

# **I - AN UPDATE - ON THE MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS IN THE CITY OF GONDAR**

**By**

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**SHINE, December 4, 1993 - Amsterdam (Holland)**

*It is to be remembered that scores of innocent church-goers who were on penance and prayer at Adebabay Eyesus church in Gondar were massacred in cold blood by the Tigrean army of the EPRDF<sup>1</sup>. It was then reported that 65 people were killed and around 300 wounded. The Tigrean minority government has tried to water down or downplay the scale of the massacre and has even tried to mislead the world community regarding the massacre of Amharic speaking Christians in the historic Ethiopian city of Gondar. The unscrupulous Tigrean government, its diplomatic representatives abroad along with expatriate ball-pen mercenaries on their pay-roll; who are adept at fabricating lies and distorting facts have unabashedly tried to blame the massacre of innocent Christians on one of the very victims (i.e. Aba Ameha Eyesus<sup>2</sup>) of this repressive and*

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<sup>1</sup> - See SHINE's press release entitled MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS IN THE HISTORIC CITY OF GONDAR, SEPTEMBER 20, 1993. In this paper I have used the terms TPLF and EPRDF interchangeably. Although the term EPRDF tries to project an image of a multi-ethnic coalition, basically it is a mask or front meant to cover up the incontrovertible supremacy of the Tigrean minority regime which pulls all political strings from behind.

<sup>2</sup> - We have herewith attached a one-and-half page-long statement entitled "THE CASE OF AMHA-EYESUS AND THE GONDAR INCIDENT OF SEPTEMBER 6, 1993" issued by diplomatic missions of the TPLF regime based in Europe. The

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paper bears the hand-written name of the Ethiopian ambassador in Belgium and Benelux Dr. Peter Gabriel Roble. In a characteristic TPLF style of deception and lies, the statement of the Ethiopian embassy, tries to accuse Aba (father) Ameha Eyesus - the famous and beloved Ethiopian preacher now under arrest, of:

a - having allegedly said that all other religions except the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) religion should be prohibited in Ethiopia.

b - having allegedly incited EOC believers to declare war on followers of other religions in Ethiopia.

c - having allegedly condemned to death (by burning) those EOC believers who befriend Moslems, Catholics and Protestants.

d - having allegedly warned EOC followers that neighboring Arab countries are going to invade Ethiopia. Of course all these allegations are false charges which say more about the frame of mind of the leaders of the Tigrean minority government and their diplomats who can even go to such despicable length in order to create animosity between various religious denominations, knowing all too well what the grave ramifications of such incitements can mean. Far from inciting war between religions, Abba Ameha Eyesus has been teaching the unity of Ethiopians and their indivisibility and was a highly regarded religious figure not only among EOC followers but also among followers of other religions in Ethiopia (Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, etc). Asked if they have experienced any problem since Abba Ameha Eyesus began to preach in Gondar, two Muslim leaders of the Gondar region (Hajji Mohammed Yassin and Hajji Mohammed Seyid) have, in an interview with a respectable monthly newsmagazine - Ye Afrika Qend - told the reporter of this magazine that:

**"We have lived in this country for ages. Moslems and Christians have lived together in unity and have been supporting each other. Our closeness is such that Christians have been building our mosques and we Muslims have been building their churches. We love one another (Christians and Muslims) and no problems have arisen between us (Muslims and Christians)".** For a detailed account on this interview we refer the reader to the **Afrika Qend** Issue of October 1993, Volume I, Number 12.

*reprehensible act. To give the reader the benefit of passing his/her own independent verdict on the real culprits of the massacre, we have tried to present both versions of the story regarding the reprehensible massacre of innocent civilian church-goers in Gondar city on September 5, 1993. Our presentation here is based on reports compiled by various sources - i.e. opposition political organizations, independent Ethiopian newsmagazines, statements of international human rights organizations like **Amnesty International (AI)**, Ethiopian government statements and communiqués of international religious institutions like the **International Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity (IISIC)**. As more information regarding this barbaric genocide of innocent church-goers has been coming in, we have decided to reach readers (foreigners and Ethiopians alike) with the updated incoming information that we have received from reliable Ethiopian and expatriate sources<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> - The information included in this paper is based on reports by the following sources.

1- Press Release of the International Institute for the Study of Christianity and Islam (IISCI), London - September 9, 1993.

2- Press Release of the All Amhara People's Organization (AAPO) - September 30, 1993.

3- Press Releases of the KEFAGN Patriotic Front - September 6, 1993.

4-Press Release of the Gondar Development and Cooperation Organization (GDGO) - September 9, 1993.

5- Military Communiqué of KEFAGN Patriotic Front - October 30, 1993.

6- **TOBYA** Monthly Newsmagazine, Volume II, No 6 - September 1993

7- **ALEF** Monthly Newsmagazine, Volume III, No 1 - 1993

*by producing this English document which is meant to reach the international community. To clarify the background, we found it convenient to present chronologically the chain of events leading up to the massacre at Gondar that transpired on September 5, 1993. The numbering of the sub-titles in chronological order is meant to present the concatenation of events that revolve around this gruesome massacre directed against innocent Orthodox Christians that were on penance on the eve of a very important Ethiopian new year celebration.*

### ***I - Church and State under the Tigrean Regime***

*- October 1992 - the EPRDF government in utter, if contemptuous, violation of the autonomy of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC), superimposed a rival ecclesiastical body called - **Ye Kahnat Mahber** - on the already existing Gondar region branch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC).*

*- The legally established EOC of Gondar region rejects this government interference in the affairs of the church. Thus begins the conflict between the people of Gondar and the present government.*

### ***II - Appointment of a New Ethiopian Patriarch***

*- The government, in contravention of the rules and canons of the EOC<sup>4</sup>, dismissed the legally elected patriarch of the EOC,*

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8- **MUDAY** Monthly Newsmagazine, Volume II, No 13 - September 1993

9- **YE AFRIKA QEND** Newsmagazine, Volume I, No 12 - October 1993

10- ETHIOPIA : Concern About shootings of Demonstrators and the Arrests, Amnesty International - October 6, 1993

<sup>4</sup> - For a detailed account of the unlawful, if uncannical coup d'état in the

***His Holiness Aba Merkorios*** and replaced him by its own appointee - Abun Paulos a controversial figure known for his support of EPRDF's ethnic politics.

- The illegally appointed patriarch introduces ethnic division within the EOC and Ethiopian Orthodox Christians refuse to recognize his authority. We have herewith attached a table containing the list of names (see pages 9 & 10) of this paper) relating to ethnic cleansing of non-Tigreans, particularly Amharas from the EOC hierarchy. Since EPRDF's assumption of power and the uncannical ensconcing of patriarch Paulos, the EOC has been forced to experience the unsavory taste of a hitherto unknown ethnic politics.

### ***III - Persecution and Banning of Preachers***

- The new government-appointed EOC leadership and patriarch ban popular EOC preachers from preaching in any Ethiopian Orthodox Church premises. Popular preachers become victims of state persecution.

- Popular EOC preachers like Aba (father) Ameha Eyesus, Aba Gebre Meskel and Aleka Ayalew Tamiru, etc, are subjected to persecution and intimidation. However, these preachers continue to:

- warn against the dangers of the rising wave of Islamic fundamentalism in Ethiopia.

- denounce the flirtation of the current Ethiopian government

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EOC, we refer the interested reader to an article entitled "**HOLY SYNOD or DEN OF GANGSTERS?** By Aba Melkesedek, bishop of Ethiopian Orthodox Church - Ethiopian Review July 1992.

*with the fundamentalist regimes of Iran and Sudan<sup>5</sup>.*

*- denounce the ethnic-cleansing of Amharas, Christians and Amharic speaking Ethiopians by forces organized and armed by the current EPRDF government and its Eritrean counterpart - the EPLF.*

*- denounce the massacre of priests and Christians; desecration and burning of churches and monasteries like the Asebot monastery (south eastern Ethiopia as a result of which 16 Ethiopian Orthodox Church monks were killed by Islamic fundamentalist forces led by Jarra Abba Gada whose real name is) by forces armed and organized by the current government. {According to a recent press release of the All Amhara People's*

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<sup>5</sup> - Sudan, which is today serving as the spring-board of Islamic fundamentalism in the Horn of Africa and beyond, is one of the poorest nations on earth that has not even been able to feed her population. However, during the last two years it has opened consulates in the various major towns and cities of Ethiopia. Apart from the Sudanese Embassy based in the Ethiopian capital Addis Abeba, today the Islamic fundamentalist government of Sudan has opened consulates in the following major towns and cities of Ethiopia such as 1)- Borana (southern Ethiopia); 2)- Jimma (south western Ethiopia); 3)- Harrar (south eastern Ethiopia) ; 4)- Dire Dawa (south eastern Ethiopia). The preparations for the opening of similar Sudanese consulates in the cities of 5)- Gondar (north western Ethiopia) ; 6)- Dessie (north eastern Ethiopia) ; Nazareth (central Ethiopia) ; 8)- Awassa and 9)- Shashemene (both cities in southern Ethiopia) is being finalized. By the way Islamic fundamentalism of the Wahhabist version that is financed by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries is allowed to flourish only in areas south of Eritrea and Tigray - the ethnic home areas of the two governments that are in power in Eritrea and Ethiopia respectively. While Eritrea and Tigray today enjoy peace, reconstruction and development; 50 million non-Tigringa speakers are suffering from destabilization and dislocation deliberately engineered by ethnic politics and Islamic fundamentalists armed and organized by the EPLF and TPLF governments.

Organization (AAPO) <sup>6</sup>, in the last two and half years of EPRDF's rule, 20 churches have been burnt down, 150 (hundred fifty) Ethiopian Orthodox Churches damaged and ceased their service, 2800 (two thousand eight hundred Christians massacred, 70000 (seventy thousands) of people have become homeless and hundreds of thousands of people displaced and destabilized as a result of the ethnic and religious conflicts engineered by the transitional government against Amharas and Amharic speaking non-Tigrean Christians}. The current EOC leadership has failed millions of EOC followers by acquiescing to EPRDF's onslaught against Amharic speaking followers of the EOC.

- criticize the EOC leadership for failing to voice its opposition to the massacre of Christians burning and desecration of churches; pillage and destruction of cultural, religious and historical relics belonging to the EOC.

#### **IV - Persecution of the Mahbere Tsion Christian Youth Association of Gondar City**

- The Mahbere Tsion Christian Youth Association came into existence in 1992 in the city of Gondar.

- The association was meant to give spiritual guidance, sense of purpose and direction in life to young people who have been subjected to 17 years of Marxist-Leninist indoctrination and disillusionment.

- The spiritual teachings of the famous preacher of the EOC- Aba Ameha Eyesus attracted many young people who, by virtue of

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<sup>6</sup> - See AAPO's recent Press Release entitled "YOUR WORDS NOW REFLECT YOUR FATE. THEN EITHER YOU WILL BE JUSTIFIED BY THEM OR YOU WILL BE CONDEMNED" Mathew Chapter XII, Verse 37.

*his teachings, have been enabled to extricate themselves from their dependence on alcohol, cigarette and Khat (an amphetamine-related addictive substance).*

*- The huge following which the association enjoyed among the youth, alarms the minority, rather paranoid, Tigrean regime.*

*- The Tigrean regime and the new EOC label the association as a political organization and began their witch-hunt campaign against the youth and Aba Ameha Eyesus - the popular preacher.*

*- Parents and the people of Gondar reject the allegations of the government and stand by the side of Aba Ameha Eyesus.*

### ***V - Prelude to the Massacre of Christians in Gondar City***

*- Having labeled the Mahbere Tsion Youth Association as a political organization, the government begins its persecution of Aba Amha Eyesus and his followers.*

*- On September 2, 1993, the people of Gondar city were on penance and prayer.*

*- The mayor of Gondar accompanied by two Land Rovers stacked with police came to Adebabay Eyesus church to abduct Aba Amha Eyesus without any due process of law.*

*- The people refused to hand over Aba Ameha Eyesus and defended him.*

*- The mayor alleged that Aba Amha Eyesus was instigating war. The congregated people at the church demanded from the mayor evidence which can substantiate his wild allegations. The mayor could not produce any evidence. Having been bluffed and*



*rebuffed by the people, the mayor and the police returned to their office.*

## ***VI - An Assassination Attempt on the Lives of Two Preachers***

*- On September 3, 1993 - the people of Gondar were once again on penance and prayer. Aba Ameha Eyesus was giving his famous sermon on this day.*

*- One individual from among the ranks of the congregated people was seen trying to assassinate Aba Ameha Eyesus. He was timely overpowered and the assassination attempt on Abba Ameha Eyesus foiled. The alleged assassin was handed over to the 2nd police station of Gondar city.*

*- On September 4, 1993 - the people of Gondar were once again on penance and prayer. On this day the preacher was Aba Tsige - a monk of the Medhane Alem Church of Gondar city.*

*- An assassination attempt was made on this spiritual father by someone from among the congregated crowd. The man was caught while trying to throw a grenade bomb at the monk. He was photographed and later handed over to the 2nd police station. His identity card identified him a member of the current government (TPLF) army. As this last evidence suggests, on both occasions, the government was undoubtedly behind both assassination attempts against the two Ethiopian clergymen.*

## ***VII - The September 5, 1993 Massacre of People in Gondar City***

*- On September 5, 1993 the population of Gondar city was once again on penance and prayer at the Adebay Eyesus church. However, on this day a tense atmosphere was evident in the city*

of Gondar.

- Elite commandos of the government army, known as the Dedebit unit based in Bahr Dar city, had arrived at Azezo town near Gondar. From there, they moved into Gondar city.

- By 12 o'clock, the city of Gondar was awash with troops of the Dedebit unit.

- By 2 o'clock in the afternoon, the Tigrean elite troops of the Dedebit unit forced their way into the Adebay Eyesus church by violating the sanctity of the church<sup>7</sup>.

- Two deacons tried to prevent the troops from entering and violating the holy premise of the church. However the two deacons were shot dead by units led by a certain captain Girma. The two deacons instantly fell to the ground and died.

- As the shooting continued, the congregated Christians began to disperse crying and yelling. The shooting lasted from 2 o'clock to 4 o'clock.

- By 4:30, the church yard of Adebabay Eyesus church was littered with dead bodies and wounded people.

### **VIII - In the Aftermath of the Massacre**

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<sup>7</sup> - According to the Ethiopian culture, the sanctity of a church yard cannot be violated. Traditionally, even when someone has committed an act of crime, he seeks refuge in a church yard by ringing a church bell. Once in a church yard, he/she is not persecuted as long as he/she is in a church yard as no earthly power can violate the sanctity of the church by going into the church yard to abduct the alleged criminal forcefully. Today, we have a government, which has the audacity and effrontery to even perpetrate bloody massacres against innocent church-goers bent on prayers and penance.

- Following the massacre of many people, a house to house search was conducted by the Tigrean elite troops and the police. According to a police man who did not want to be identified, 2300 people were imprisoned.
- Reports say that the government was still hunting down another 5400 people.
- Due to the massive incarceration of the clergy of Gondar city, many churches were temporarily closed and ceased their church services.
- Churches like **a) Abune Ze Gabriel; b) Atatami Mikael; c) Tekle Haymanot churches** were closed for more than a week since the clergy serving in these churches have been imprisoned.
- Following the massacre, thousands of inhabitants of Gondar city have fled to the countryside for fear of being persecuted or killed.

### **IX - Who Are the Culprits of the Gondar Massacre**

- The massacre of Amharic speaking Christians in the city of Gondar is not something that took place accidentally. It is a well-prepared, premeditated act of vengeance master-minded and carefully planned by the Tigrean minority regime of the EPRDF. - The local authorities who are responsible for the massacre and repression that took place on September 5, 1993 are as follows:

1) - **Mr. Tessema Gebre Hiywet** - police commissioner of Gondar region. He is a Tigrean who grew up in the city of Gondar. It was under his command that the massacre took place.

2) - **Mr. Debalke Chekol** - mayor of Gondar city.

3) - **Mr. Tsega Adgo Aychew** - regional administrator of Gondar.

- Sadly, far from condemning the massacre of Amharic speaking Christians in Gondar, the present ethnic-based EOC leadership and the incumbent EOC patriarch Paulos have rather chose to condemn the very victims of this massacre. This is unprecedented in the history of the EOC when compared to the gallantry and courage of such EOC leaders like Abuna Petros - the legendary Ethiopian bishop who chose to defy the authority of Italian fascist occupation forces and was brutally murdered thereby becoming the symbol of Ethiopian patriotic resistance and defiance against fascist Italy.

### **XI - Number of Casualties - Dead and Wounded**

- As not all of the wounded were able to seek help from hospital (for fear of reprisal or abduction by the government forces), to date the exact number of dead and wounded has not been exactly ascertained.

- It is also possible that of the wounded, some may have died in their homes. So far the death of 36 people has been ascertained. In what follows we try to present you with the list of those killed, wounded and imprisoned.

### **XII A - List of People Killed by the EPRDF Army**

1- **Aba Kinfu Michael Werku** - monk of Atatami Mikael Church of Gondar. (This brave monk and martyr, walked towards the troops when the shooting began asking the troops not to shoot at the congregated Christian people of Gondar city. But he was

*savagely shot dead by the Tigrean troops.*

*2- Meri Geta Tsigie Menberu - a clergy of Beata church in Gondar city.*

*3- Tsega Ze Ab - deacon of Saint Gabriel Church of Gondar*

*4- Tsegaw Menberu - a deacon of Bata Church of Gondar*

*5- Gebre Amlak Gebeyaw - a deacon of Saint Gabriel Church*

*6- Mr. Bazezew Maleda -*

*7- Mr. Abebe Berhanu -*

*8- Mrs. Asmaru Fente - (a highschool student of Gondar city)*

*9- Mr Yemane Berhan -*

*10-Mr. Kifle Haile Mariam -*

*11-Mr. Molla Muchie -*

*12-Mr. Yaltaye Muuk Negash -*

*13-Mr. Negash Mihrete - a business man in Gondar city*

*14-Mr. Zera Beroek -*

*15-Mr. Fekadu Assefa -*

*16-Mr. Wendimu Getinet*

*17-Mr. Einyew Werke -*

*18-Mr. Wossen Seged Mersha -*

19-Mr. Widu Mersha Kelkay -

20-Mr. Yewend Wossen Mersha - student

21-an unidentified person (name and address of this person has not been identified. He is believed to be some one from the countryside around Gondar city. As neither his relatives could be traced nor his whereabouts known, this person was buried in the city of Gondar 5 days after his death.

**XII B - List of the Wounded People who are now Hospitalized is as follows:**

1- Mr. Mulu Alem Alamrew - a young person

2- Mr. Semere Tesfahun - deacon

3- Mr. Teshome Engidaw - (a young Muslim)

**XII C- Prominent Church Preachers in Detention**

**1 - Abba Ameha Eyesus - currently held in custody in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia**

**2 - Abba (father) Gebre Meskel - currently held in custody in Addis Abeba - along with 17 of his dependants and close associates <sup>8</sup>. (See also persons mentioned under heading D (#10 & 11).**

**XII D - Prominent People of Gondar City Under Custody**

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<sup>8</sup> - For a detailed story of the arrest of Aba Gebremeskel and 17 of his dependants, we refer the interested reader to the September 16, 1993 issue of Addis Tribune - an English language Ethiopian newspaper.

## ***following the Massacre***

*1 -Mr Bayuh Bezabeh - President of the Higher Court of Justice of Gondar*

*2- Mr. Mandefro Tsehay - Judge of the Higher Court of Justice of Gondar region*

*3- Mr. Teferi Negussie - pensioner*

*4- Mr. Tesf Alem Werku - pensioner*

*5- Mr Haile Yesus Bituel - pensioner*

*6- Mr. Asmamaw Asres - school teacher*

*7- Mr. Beyene Mekuanent - school teacher*

*8- Mr. Endale Getaneh - a school director*

*9- Mr. Birle Getaw - a school teacher*

*10- Aba (father) Melake Mehret Mulu Shita - aide of the patriarch of Gondar*

*11- Aba (father) Tsige Wolde Yohannes - priest of Medhane Alem Church of Gondar*

*12- Mr. Birku Abebe - business man*

*13- Mr. Abebe Lakew - civil servant*

*14- Mr. Azanew Aklilu - civil servant*

*15- Mr. Bego Ayehu Eshetu - pensioner*

16- Mr. Muluken Melesse - school teacher

*With this, we appeal to the world community to denounce this barbaric regime and urge western governments like the governments of Holland, USA, and Scandinavia, Germany, Britain, etc to withdraw their support to it. The blind, if misguided, support they give to this barbaric regime, is entrenching, buttressing and propping up a budding ethnic dictatorship which perpetrates this kind of massacre against innocent civilians mentioned in this report. Equally, we deeply resent the supine acquiescence of the western media moguls which have generally continued to maintain a diplomatic silence on the gross violations of human rights taking place in present-day Ethiopia. The silence of western churches (Catholic as well as Protestant) in view of the burning of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches, slaughtering of monks, priests, persecution of EOC believers etc, is as intriguing as it is disgusting, to say the least. These western churches were decrying human rights violations under the previous military regime of the Dergue. Today, while the abominable ethnic politics of a minority Tigrean regime is taking its toll on hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians, no word has been uttered by those same church quarters who made shrill noise about human rights violations under the now defunct military regime. To our chagrin, we have not heard any voice of concern, much less condemnation, from the very vocal western churches and institutions that were so much concerned with human rights violations in Ethiopia barely three years ago. Where has that concern gone? Or are they caught with the now universal western double standard regarding human rights violations? We believe that the issue of human rights violations, has to do more with the expediencies of East-West conflict and the anti-communist hysteria of the cold war period than any thing else. In the cold war years, human rights issues were used by the western powers to project their hatred on the communist*



*East by citing the excesses of satellite pro-Russian regimes such as Ethiopia; which were then in the Russian fold and under the spell of communism. During the cold war years, human rights violation issues were catapulted to the fore by the West as a means of asserting the moral superiority, humanistic norms and mores of the west over the communist East. Today, with the disappearance of the Berlin wall and eclipse of the communist power, exposing human rights violations in countries like Ethiopia has ceased to have any significance in the global geo-political calculation of the west. Exposing human rights violations in countries like Ethiopia has no value (diplomatic, political, ideological or otherwise) as it is of no use any more in discrediting communism or Russian interference in Ethiopia. As far as we care to remember no western government worth its salt has come out to condemn the ethnic cleansings in Ethiopia (Arba Gugu, Bedeno, etc); the violent suppression of demonstrators of Areka (Welaita), Addis Abeba University student demonstrators (on January 4, 1993); the arbitrary dismissals of competent professionals from public offices and educational institutions, etc. That is why we cannot but join a leader of an Ethiopian opposition organization, i.e. professor Asrat Woldeyes who summarized this western double standard in the following terms:*

***"Under the previous military regime in Ethiopia, the west was able to observe at night even something as small as a needle; today (under the present EPRDF regime) these western governments and institutions have even failed to see an elephant in broad day light. Should we beg these westerners to see this elephant in broad day light? "***

*It may be too much to ask these western governments to come to our aid. But let us beg them to stop interfering in our affairs by propping up a heinous regime through the various financial and diplomatic supports they are extending to this*

*regime which is instrumental in perpetrating the kind of atrocities cited in this report. This is not to say that we are against all western institutions. As much as we have been saddened by the support given to a repressive EPRDF government, we have also been comforted by the concern shown so far by such western institutions such as the European Parliament, Amnesty International, International Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity (IISIC), the Indian Ocean Newsletter, such NGO's like the French-based Foundation Pour le Progress de L'Homme and the French Catholic Committee Against Hunger and For Development - the last two of which have been instrumental in supporting the Paris Peace Initiative out of genuine concern for the people of Ethiopia. Thanks are due to all such organizations. We call upon the international community to bring pressure to bear upon the incumbent Tigrean government of the EPRDF to immediately release the thousands of Amharic speaking Christians of Gondar city and unconditionally release famous preachers and church leaders like Aba Ameha Eyesus, Aba Gebre Meskel, etc. We also request human rights organizations like the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO), Amnesty International and the International Red Cross, etc to commission an enquiry into these massacres of innocent people. Ethiopians living in Holland will organize a candle night vigil on December 8 and 9, 1993 in memory of the victims of the Gondar city massacre. We call on all sympathetic Dutch people to join us in the Hague (Den Haag) at the Binnenhof (Dutch Parliament) for the vigil that will be held between 4 - 8 P. M.*

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*Dear readers of the account of the Gondar massacre. Herewith you find a communique or press release issued by the TPLF ambassador to Benelux countries and EU based in Brussels, Dr. Peter Gabriel Roble. Peter Gabriel Robleh, who loyally served the TPLF regime for several years had issued this statement*

*which is full of lies and seeks to paint the Orthodox Christians of Gondar and their religious leaders as being extremist gangsters bent on harming Moslems and Christians of other denominations such as Catholics and Protestants. This was meant to curry favor with the Islamic world and the Western world who are homes to hundreds of millions of Moslems and Protestant and Catholic Christians respectively. I have reproduced the entire text of TPLF's ambassador to Brussels for the benefit of presenting a balanced account of what both the TPLF and its opponents say regarding the Adebabay Eyesus Massacre at Gondar city in September 1993.*

## **II - THE CASE OF AMHA-YES AND THE GONDAR INCIDENT OF SEPTEMBER 6, 1993**

***Sent by - Dr. Peter Gabriel Roble<sup>9</sup>, Ethiopian Ambassador based in Brussels***

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<sup>9</sup> Dr. Peter Gabriel Roble served as a trusted TPLF ambassador in Brussels for several years. He is an ethnic Somali from Jijiga who attended at Harar Medhan Alem high school. After finishing high school, he joined Haile Selassie university and subsequently went abroad for higher studies. When the TPLF regime came to power, opportunists like him who consider themselves members of oppressed ethnic minorities jumped on the TPLF band-wagon and he became TPLF's ambassador representing this minority government in Brussels, both as a Benelux (ambassador of Ethiopia for Belgium, Netherlands & Luxumberg) and representative of Ethiopia in its relationship with the European Union. Peter Gabriel Roble joined the African Union where he currently works as an advisor at the African Union head office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Like many fortune-seekers he used his ethnic Somali card to assume ambassadorial position within the TPLF regime which was adept at employing such colorless individuals of dubious character to give itself a semblance of a regime that promotes ethnic inclusion of hitherto marginalized ethnic groups. Today, the ethnic Somalis whom Peter Gabriel Roble claimed to represent suffer the double-edged sword of war and displacement in the area of they were told to be sole masters.

*“It is indicated by Amnesty International's News Service 127/93 that the incident in Gondar town in which 13 people, including three members of the police force, died and 24 others, out of which 16 of them are members of the police and the national security forces were wounded, is caused due to the attempt of the security forces to arrest "preacher" Amha-Yes. This is a clear mis-information which the organization is repeating again as it did on the University Students demonstration incident.*

*What actually happened on that day as eye witnesses from Gondar have presented is as follows. Amha-Yes, who had a record of inciting disturbances since June 1986 in Yabele town; Sidamo Province, led an organized group of gangsters and overrun the Municipality of Gondar destroying furniture and documents. He and his gangsters overpowered Shibabaw Guangul, the Municipality guard on that day, taking his gun and beating him extensively. When security forces arrived to control the situation, Amha-Yes and his group threw six hand grenades at them and the people who gathered to watch the incident. This was the circumstance under which many of civilians and security forces were maimed and wounded. When the police searched the Eyesus Church compound where Amha-Yes and his group had camped and prepared their attack strategy for some days in the name of Church participants, they found 3 guns 2 hand grenades, different types of swords and other dangerous materials.*

*It should be clear to every member and participant of Amnesty International that people like Amhayes and his gangster group who are committed to incite violence in the name of religion is contrary to the principles on which A.I. is based. In all the "preachings" that Amha-Yes had done previously on different occasions, the main points he stressed are:*

- All other religions except the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*

*must be prohibited in Ethiopia;*

- *All believers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church must declare war on other religions' followers;*
- *All those who befriend a Moslem, a catholic, a protestant or other religious followers will be burned by the fire and that Jesus Christ will descend on them soon;*
- *The neighboring Arab countries are preparing themselves to invade Ethiopia. He presents the building of Mosque in Gondar town as a clear evidence of this plan etc.*

*Under such circumstances, the evil minded Amha-yes managed to escape to Addis Ababa after his mission in Gondar town was accomplished. He was apprehended by the Addis Ababa police and is awaiting trial according to the laws of the country.*

*Therefore, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia is fully confident that members of Amnesty International would not support people like Amha-yes and his gangsters to go free without answering for their deeds through a proper due process of law. We are also confident that Amnesty International would fully investigate the situation during the unfortunate incident before jumping into conclusions based on distorted information delivered to its office by groups or individuals who do not want to accept the downfall of the dictatorial regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam and the emergence of a democratic process in Ethiopia. (Signature and Seal of the Ethiopian Embassy in Brussels)".*

*=====End of the press release of the Ethiopian ambassador Dr. Peter Gabriel Roble =====*

### **III - ETHNIC CLEANSING WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

*The list of names mentioned in the table below <sup>10</sup> is meant to shade light on the extent of the ethnic cleansing currently underway in Ethiopia. The policy of ethnic cleansing embarked upon by the Tigrean minority government of the EPRDF has left no national institution unscathed including the Ethiopian Orthodox Church - which has hitherto known no division whatsoever be it on ethnic or regional lines. But today, thanks to the pervasive ethnic politics of the Tigrean minority regime in Ethiopia, even Ethiopia's holy Christian sanctuary has become victim of ethnic politics as can be gleaned from the following table. The table contains the list of 15 Amharas (two of them have deceased) - in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church hierarchy who have been arbitrarily dismissed by the EPRDF-appointed Tigrean patriarch and their replacement by 15 Tigreans (the ruling elite group is of Tigrean ethnic origin).*

*List containing the names and responsibilities of Ethiopian Orthodox Church Officials which have been dismissed (members of the Amhara ethnic group) and those who have replaced them (members of the Tigrean ethnic group). **EOC = Ethiopian Orthodox Church***

<b>NAMES OF NEWLY APPOIN</b>	<b>ETHNIC GROUP OR ORIGIN</b>	<b>POSITION OR TITLE IN EOC</b>	<b>NAMES OF DISMISSED</b>	<b>ETHNIC GROUP</b>	<b>POSITION OR TITLE IN EOC</b>
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<sup>10</sup> - This table with list of names is based on an article published in an Amharic weekly Ethiopian newspaper known as MOGED, Volume I, Number 12, page 7 - (Hidar 1986 E.C) December 1993. We translated the Amharic version into English. As such SHINE will take all responsibility for any mistranslation or misquotation.

<b>TED TIGRE EOC OFFICIALS</b>			<b>AMHARA EOC OFFICIALS</b>		
<i>Mr. Tewolde Yohannes *</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Special Secretary of the patriarch</i>	<i>His Holiness Bishop Gorgorios</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Special secretary of the patriarch</i>
<i>Aleka Mekonen Gebre Medhin</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Chief Administrator</i>	<i>Mr. Teferra Yirgu</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Head of administrative department</i>
<i>Mr. Tekabe Berhe</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Chief Secretary of EOC</i>	<i>An Unidentified Person</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>An Unspecified Job</i>
<i>Mr. Tsegaye Berhe</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Dept. of Development and Child Care</i>	<i>Mr. Haddis Terfa</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Deceased</i>
<i>Mr. Ermias Tedla</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Chief Accountant EOC</i>	<i>Mr. Wolde Kidan Abebbayehu</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Chief Accountant EOC</i>
<i>Mr. Daniel Wolde</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Personel Officer</i>	<i>Mr. Mistehal</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Personel Officer</i>

<i>Gabriel</i>			<i>Abbay</i>		
<i>Mr. Tesfaye Haile Mariam</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Chief Purchaser</i>	<i>Mr. Alemu Feleke</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Deceased</i>
<i>Mr. Berhane Haile</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Chief of Guardians</i>	<i>Mr. Assefa Cherinet</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Chief of Guardians</i>
<i>Aba (father) Izra Gebre Giorgis</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Dept. Head of Sunday School</i>	<i>Mr. Gebre Mikael Defar</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Dept. Head of Sunday School</i>
<i>Memiher Haile Selasse Alemayehu</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Head of Addis Abeba Hagere Sebket Office</i>	<i>Likke Kahnat Aba Gebre Mariam Feleke</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Head of Addis Abeba Hagere Sebket</i>
<i>Afe Memiher Habte Mariam</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Addis Abeba District Sebeka Gubae (Council)</i>	<i>Likke Kahnat Belete Abebe</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Western Zone Sebeka Gubae Officer</i>
<i>Abba Mengiste - Ab</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Store Keeper in the Patriarch Office</i>	<i>Mr. Misgana w Arikke</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Store Keeper in the Patriarch's Office</i>
<i>Memiher Gebre</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>Addis Abeba</i>	<i>Merigeta Esaias</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Southern Zone</i>



<i>Meskel Gebre Mariam</i>		<i>District Sebeka Gubae (Council)</i>	<i>Wolde Agegnehu</i>		<i>Sebeka Gubae Officer</i>
<i>Melake Selam Gebre Hiywet Afewerk</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>" " "</i>	<i>Likke Seltanat Neka Tibbeb Wendim</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Easter Zone Sebeka Gubae (Council) Officer</i>
<i>Risse Debre Gidey</i>	<i>Tigre</i>	<i>" " "</i>	<i>Likke Kahnat Zewde Tachbel e</i>	<i>Amhara</i>	<i>Northern Zone Sebeka Gubae Officer</i>

*Mr. Tewolde Yohannes \* - This person is the younger brother of the current Ethiopian Patriarch - Abuna Paulos (of Tigrean ethnic group)*

***N.B - PLEASE JOIN US IN ECHOING THE PLIGHT OF ETHIOPIANS SUFFERING UNDER THE INCUMBENT TIGREAN ETHNIC DICTATORSHIP BY COPYING AND PASSING ON THIS REPORT TO OTHER ETHIOPIANS AND FOREIGNERS, HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS, PARLIAMENTARIANS, etc IN YOUR COUNTRY AND AREA OF RESIDENCE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.***

***LONG LIVE ETHIOPIA  
ETHIOPIAN INFORMATION SERVICE NETWORK IN HOLLAND  
(SHINE)***