

Melbourne Rally 2012: For How Long Can You Remain Silent in the Face of Oppression?

For the last 10 years, we have been rallying peacefully against PFDJ-sponsored 'so-called' cultural festival in Australia, demanding the transfer of power to the people; respecting for human rights; end to oppression and extra-judicial killings; end to confiscation of people's land; the prevailing of the rule of law; citizens' rights to education, proper health services, employment and other rights that a decent and good government provides to its people. Our cries for justice have been ignored; our demands for the rule of law have not been met. In fact, the political, economic and social circumstances have been worsened because of the irresponsible acts and failed policies of the Eritrean regime. **So, why should we stop raising our voices on behalf of the voiceless and oppressed people in Eritrea?**

As in previous years, we call on the Diaspora communities living in the free world that have chosen to be silent in the face of oppression and the ever growing injustice committed against the Eritrean people to fight for the people's rights. We remind you that you are morally obliged and duty bound to speak for the Eritrean people and to stand-up against injustice. We remind you the freedom that you enjoy are the outcomes of sacrifices paid by people who believed in liberty, freedom, justice and democracy. **So, why don't you demand for the Eritrean people the same civil rights that you are relishing? We encourage you to be part of the struggle for democratic change?**

Although you are aware of the dire situation in Eritrea, we remind you of the following:

- Our youth have been denied the right to proper education and are forced to serve in the military for indefinite period; they have wasted their youth, future and valuable time in trenches
- Our elderly have been arrested, fined a sum of money well beyond their financial capacity and humiliated being accused of assisting their children to flee Eritrea.
- Our religion leaders and teachers arrested without any charges and fair trial; Many of them disappeared and their whereabouts are unknown to-date.
- Our politicians have been incarcerating for demanding the implementation of the constitution.
- Our people's land have been confiscated
- Our farmers have been ordered not to sell their produce and to hand part of their produce to the Eritrean regime
- PFDJ refused to accept any form of humanitarian aid while the Eritrean people are in desperate need of assistance

These are some examples (the tip of the ice berg) of the sad situation in our home country. If these atrocities and irresponsible acts by the Eritrean regime don't move your conscience, what else? If the drowning of Eritrean youth, women and children in high seas doesn't move your conscience, what else? If human trafficking and the slaughtering of Eritreans for their organs don't move your conscience, what else? Finally, If the people's uprising that toppled dictatorial regimes in North Africa doesn't empower and inspire you to fight for justice and democracy, what else?

Enough is enough, fight for the people's rights.

Melbourne Rally Organising Committee
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