

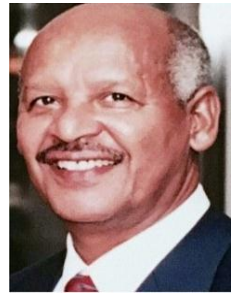
A tribute to the great Eritrean leader Dr. Habte Tesfamariam.

By: Ali Omer Ore

With the passing of Dr. Habte Tesfamariam, the Eritrean people as a whole have painfully lost one of the towering legends of Eritrean revolution for independence.

Dr. Habte, popularly known as A conscience in dual reference to him being a doctor and the conscience of the Eritrean movements, by and large and is unmatched in Eritrean history. He is the quintessential intersection of Eritrean democratic nationalism, and egalitarianism.

Yet, even such monumental attributes are but a small part of Dr. Habte's legacy. It is his unparalleled principled character, humility, love for his comrades and people and unblemished history that coin him as the archetypal revolutionary leader. From the day he became an activist in 1975, to founding the Eritrean Student Union Movement and subsequently the Eritrean Liberation Front, to emerging as one of the most beloved Eritrean revolutionaries in the eighties, to his final departure on 13 Jan 2017 in Bonn, Germany, at the age 74-years journey is that of Eritrea itself.



While many barter for mere crumbs the entirety of their once-existing principles, Dr. Habte gave up none not an ounce.

Dr. Habte transcended all organizations, political parties, nation-states and borders. He spoke loudly for justice, fought for unity and reconciliation. He was Eritrean in heart, From Adikhuala in blood and egalitarian in his principles. He leaves a legacy of nationalism situating the Eritrean struggle within an anti-dictatorship struggle that transcends the borders of Eritrea.

Dr. Habte shunned chauvinists and embraced democratic nationalists who valued unity and home-grown cooperative. He rejected the blind mechanical importation of political ideology, and argued that it must evolve from our particular Eritrean conditions. He understood the nature of dictator as an agent of regional dominance while also recognizing that it is served by functionaries and servants from within the Eritrean ranks.

He was an ardent advocate of the inseparable duality between national liberation and social equality. He remained true to his belief, never oscillating from one political camp to the next in search of a seat of power. Dr. Habte lived and died never distinguishing along religious lines. He was deeply entrenched in the cumulative totality of our Eritrean history from Ras Quasar to RhaHyiata.

Ironically, the passing of this exemplary unifying legend comes at a time when our people in Eritrea are tearing down shot to kill fences to join hands with the opposition or escape the slavery camp of HGDF.

How sad it is to lose Dr.Habte Tesfamariam at a time when true leadership is scarce and despots are many. How painful it is to lose such a visionary at a time when our people appear to be led by local agents of Empire.

How devastating it is to lose an icon of integrity and unity, when Eritrean pride is trampled every day, particularly by its presumed custodians. And how untimely his loss is when the need to enhance and rehabilitate the Eritrean National democratic Council, a unifying alternative umbrella is an existential necessity in today's challenging redress of grievances among patriots, with the loss of this patriot from, we are all painfully so much less, yet due to his life and legacy we are all so much more.

Dr. Habte Tesfamariam was a born leader, the respect of whom was inevitable and willingly accepted by the people around him without demand on his part generations of young and old Eritrean in complete devotion and dedication to the regional cause in general and the Eritrean one in particular, which is in its core, Habte (doctor and wise man) Dr. Habte, made irreplaceable and unforgettable favours to all those who accompanied and worked with the beginning of the Eritrean Student Union and Eritrean Liberation Front on the road to Eritrean independence that is ours in the past, present and Eritrean democratic state in the future. Dr. Habte, exhausted his youth and up till the last breath of his life in the struggle for the Eritrean cause.

He deserves all the gratitude, respect and admiration by all his people, "All men must die, but death can vary in its significance. The ancient Chinese writer Szuma Chien said: 'Though death befalls all men alike, it may be weightier than Mount Tai or lighter than a feather. "To die for the people is weightier than Mount Tai, but to work for the dictator and die for the oppressors is lighter than a feather."

Today, heavy responsibility lands on the shoulder of his very organisation ENSF to follow his vision and the vision of his heroic predecessors, the heroic Eritrean people to continuing to resist, the dictator by all available means necessary. Dr. Habte, one of the greatest leaders of the Eritrean people, and, more importantly, to celebrate his glorious life and give real political vitality and clarity to the essential work he endeavored to building solidarity with all revolutionary movements was a point in case.

Dr. Habte Tesfamariam who has passed away at the age of 74, gave more than six decades of his life to the revolution. He was born into a prosperous Christian Orthodox family in Eritrea, city of Adi-Khuala.

Eritrean National Salvation Front Salutes all the revolutionary comrades and we pledge to continue on the revolution until we achieve the democratic goals of our people for justice and democracy.

May his soul rest on Eternal peace, glory to all our martyrs and victory to our people.