive with renewed commitment to safeguard national unity and harmony and make our country a haven of equality and prosperity abandoning past harmful practices.

As it is only when the nation's honour and well-being are ensured that we can implement programmes based on the wishes and interest of the people, it is incumbent on each and everyone of us to contribute his or her due share in this respect.

As no part of our country can feel secure when the very existence of the nation is seriously endangered, all of us should exert utmost effort so as to do away with common problems with the far-sightedness that this demands.

Since the people themselves are the ones who hold the final decision on the nation's peace and development, it is their very decision which is the source of confidence for the realization of the will of the people. The critical situation has

challenged the stature of all of us compatriots who believe in the struggle for the popular cause. Under the circumstances to give a balanced verdict free from blind emotion and, by transcending transient difficulties, to remain firm on our stand are the challenges of the day. This will decide either the triumphant emergence or collapse of the people.

Obviously, popular objectives can only be realized when the security and well-being of the nation are ensured. Hence, I call on all citizens not to be swayed by enemy manoeuvres and would like to convey in particular and on behalf of the entire people, great admiration to the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the People's Militia who are unswervingly discharging their duty as well as to all those genuine Ethiopians who are directly or indirectly living up to their national obligations for which we feel justifiably proud.

Ethiopia Tikdem !!
THANK YOU.