

The Ethiopian American diaspora

28 October 2020

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We are dismayed by your regrettable remarks from the White House on public TV when you condemned Ethiopia for “stopping the deal”. Not only had the US administration stopped aid/ “payment” to Ethiopia, but that you also declared Egypt “will end up blowing up the dam”. You encouraged Egypt to “blow up the dam” if Ethiopia continued to resist to sign a deal of handing over the management of the Blue Nile water to Egypt.

We are completely appalled and offended to hear you promote blowing up the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) to satisfy Egypt’s illegitimate entitlement handed to it during the colonial era. Your administration utterly disregarded international norms of engagement and chose to discount the longstanding alliance between the US and Ethiopia. Your son-in-law who stood behind you as you spoke is the main architect of the most arrogant and reckless’ transactions’ Africa has witnessed in modern history. Egypt was lobbied to hand over the Arab nations’ support of Israel’s annexation of the West bank for rights to Blue Nile Waters. This quid pro quo was facilitated and eventually almost signed by the novice leader of Ethiopia, Dr. Abiy Ahmed who very suspiciously seemed to enjoy announcing irrational deals without the Ethiopian peoples’ approval or support. This deal fell apart after Ethiopians globally rose in unison demanding his retraction or face what would have been inevitable civil unrest and possibly war.

Mr. President, a deal conducted in the shadows without the support of the people or their representatives and concluded through mysterious transactions at breakneck speed conducted in the shadows with zero transparency can only be seen one way. This was good for Jared Kushner, Benjamin Netanyahu, Il Sissi, Dr Abiy Ahmed, and yourself but not for the Ethiopian people. There is no stronger cause than breach or the threat of Ethiopian sovereignty to unite Ethiopians to fight and resist foreign aggression. It’s not coincidental that Ethiopia remained uncolonized for centuries other than the peoples willingness to die in order to defend its freedoms.” Ethiopia shall never want what does not belong to it rightfully nor surrender what is its own”.

Ethiopians of all walks of life value the Great Renaissance Dam as uniquely their own because it was built with their own money and labor. Families sold whatever possessions they had to contribute to the construction of the dam. It was built with their money, on their land, using Ethiopian engineers on the

great Abay River before it crosses into Sudan. This transformational project will Ethiopia and her neighboring countries with the energy needed to power cities, towns, and villages as they advance with more autonomy into greater development. The ill-advised threat of blowing up the

GERD is tantamount to blowing up Ethiopia, which will undoubtedly defend itself as any sovereign nation would.

We will, otherwise, defer to qualified military leaders, economists, politicians, statesmen and global leaders to figure out the consequences of a war of this magnitude in one of the most volatile regions in the world.

Ethiopians have no intention to hurt their Sudanese and Egyptian sisters and brethren; Ethiopians subscribe to rational equitable distribution of the Nile waters. The two oldest African civilizations should rise above mutually destructive confrontations by engaging in hyperbolic grievances to score temporary victories. Instead, they must resolve to optimally manage the waters of the Nile for the benefit of all Africans along the course of the river from Lake Victoria to Alexandria. Therefore, Egypt and Ethiopia should be encouraged to engage in honorable high-level diplomacy and conflict resolution with honest and neutral brokers as mediators, including the Africa Union and European Union.

May God bless and lend strength to the families and friends whose lives were cut short by Covid-19.

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cc:

- Secretary Steven Mnuchin Secretary of Treasury
- Mr. Jared Kushner Senior Advisor to the President
- Honorable Elliot Engle, US Representative, New York
- Honorable Karen Bass, US Representative, California
- Honorable Ilhan Omar, US Representative, Minnesota,
- Honorable Ted Lou, US Representative, California
- Honorable Abigail Spanberger, US Representative, Virginia
- Honorable Dean Philips, US Representative, Minnesota
- Honorable Juaquin Castro, US Representative, Texas
- Honorable Adam Smith, US Representative, Washington
- Honorable Bob Menendez, US Senator, New Jersey
- Honorable Tim Kane, US Senator, Virginia,
- Honorable Cory Booker, US Senator. New Jersey
- Honorable Jeff Merkley, US Senator, Oregon
- Honorable Chris Murphy, US Senator, Connecticut
- Honorable Mitt Romney, US Senator, Utah
- Honorable Chuck Schumer, US Senator, New York
- Honorable Patty Murray, US Senator, Washington