

The Systematic Emasculation of Africa's Leadership-Part 3

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In the previous two sections, the author has written about the emasculation of the UN General Assembly, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and how they were being used to effectuate the foreign policies of certain nations while subordinating the rights of others. For this third and final section, I will show how African leaders undermined one of their own in order to win the support of some donor nations. They tell me diplomacy is about telling lies and that politics is ugly. I disagree. Diplomacy is a fine art; it is about listening, more than talking, it is about bringing peoples and nations together, it's about service, not power. Ditto for politics, it only gets ugly, when rules change and then hypocrisy and double standards rule.

Western governments don't have to try very hard to break African governments as they do a good job undermining Africa and its leadership all by themselves. They have become Africa's worst enemies. If they are not selling state secrets, they are found snitching on each other, gossiping, bad mouthing and undermining each other to Europeans whom they believe will not only provide for their people, but also protect their reign against their angry populations. In the movies and in the soap operas, women are usually depicted as the gossip mongers. After reading the many thousands of pages from the Wikileaks cables, this author is convinced that some African leaders are grand gossipers... crueller and sometimes deadlier.

Most good leaders work for peace... Unfortunately, there are those that wrongly believe they would fare better in war and conflict. In an effort to divert attention from their own weaknesses and governance issues, they choose to keep populations perpetually in conflict. For some, creating coalitions is about pooling resources for the common good, for others it is about creating partners in crime. Some of the African leaders spent more time conniving with Americans and European diplomats against each other, instead of using their energies to improve relations with each other, for the benefit of their regions and nations. Once again, I will be using leaders in the Horn of Africa to illustrate my points and the Wikileaks cables to show the extent of their emasculation and betrayal of each other and their people.

For some reason, it is the regime in Ethiopia that the Americans and European depended on for their insider information. They found the weakest link. The frightened emasculated minority regime wrongly believed that its salvation would come from its servitude, by backstabbing its African peers and hobnobbing with the western leaders in their forums, serving as the "African Face" needed to advance western agendas for

the continent. By suppressing the rights of the Ethiopian people using brute military force, it wrongly believed it could sustain its reign.

By selling out the people of Africa to elevate itself in international forums organized by its handlers, the regime in Ethiopia has been exposed for what it is...a cheap political thugocracy suffering from deep seethed envy of all its neighbors, a regime that covets the resources of its neighbors, including their lands. Inflicted with incurable inferiority complex and crab mentality, like its predecessors used the “they are Africans”, “they are Arabs”, “We are Christians”, “The Arabs are coming” scare tactics and fear mongering in order to collect stipends from its handlers. It remains a disgrace and an embarrassment to its people, and the singular threat to peace, stability and security in the Horn region. Allow me to elaborate.

The American Embassy cables show that the ruling clique in Ethiopia relied heavily on US diplomats to carry out its domestic and international agendas. It also shows that the US looked the other way as Ethiopia’s leadership instigated conflicts and wars in neighboring states. The 16 September 2006 cableⁱ says a lot about Ethiopia’s attitudes in the Horn region and how much influence Ethiopia has on its tiny neighbor Djibouti, who depends on it for its daily bread. In this cable, an Ethiopian cadre is on record as he asks Donald Yamamoto, the US Ambassador, to intervene with Djibouti and break up the good neighborly relations between Eritrea and Djibouti. According to the cable, the cadre tells Yamamoto that:

“...The Government of Djibouti's opposition to IGAD actions in Somalia are the result of its fear of Eritrean President Isaias, Tekeda said, as well as President Guelleh's personal business interests with Eritrea...”

Why would the President of Djibouti fear the President of Eritrea? What do his business interests in Eritrea, assuming he had any, have to do with Somalia’s peace, stability and security? What then should be assumed of his relationship with Ethiopia’s leadership and the vast lands and business interests Guelleh has in Ethiopia?

Not long after the sparking of a non-existent Eritrea-Djibouti border issue and escalating it in order to use it to give substance to the US-Ethiopia engineered “stand alone” sanctions against Eritrea, the headlines were filled with stories about the Djiboutian President and land he was awarded by the minority regime in Ethiopia. According to an 8 February 2010 cableⁱⁱ Addis Ababa:

“....Djiboutian President Ismael Omar Guelleh recently acquired the right to develop about 2.5 acres of lakeside land in Debrezeit to build a hotel. This acquisition added to the 7,400 acres of farmland Guelleh leased last year in Bale, Oromia region. According to post's conversations with local agricultural business investors and press reports, this farm has already harvested wheat and other cereals for export to Djibouti...”

Let us see what else Tekeda Alemu, now serving at the United Nations had to say about the Djiboutian leadership:

“...The Deputy Foreign Minister speculated that the Djiboutian leadership was worried that Eritrea would support Afari separatist movements, as Isaias had done successfully in Sudan, if Djibouti did not follow Eritrea's lead in Somalia. Tekeda also told Yamamoto that Aweys and other CIC leaders had stopped in Djibouti to meet with President Guelleh on their way back from Libya the week before. Tekeda maintained that the GOD was "on the wrong path," and added that Djibouti was not strong enough to take Ethiopia's continued friendship and forbearance for granted...”

That sounds like a veiled threat to me. So what was Ethiopia's ultimatum? Was Ethiopia going to stop sending food to Djiboutians or was Ethiopia going to stop delivering the very lucrative Khat (an illegal drug in the United States)? Or was it threatening to stop using Djibouti's ports? Or was it going to attack Djibouti as it has done to all its neighbors since it usurped power in 1991?

Ethiopia's leadership, as it has done several times, took the opportunity to take jabs at Iran- (they believe doing so will enamor them with Israel and the US). Here is what the Ethiopian cadre shared with Ambassador Yamamoto:

“...He criticized President Guelleh's recent visit to Tehran as well as his comments on a recent BBC Somali Service broadcast, in which he had called on Somalis to be vigilant in defense of their homeland against the Ethiopian threat... Tekeda urged that the USG speak frankly with Djibouti about its role in the region. He said that President Guelleh would pay attention to U.S. concerns given the importance to him of the U.S. military base in Djibouti. "He must be told to choose" whose side he wanted to take...”

Needless to say, the hypocritical Ethiopians maintained their relationship with Iran, even strengthening it further by signing several bilateral agreements since then...more on that in another post.

Ethiopia was also the source for the erroneous and manufactured information about Eritrea trying to destabilize Djibouti, information the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia attempted to peddle as fact in December 2010. The 28 May 2009 secret cable clearly shows Ethiopia as being the source of the allegations which were then presented to the Security Council by Djibouti:

“...Except for Eritrea, all the countries in the region were united in seeking a common approach to support Somalia, Youssouf said. Eritrea also continued to seek to destabilize Djibouti, Youssouf said. He reported that Ethiopian FM Seyoum had informed him on May 24 of Ethiopian intelligence that more than 200 rebel fighters (presumably ethnic Afars), who had been trained in Eritrea, had infiltrated Djibouti via Ras Doumeira...”

Instead of helping the two neighborly nations resolve the problem, Ethiopia and its friends in Washington chose instead to escalate the issue in a futile and childish effort to isolate Eritrea. How exactly does that advance US interests in the region? I'll let the regime's cadres do the explaining as my mind cannot decipher warped logic...

The cables are very clear as to Ethiopia's role in the destabilization of Somalia and yet, no punitive actions have been taken to prevent Ethiopia's self serving interference in Somali affairs. To the contrary, the US has rewarded Ethiopia's destruction, invasion and occupation of Somalia.

So far, there have been at least 16 Transitional National Governments (TNG) for Somalia. Ethiopia has undermined each and every TNG established. The Wiki leaked cables are full of instances wherein Ethiopian cadres vetted TNG candidates as opposed to allowing the Somali people to choose their own leaders. Here are some examples of Ethiopian consistent undermining of all of Somalia's leadership:

- **“...Meles said that Transitional Federal Government (TFG) Prime Minister Gedi has "outlived his purpose" and is not the right person for the primary job now of ensuring an inclusive political process. The removal of Gedi would best be an outcome of the National Reconciliation Congress. Meles, Belliard said, agreed that there needs to be more Hawiye in the government, including in the security services...”-(Meles Zenawi 2007)**
- **“...Tekeda said that Ethiopia's objective for the upcoming October 27-29 IGAD Summit in Nairobi was "to soften Yusuf up...and put him in a cage." He said that "either Yusuf will come out of the summit as a ceremonial president or he will be**

jettisoned." Tekeda hoped that the summit would convince Yusuf that he cannot continue conducting business as usual with Yusuf only serving his Majerteen clan interests. Tekeda stated that there was now absolute consensus within the Ethiopian government that President Yusuf can no longer continue to be an obstacle to political progress in Somalia...Tekeda said that Yusuf was "an old man with no capacity," and that he was a liability. The only question that remains is what can be done to limit the damage he can do. Tekeda said Yusuf could continue as President if he agreed to become a figure head, but if Yusuf does not listen, then he must leave... Tekeda revealed that in the previous weeks he had met secretly with ARS/Djibouti head Sheikh Sharif to discuss the integration of the ARS into the TFG"-(Tekeda Alemu on Abdulahi Yusuf -2008)

- **"...Tekeda suggested that the presidency was too high for ARS/Djibouti head Sheikh Sharif, but that Sharif as prime minister was possible. He added that Sharif should have some role in the government because he had some level of acceptance and credibility among Somalis. Tekeda noted that he had just gotten off the phone with Sharif, and that their discussions over the formation of a unity government were continuing. He also said that Sharif and the opposition would go to Nairobi to participate in the summit. Tekeda declined to name possible replacements for Yusuf..."**- (Tekeda Alemu on Sheikh Sharif 2008)
- **"...Asked by Special Envoy for Somalia John Yates if Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein "Nur Adde" was capable of governing, Meles said only "no." Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Abdisalan Aden had the right clan credentials (Habr Gedr/Ayer) but no power base of his own. Meles acknowledged, however, that "you can talk to him" and "he's very useful." Meles agreed with A/S Frazer that ARS Chairman Sheikh Sharif might be a Trojan horse for more radical Islamists..."**- (Meles Zenawi on Sheikh Sharif 2008)
- **"...Questioned about CIC leaders, Meles observed that with its defeat, the CIC had now lost its "aura of continued victory." Whereas the Ayr sub-clan had been the CIC's primary backer, CIC Executive Committee Chairman Sheikh Sharif Ahmed was Abgaal and now wielded little influence..."**- (Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia-2007)

With Ethiopian officials serving as US advisors in the region, it is no wonder then that US policy for the Horn of Africa remains bloody, callous and incoherent.

Turns out, (6 years later) that Eritrea's principled stand on Somalia was the right course, but because the regime in Ethiopia convinced its skirted friends in Washington and the UN to isolate Eritrea and prevent a constructive dialogue on Somalia. For that grave mistake, thousands of Somalis have paid with their lives; millions have been displaced, maimed and injured. Children have been irreparable scarred and Somalia has seen the total destruction of its vital infrastructures including schools, hospital and clinics, as well as its homes and villages.

Ethiopia's lies and fabrication were all a cruel ruse, a pretext, so that Ethiopia could go ahead and invade and occupy Somalia and knock off a few hundred "extremists" and also maybe, while they were at it, kill off members of Ethiopian opposition who may have taken refuge next door. Needless to say, it is the Somali people, mostly women and children that have had to bear the brunt of Ethiopia's excesses. Did Ethiopia really want peace to reign in Somalia? The answer is no and what makes this even worse is that they chose to remain silent, afraid to say so, afraid that the US would not put them on its favored country list.

Of all the countries in the region, Djibouti knew very well that Ethiopia did not want to see Somalia at peace. That it always felt threatened, but it chose to go along, believing it could score politically, like Ethiopia, by becoming a favored US mercenary. Let us see what Djibouti's officials have to say about that. Djibouti's Foreign Minister Ali Abdi Farah met with US Ambassador Marguerita Ragsdale on 10 March 2004 in Djibouti before leaving for Nairobi to attend an IGAD Council of Ministers meeting on Somalia. According to the 11 March 2004 cableⁱⁱⁱ:

"...FM Farah responded that the concept of a "federation" of entities within Somalia, rather than the traditional concept of a unified state might achieve the best result. Tribal tensions are too intense to make much else workable. He recounted historic attempts at union that ultimately proved unworkable. Yet he also said the "stupidity" of Somalis have contributed to the absence of peace...Asked about Ethiopia's relations with Somalia (writ large), he said he saw no genuine interest in Ethiopia to peace in Somalia..."

What does that say about this Djiboutian leader? Why did he not speak up against Ethiopia and save the lives of the Somali people? Or are they too stupid for him to care...

There is another Djiboutian leader that has been emasculated by the Ethiopians and reduced to parroting their rehearsed spills on Eritrea. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, the Djibouti Foreign Minister is found in several cables as he undermines leaders in the

region. Youssouf's myopic take on neighborly relations is found in a 23 May 2004 cable^{iv} in which the Djiboutian Foreign Minister is found telling the US Ambassador Marguerita Ragsdale that:

"...In the history of dealing with Ethiopia, the farther it is apart from Eritrea, he mused, the closer it wants to move toward Djibouti. Djibouti benefits economically from the existing tensions between the two countries and while unfortunate in a way, he said, it is "a fact of life..."

That is not a fact of life; it is a sign of poor leadership and an insult to the people of Djibouti and Eritrea who have enjoyed brotherly relations for decades-even when they were both under colonial occupation.

Iran, Sudan and Zimbabwe have a difficult relationship with the West, but why should that be an issue for Africa? In order to ingratiate themselves with the West, Ethiopia and others have taken to undermining the Sudanese and Zimbabwean leaders behind closed doors-not with other Africans, but with American and European diplomats. Let us take a look at what Meles Zenawi advises^v the US on Sudan and Bashir:

"...Meles offered that if he were the United States, he would look at two options. First, which he clearly conveyed as the preferred choice, would be to "remove the Bashir regime." Acknowledging that such an option was unlikely, Meles advocated for making a clear representation to the GoS that the United States is not/not "out to get them... Meles concluded the discussion by highlighting that "they don't trust the Obama Administration," and "they trust the Obama Administration less than the Bush Administration," and with a clear reference to U.S. Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice and former Senior NSC Director for Africa Gayle Smith "...especially some friends of mine..."

But it is not only Zenawi that bad-mouth's Bashir as we shall see in this 25 January 2007 cable from Addis Ababa, "DEMARCHE DELIVERED: ETHIOPIAN VIEWS ON AU CHAIRMANSHIP VOTE"^{vi}, which exposes the minority regime's hypocrisy. This time it is Tekeda Alemu again that is backstabbing an African leader of a country next door to Ethiopia, this time it is to prevent Bashir from taking the helm at the African Union:

"...Minister Tekeda highlighted that while Ethiopia believed selecting Sudanese President Bashir as African Union Assembly Chair was not desirable for the AU, Ethiopia could not openly oppose Bashir's candidacy for fear of alienating pro-Ethiopian elements within the GOS, which would thus drive Sudan closer to Eritrea..."

Ethiopia recognized that a Bashir chairmanship would leave the AU "paralyzed for a year"..."Don't take our reticence as evidence of support" for Bashir, Tekeda said..."

The Ethiopian regime doesn't have much confidence in the South Sudanese leadership and says so in this cable which records a meeting between Donald Yamamoto, the US Ambassador and Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia. According to the cable:

"...The Government of South Sudan lacks cohesion and is in disarray, Meles argued. The SPLM lacks leadership, and in turn "lets events determine its destiny." The Prime Minister suggested that the internal fractures within the SPLM currently mean that if it were to an active stand on something, it would break apart from within...In light of these dynamics in both Khartoum and Juba, prospects for the successful implementation of the CPA are very poor, the Prime Minister noted. Not only is Ethiopia bracing for the outbreak of widespread violence throughout Sudan around, or in the run-up to the referendum in 2011, but Meles speculated that the chances of that violence spilling over into the nine countries bordering Sudan is high..."

No doubt Zenawi is hinting the need for more US support for Ethiopia as it prepares for Sudan's implosion...

A 9 November 2005 cable," AU'S KONARE ON AU ASSEMBLY CHIEF, WASHINGTON OFFICE", reported on a meeting between Vicki Huddleston, former US Charge D'Affaires in Ethiopia, and Alpha Oumar Konare, the then AU Chairperson. Notwithstanding the fact that the African Union chair was freely providing US officials with information about the African Union's upcoming agenda, in this cable, the AU chair seems to be offering more:

"...Asked for information on the next AU Assembly Chairman, Konare replied that he is adamant that Sudanese President Bashir not succeed Obasanjo, and that "many" African leaders agree with him that Sudan's assuming the Chairmanship would be a disaster for Africa. Konare went so far as to declare that he will step down as AU Commission Chairperson if El Bashir were elected. He expressed disbelief that El Bashir believes he is prepared to assume the Chairmanship..."

The AU Chair had no qualms insulting his fellow Africans and their leadership. Let us take a look at more of the November 2005 cable:

"...Konare commented that there are "not many choices" in the Eastern region. Ugandan President Museveni is no longer a possibility as he has changed the

constitution to allow him to remain in office, Konare stated. Tanzania would be acceptable, but the President is too new. Konare said that Kenya is not an option because the President is "ill..."

The various comments made by Ethiopian officials about Sudan's leadership reflect what Ethiopia's Deputy Foreign Minister Tekeda Alemu stated in this 5 February 2008 cable:

"...Tekeda stated that the bilateral relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan was improving, although he characterized the relationship as more of a "love-hate" affair..."

A 21 May 2009 cable details a 6 hour long meeting Meles Zenawi had with Susan E. Rice on 16 May 2009. Meles opined about all the countries in the region and on Sudan, he had this to say:

"...Meles has consistently stated that instability in Sudan poses major threat to Ethiopia's security. Noting the corruption within the Bashir regime, Meles said Sudan and Ethiopia have an understanding that Ethiopia and Sudan will not challenge each other nor interfere in each other's internal stability. Meles noted, however, that Sudan could deteriorate into internal conflict... Meles commented that he did not characterize the situation in Darfur as genocide, because genocide depends on "intent." While Meles recognized the massive human rights abuse in Darfur, he concluded that many of the deaths in Darfur was from starvation..."

Meles is setting Rice up into believing that the deaths of the thousands in the Gambela, Ogaden and Oromia regions of Ethiopia are caused by starvation and not genocide, as has been called by Genocide International and Survivors International.

To be continued...

ⁱ <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2006/09/06ADDISABABA2526.html> accessed 11/01/2012

ⁱⁱ <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2010/02/10ADDISABABA247.html> accessed 11/6/02012

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2004/03/04DJIBOUTI353.html> accessed 11/01//2012

^{iv} <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2004/05/04DJIBOUTI730.html> accessed 11/6/ 2012

^v <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2009/02/09ADDISABABA259.html> accessed 11/06/2012

^{vi} <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2007/01/07ADDISABABA232.html> accessed 11/06/2012