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ETHIOPIAWINNET

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4th Ethiopiawinnet Symposium

Date: August 11-12, 2018

Place: The Catholic University of America, 620 Michigan Ave., NE

Washington, DC 20064

SYMPOSIUM 2018

CHANGE FOR A DEMOCRATIC AND PEACEFUL ETHIOPIA



Ethiopia is going through a major transition. After 50 years of institution building experiment, it seems that we have reached an impasse. We are raising the same kinds of questions that concerned Ethiopians raised many years ago – what kind of government? What kind of institutions? How to build a democratic and prosperous Ethiopia?

Currently, the country is experiencing turmoil that has spread to many parts of the country. People are demanding for freedom and justice; the economy is going in a downward spiral; ethnic violence, which has never been a major problem in the country's history, is becoming an everyday scene; in short, people are fed up of the current government's shenanigans and monopoly of power and wealth.

Many people believe that change is overdue, and steps must be taken to save the country from the political and economic abyss the country finds itself. Some are even worried that Ethiopia is on the verge of becoming “a failed state” unless political leaders as well as opposition groups are willing to embrace change, a change that demands fundamental transformation. The central question is: What kind of change?

Ethiopiawinnet would like to dedicate the 2018 symposium to explore the various dimensions of change needed to set the country on a peaceful transition. It also would like to learn from past experiences by critically looking at the direction that the Ethiopian politics has taken in the last 50 years. Specifically, we would like our invited guests and paper presenters to address the following issues.

- Given the current economic and political realities of the country, how can we bring about a change – through negotiation, phased transition, force, or other measures in between
- The legacies of Stalinists in Ethiopia and their views on democracy and ethnic politics in the country
- Democratic pluralism, coalition building and group representation in building strong political parties
- The role of cultural negotiation skills and use of local resources in resolving conflict in Ethiopia
- Civic education and its role in reinforcing cultural values and building national identity

We hope that the various paper presenters would draw on their expertise and experiences of other countries to inform us of the possible options and modalities of how to build a democratic and peaceful Ethiopia that embraces its diversity and restores its glorious days.