

HORN OF AFRICA YOUTH HELD DEBATE

....on current realities in the region..... London



Youth from Horn of Africa residing in London held a wide ranging debate on subjects relating to current realities and long term vision of the Horn of Africa region. The debate and discussion that was sponsored by West Side Radio 89.6 FM and was held in West London during the New Year period ensured the participation of youth from Somalia, Ogadien, Eritrea, and Oromo region who reside in England. Also, the Raad Television studio was present to record the debate.



The discussion was hosted by the presenter of West Side Radio 89.6 FM Mr. Abdi Chukri together with the Horn of Africa Youth initiatives (HAYI) who have been working together to address important issues that affect the horn of Africa region collectively. The HAYI group have been working for the last few years to address the peace and stability of the Horn of Africa by organising seminars, demonstrations and lobbying the British government and Media and other relevant institutions.



Recently the Horn of Africa Youth initiative have met the British Foreign Office representative and held talks with regards the worsening developments in Somalia, the plight of the Ogadien and Oromo people and the ongoing illegal occupation of Eritreans land by the Ethiopian government (Woyane regime).

The debate that was held in Hanwell, west London was led by panellists which represented the members of the Horn of Africa Youth initiative. The issues that were addressed in the debate were the following:

1. The assessment of the different parts of Horn of Africa at this moment? What are the negatives and positives?
2. What are the main obstacles that are preventing the horn of Africa from having peace, stability and development?
3. Is there terrorism in the horn of Africa? Is the policy of war against terrorism by US in the Horn of Africa a valid action?
4. A lot of AID has been flowing towards the Horn of Africa especially towards Ethiopia. Has this Aid helped the people of the Horn? What are the impacts?
5. What are the relations between the countries and the people of the horn of Africa?

Why is there suffering, conflict and the region is always volatile? What is the role of IGGAD?

6. How do we describe the Western policy and UN towards the horn of Africa? Does it promote justice, democracy and development in reality?
7. The Media plays a very important role in shaping the lives of the Horn of Africa? How does the Media in general represent the Horn of Africa?
8. Leadership is always important and even more important in the Horn of Africa. Do we think the leaders in the Horn of Africa represent the interest of the people of the Horn?
9. Is there a role for the youth to play in the future of the Horn of Africa?
10. What has the youth of the Horn of Africa done to shape the future of the region? Is there any action that has been taken so far?



The discussion started by looking briefly at the situation in Somalia, Oromo, Ogaden and Eritrea and assessing the events and conditions that lead to the current reality of the Horn of Africa. The illegal invasion of the state of Somalia, the brutal decimation of the Ogaden population and the oppression of the Oromo people under the minority Ethiopian regime and the war waged against Eritrea under the pretences of border conflict was highlighted as the intolerable conditions the people of Horn of Africa find themselves under. All this

terrible circumstances were instigated by the minority Government who is currently holding power in Ethiopia and the unrestricted support it receives from Western governments and donors.

Therefore, the main obstacles that are preventing the Horn of Africa from developing and achieving stability in our region can be traced on the western policies and the agents of the west who are implementing the interest of the west in our region. The original territorial issue of colonial border decisions has also started unnecessary and disastrous conflicts that went on for decades in the Horn of Africa. Poverty in the horn of Africa is also forcing the population of the region to take short term actions, and therefore we need to address the causes of poverty and help the people to help themselves.



The subject of Terrorism in the horn of Africa was also discussed thoroughly. The action that is taken by US in the horn of Africa is conducted under the 'war in terrorism' pretext. The US has been providing support to the Ethiopian government to invade Somalia only because it thinks Somalia is run by Islamic Court hence terrorists. This is simply wrong and the only body that is terrorising the population in the region is the Ethiopian regime. The regime that is con-

ducting a wanton rape, mass arrest, using starvation as a tool to subjugate the people in the Horn of Africa.

The US has lost the war in terror in the horn of Africa. They have completely lost the hearts and minds of the people. If fighting for the rights of the people is going to label you as terrorists, then the whole of Somali people will be termed as terrorists. The whole of Ogadieni people will be called as terrorists and so on. The US has chosen the



wrong strategy to fight against terrorism and it has created more chaos by using Woyane to wage wars that only protects the interest of the Woyane regime.

In the subject of Aid towards the Horn of Africa, it was agreed that the billions of dollars that is given to Ethiopian government has not shown any marked development to the citizens of Ethiopia. Unfortunately, Ethiopia and the rest of Africa have become addicted and highly dependent to Aid and

would not be able to survive without Aid donated by the western world; what's even worse is most of the institutions that are responsible to develop the nations are substituted by western based NGOs and would not give opportunity for the citizens to be the owners of development of their nations.

Currently, talking about development in Ethiopia can only be a wrong understanding of the situation in the country. It is impossible to talk about development while there are millions of people who are dying of starvation in Ethiopia. If the resources of Ethiopia was managed properly, the Oromia region can be able to meet the majority food need of the Horn of Africa, however due to lack of management Ethiopia finds itself unable to feed its citizens to this day, while it has been waging adventurous wars all over the region and spending hundreds of millions in weapons and military armaments.



Other topics such as the role of western policy, the role of Media and its portrayal of the issues in the Horn of Africa and regional bodies such as IGGAD were also discussed in the debate. The full content of the debate will be made available in video soon.



Finally, the role of the youth and their responsibility in shaping the future of the Horn of Africa were discussed. The youth has to create awareness of the main issues and be able to organise themselves to tackle the issues which are preventing us from moving forward.

After the debate was finished, top singers from the Horn of Africa provided music and entertainment and gave us the opportunity to share our culture and gap the bridges amongst our people.

Peace and Stability for the Horn of Africa!

Horn of Africa Youth Initiative

The event in pictures.....

