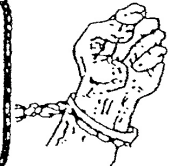




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SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE FOR ETHIOPIAN
POLITICAL PRISONERS (SOCEPP)



December 8/2009

**STATEMENT ON THE OPENING OF THE UN CLIMATE CHANGE
CONFERENCE IN COPENHAGEN**

The UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen is being attended by world leaders and it is sad to note that once again the repressive and environmentally dangerous Meles Zenawi is present and "representing" Africa.

Meles Zenawi is not only one of the worst human rights violators in Africa but is also responsible for the environmental degradation in Ethiopia. When his group was just a rebel outfit, his fighters were accused of felling very many old trees, killing rare wild animals, selling trees and bamboos to the Sudan and letting the Sudanese destroy the trees (for coal) in area they controlled then in Gondar region. Once in power, the Meles Zenawi group has been held responsible for the burning of the Nech Sar wild animals park, the extensive cutting of trees and sale of timber to the Sudan and other neighbouring places, allowing Saudi and other Arab "hunters" to shoot rare wild animals ranging from elephants to the Red Fox of Bale and Semien, etc. Presently, the regime has sold some 3 million hectares of fertile land and forests to foreign companies (Indian, Arab, Chinese, etc.) for extensive farming using fertilizers. The leasing of vast tracts of land to flower production has also done damage to the soil while the dams on Gilgel Gibe have been criticised as detrimental to the farmers, the wildlife and the Turkana Lake in Kenyan territory. Active and careless deforestation has affected the climate leading to aridity and drought and famine.

The list can go on but Meles Zenawi is the last person once can accept any lecture on climate and environmental control. His latest slick ploy to blackmail the donor countries and to fleece the money thus earned cannot fool anyone except those who close their eyes voluntarily. Meles Zenawi should be booted out of the Copenhagen meeting and failing that should not be allowed to posture as an advocate of for climate control and safe environment. The predator of human rights, the very man who decreed a draconian law to block the useful work of NGOs cannot and should not be allowed to hog the stage of the Copenhagen meeting.

INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS INJUSTICE EVERYWHERE
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