



Programme of Afar People's Party (APP)

PREAMBLE

Afar is one of the nations with a long and rich traditions in the Horn of Africa. The Afar has a geographically continues area and has a single common mother tongue, which belongs to the eastern Cushitic group of languages. The Afar traditional structure shares common features largely supported by a fiqma (age group) system. The customary law secures cohesiveness, continuity and harmony within the traditional system at large. The Afar people make up about 2 million out of the present 70 million population of Ethiopia. Their economic patterns show variety where pastoralism remains as the mainstay.

Our ancestors defended their land, with determination and uncompromising spirit, from foreign and domestic intruders to ascertain their continued unity and sovereignty. Unfortunately, since the beginning of the 19th century, due to continued oppression and subjugation by successive Ethiopian regimes, the Afars have been unable to control their destiny. However, they continued to resist oppression and intensify struggle to determine their right for self-

determination. Their aspiration was for self-rule and to build a democratic Ethiopia, based on respecting the rights of nations and nationalities in the country. Hence, the highly centralized totalitarian successive regimes of Ethiopia failed to pay attention to their quest as an equal partner in the making of Ethiopia; failed to implement economic development that could left up the Afars from chronic economic degradation and good governance that guarantees equal treatment, independent judiciary and security.

Past political attempts to settle disputes with Ethiopian regimes have failed to bear the results Afars hoped and aspired for. Too many lives have been sacrificed by gallant Afars who envisage that their people ultimately will live in peace and prosperity side by side with all other nations and nationalities of Ethiopia. Tenth of thousands of Afars shed their blood and gave their precious life to fight against oppression perpetuated by totalitarian repressive successive regimes of Ethiopia to achieve justice, equality and liberty. Against these backgrounds, it become necessary to establish an Afar political party that shall work towards realizing the aspiration of the Afar people and live in peace and harmony with other nations and nationalities of Ethiopia. The Afar People's Party (APP) is the outcomes of the condition of Ethiopia in general and that of the Afar in particular. The Party believes that stability and security can only be achieved when Afars work hand in hand with other nationalities and nations within Ethiopia on equal footing and not as a subordinate.

APP works towards realizing a proportional power sharing in the federal arrangement. Any political arrangement with other political parties must guarantee to benefit the Afar

people on equal terms. The APP resolutely works hard to participate in political system and voice their concerns towards realization of ideas that will benefit the Afar people. The Party shall work towards improving the unacceptable economic, social, political and environmental problems the Afar people are faced with. It envisages the political, economic and social development should include helping and improving the lives of our pastoralist majority. The Party shall establish policies that will secure viable political, economic and social development, where the Afar communal property rights are guaranteed. APP shall undertake measures to achieve justice, liberty, freedom of speech and the right to be heard. The Party shall work towards helping the Afar Pastoralist are properly secured and cared for.

Article I POLITICAL PROGRAM

The Afar People Party recognizes that the Afar people should play a constructive role in the establishment of free Union of Ethiopian nations. The political program of APP will be centered to secure a full-fledged Afar Regional State within the federal system of Ethiopia. The Afar People Party shall work towards establishing and protecting self-rule within a federal or con-federal arrangement whereby the Afar people's political, economic; and social particularities are protected and nurtured for Afars by Afars;

1.1 Major Political Issues

Hence the Afar People Party

- Shall work to ensure the Afar self-rule and good governance;
- Shall guarantee freedom of speech and strengthen the right to be heard, the right to

assemble and to organize without interference of the state;

- Encourage and foster pluralistic democracy and allow the people to participate in the political process freely without fear;
- Ensure the rights of the Afar people without direct and indirect interference of the federal government and protect the right to self-determination within the federal and democratic Ethiopia.
- Shall work towards bicameral political system in the region, which would guarantees full participation of the citizens with particular emphasis to women and elderly. Hence, the Afar parliament will have two chambers:

- a) Chamber of people's representative; directly elected by the people
- b) Chamber of consultative traditional leadership lead by Fiqma groups, from different sub regions and nominated by the people.

The law shall decide the functions and responsibilities of the two chambers.

- Members who shall represent the Afars in the federal levels shall be elected based on their qualifications including their knowledge about Afar situation in the region;
- Representatives of the Afars in the federal levels will work genuinely in the interests of their own people, but hand in hand with other nations and nationalities of Ethiopia;

- Shall work towards ensuring the sovereign rights of using and protecting the various rivers of the Afars which are the lifeline of the people;
- Shall ensure building of strong public institutions such as an independent juridical system, police, tax authority harmonized with the Afar traditional customary law.
- Shall ensure that the police and intelligence officials will be prohibited to participate in any political arena while actively servicing in the force.

Article II PRICIPLES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The visions of development in the Afar land have reflected the priorities of the successive Ethiopian regimes, while the needs and aspiration of the Afar people grossly neglected. As the result, the Afar people are one of the least developed nations in the country. APP believes that economic development is part one part sustainable development that involves, nurturing the human capital, and improving the social capital of the society. Educated and healthy population with increased level of participation in social networks and decision making is the core of sustainable development agenda. However, the immediate priority of the APP is to invest in food security, poverty reduction, primary healthcare and education of women. Meanwhile, particular concerned should be made on environmental aspects that involve the pastoralist community.

1.2 Security issues

The Afar People Party

- Shall ensure an independent and democratic Afar Police Force that safeguards security, stability and peace of the Region;
- See to it that the Afar regional forces should be equipped with necessary political and technical know-how as well as principles of peacekeeping and conflict resolution;
- Shall stablish an effective and efficient police force that will respect individual and group rights of all citizens. Militia force will be established to protect the borders and supplement the federal force in case of national emergency;
- Shall ensure that the duty of police forces is to protect citizens, and ensure that law and order are respect and uphold;
- Shall ensure that the Afar State police force to be govern by Afar State under applicable law;

2.1 Major Issues

Thus the Party shall work:

- The natural resources of the Afar region belongs to the Afar people and shall be shared with central government, based on fair distribution criteria.
- To help the pastoralist benefit from their livestock by providing adequate veterinary services and by encouraging and helping create viable livestock domestic

and foreign market for their products;

- To develop a policy that will help the pastoralist settle in one area on their own will and condition; and provide them with essential services and towards transforming them to a modern economy;
- To establish and implement an economic empowerment policy that is driven and based on free market, where Afar entrepreneurs are encouraged to engage in various sector of the Afar economy;
- APP believes that land is a communal property. Allocation of land for agroindustry and other developments shall be with full participation and concerns of the Afars who live in the area; and ensure that pastoralist are not displaced in pretext of development;
- Establish an appropriate development fund bank to help the Afars to start businesses and facilitate microloans without bureaucratic hurdle;
- Stimulate national and foreign investments that Afars will benefit from through tax incentives and work opportunities;
- Encourage entrepreneurship spirit to help the Afars engage in commerce and help them from being only consumers and passive observer;
- To ensure that the Afars benefit from the utilization of the natural resources and have a say in any

development undertaking in Afar land;

- That any domestic and foreign investors in the Afar region should respect the Afar culture and heritage in any development; any such development should be realized only through consultation with the people in the region;
- Formulate and implement policies and measures to combat widespread corruption practices;

2.2 The environment

- The APP will establish policies that are conducive to exploit the natural resources. In additions, the party will ensure that all form of exploitation of natural resources and large agribusiness in the Afar state to be carefully studied before its implementation to avoid displacement of the citizens and its adverse impact on environment.
- Establish policies that will accommodate the exploitation of natural resources, which, allows full rights for the Afars to engage and participate with domestic or foreign investors on a joint venture bases;
- Combat desertification and initiate the reforestation program that includes the preservation of endemic vegetation and wild life of the Afar Region;
- Minimize the use of charcoal and fossil fuel and instead invest in renewable energy such

as the solar, wind crafts energy program;

- Regulate pollutions caused by factories around the Awash River and establish a center for environmental protection;

Article III SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social aspects of the Afar have never been duly considered in the past. To preserve the cultural heritage and national identity of the people, the Afar People Party shall take particular interests in pastoralist population. This shall be adjusted through policy procedure that would be reinforced by political measures.

3.1 Education:

Thus Afar People Party

- Believes that education is the backbone of modern life and towards this end, shall ensure that educational programs and facilities are available to provide quality education and training;
- Shall introduce pastoralists centered education policy that would combat the high rate illiteracy of the pastoralist community. Hence, the children of the pastoralists shall get basic education by providing evening classes, rural Kindergarten, mobile education as well as boarding schools services;
- Shall establish institutions of vocational training, civil service and management that will help the Afars learn appropriate skills and modern administration to run their affairs and institutions;
- Shall help and encourage private schools and higher educational institutions in the region;
- Shall ensure that Afar students are offered scholarship to study abroad through the federal government or through direct

contacts with foreign friendly governments;

- The Afar language will be the standard language to teach students in the elementary schools;

3.2 Health

- Shall invest on equitable, affordable and accessible regional healthcare system with quality ;
- To reduce the existing health inequalities, a health policy that targets specific health needs of pastoralists will be introduced. This shall among others include safe motherhood program, extended program of immunization (EPI), prevention of malaria and waterborne diseases, prevention of malnutrition and animal health.
- Invest in primary healthcare to alleviate chronic shortage of healthcare services and encourage private investment in the health sector;
- Establish policies that will allow training opportunities to produce skilled and trained medical personnel to help alleviate shortages of Afar medical personnel;
- Shall reach out and work with NGO's who are working in the region to help build medical facilities and help in establishing viable mobile medical service that targets pastoralists;
- Shall actively engage in health education and promotion to combat HIV/AIDS, TBC,

malnutrition, Malaria. Accordingly, provide anti-viral HIV medicines to help those affected and establish treatment centers for HIV, TBC Malaria;

- Shall establish prevention programs to promote healthy lifestyles and discourage people from sedentary lifestyles such as smoking and chewing Khat;

3.3 Culture

- Set up institutions that will preserve, develop and foster the cultural heritage of the Afar society;
- Preserve historical, cultural, shrine, graves sites, etc.
- The development of Afar language shall be given major support to promote the cultural virtues, literature and artistic practices. Afar language will be the official language of the Afar State;
- Establish and encourage a regional radio stations and medias that will educate and promote culture and free speech;
- APP is against any form of religious domination and extremism.

3.4 The right of Women

The Afar People Party

- Shall establish and support various programs that will improve gender equality and empower Afar women;

- Ensure our women to have educational opportunity to participate fully in the political, social and economic affairs of the Afar State and at the federal level;
- Ensure that women get proper legal protection from abuse;
- Ensure that women get proper medical attention during maternity and child birth;
- Prohibit female genital mutilation (FGM) in any form which endangers the health Afar women.

Article IV RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING PEOPLES

The Ethiopian regimes always capitalized on clashes between the Afars and the neighboring peoples. No settlement of conflict resolution has been possible with the divide and rule policy of the successive regimes of Ethiopia. Hence, the Afar People's party:

- Shall establish friendly relationships with neighboring nations and nationalities in order to work towards mutual interest and settle disputes peacefully
- Establish and encourage people to people contacts through sport and cultural exchanges and foster relationships based on equality respect for others cultures;
- Shall ensure that there is a clear border demarcation between Afar region and other neighboring states. This will be achieved through dialog and

mutual understanding with our neighbors.

- Ensure other nations and nationalities of Ethiopia who respects the sovereignty and territorial border of the Afar state to freely work, live and protected by law within the Afar land;
- Shall respect and uphold the federal constitution that will guarantee self-determination and self-rule for nations and nationalities of Ethiopia.