

DEMOCRATIZATION: HUMANITY'S HOPE FOR SURVIVAL

Mesfin Wolde-Mariam, (Keynote speech prepared for the conference on 'Democratization: Freeways and Detours', at Duke University, North Carolina, USA, October 2001)

1. HUMANITY AS AN OPEN SOCIETY

It is a reality that humanity is divided by boundaries and nationalities, by race and colour, by language and religion as well as by tribes and clans, and, of course, by political beliefs and by wealth. These boundaries have weighed much too heavily for a long time on humanity. The time may be ripe for breaking, or at least reducing the negative effects, of these boundaries. In spite of all the apparent differences and the constant irritation these boundaries create, humanity is universal in its drive for better and for more, for its drive to great ideals and in its desire to rise to greater heights in every way. This movement to the ideal, this movement to the ever-receding perfection with all its pitfalls is the hallmark of universal humanity.

Ordinarily, it is the reality, the animal in man and its consequences of strife, conflict and war that loom large in our every day affairs. But as Leo Tolstoy reminded us it is "*the ideal alone [that] can guide us in our lives either individually or collectively.*"¹ The English poet, Lord Tennyson, expresses the perpetual and universal human quest for perfection in beautiful language:

*I am a part of all I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrou:
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.*

Humanity's movement toward the ideal does not stop. That is what the French philosopher, Jean Paul Sartre, means when he says, "*existing man is seen as a moving system of intentions.*" The Ethiopian philosopher of the seventeenth century, Zer'a Ya'iqob, puts the same idea in a different context. He says that God could have created man as

¹ Leo Tolstoy, trans. Aylmer Maude, *Recollections and Essays*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1952, pp. 166-167.

a perfect being if he wanted to. Instead, he equipped him with rationality to enable him to move toward perfection by his own effort.

Humanity's march toward the ideal and toward perfection is obviously not with the same pace everywhere and at all times. Right now we are witnessing that a relatively small proportion of humanity is moving much faster than the rest. What is the secret? It is not natural resources. It is not better intellect. It is rational self-management. Development and affluence are simply consequences of rational self-management and nothing else.

I think Lon L. Fuller has pinpointed the problem when he correctly says "*it is in the nature of all human aspirations toward perfection, including that which seeks maximum economic efficiency, to be pliable and responsive to changing conditions.*" Then he remarks that the "*pervasive problem of social design is therefore that of maintaining a balance between supporting structure and adaptive fluidity.*"² Rigidity and fluidity mark the boundary between that part of humanity that is moving faster toward the ideal and toward perfection from the other part that is slow and even regressive. I shall give two contrasting examples of the fast and slow movements from my own personal experience.

In the early fifties I was a student in the United States. Those old enough to remember those years will agree with me how far the country has moved *away* from legal and official discrimination *toward* the ideals of democracy. Although it is still far from perfect there is no doubt whatsoever that tremendous progress has been made. By contrast my experience in my own country, Ethiopia, is very grim: not only have we not moved forward, we have actually gone backward in more ways than one. Especially in the last thirty years we have demonstrated our rigidity and our lack of the "adaptive fluidity". Nevertheless, the universal human quest for the ideal is such that both Ethiopians and Americans are discontented with their respective realities. In Ethiopia whatever discontent the people have is directed upward, to God and His multitudes of Angels and Saints, whereas the discontent of the American people is directed to the institutions of government and those charged with responsibility.

If I have succeeded in my attempt to establish the universality of humanity and of its aspirations to the ideal and to perfection, I would like to move a bit further and argue the universality of culture. In this connection, I would like to mention a very excellent book, ***A Theory of Human Need***, by Len Doyal and Ian Gough³. The authors convincingly argue that human needs are universal. My own view is that there are needs we share with other animals, and I call these animal needs. There are also exclusively human needs. The animal needs are readily recognized universally. That is the reason for the massive, swift and

² Lon L. Fuller, *The Morality of the Law*, New York, 1964, p.41.

³ London, 1991.

generous relief assistance of Western countries in times of famine. When it comes to human needs such as liberty, justice, equality and the rule of law, the response is entirely different. Here the universality of human needs breaks down on grounds of cultural peculiarity and state sovereignty. Many dictators argue ferociously against human rights and democracy as Western cultural peculiarities that have no relevance to their societies. These same dictators beg for weapons that are products of Western culture.

On the issue of culture we can agree that no doubt culture has a narrow and parochial meaning; but I suggest that it also has a broad and universal meaning. In that sense it is as universal as humanity is. Culture, in its broadest sense, and taken as the material-technological, intellectual and spiritual instrument of social life is universal in form. The variations in content cannot mislead us into ignoring the similarity of the fundamental driving force underlying all cultures, for culture is only the consequence of and the instrument for social existence. It is men and women everywhere in the world and in all ages that create culture and the means for transmitting it.

As humanity conquers space and distance, on one hand, and, on the other, prejudices and irrational attitudes, human beings will interact more freely, and in mutually more advantageous ways. Such a process towards a humanized universal culture has already begun and the proponents of cultural peculiarity cannot arrest it. Let us look at the religions and languages, the sciences and the arts, technologies, the flow of trade and assistance, and most of all the growing concern of man for man. Humanity is coming together more than ever before. The problems of Africa and Asia become the concerns of Europe and America. In peace and in war, humanity has never been as interdependent as it is today.

Humanity is universal. Human needs are universal. The irresistible human drive toward the ideal and toward perfection is universal. Culture is nothing more than the concrete manifestation of the drive toward better conditions of life. If culture is not dynamic enough to accommodate new and changing demands it has ceased to be functional and useful; it is only a relic of the past with no vision for the future. Beating wives, killing daughters, segregating human beings on the basis of caste or race, or religion, or language has no longer any value or worth to justify preserving. Fear can no longer be a manifestation of respect. The veneration or celebration of life is no longer the privilege of the few, suffering and death the lot of the many. Life, happiness, liberty, justice, equality and the rule of law are rights for every human being wherever he or she finds himself or herself. Those who deify cultural peculiarity err no less egregiously than those who espouse racial purity. Such backward-looking attitudes impede the march of humanity toward the ideal and toward perfection in peace and in harmony.

Although in practically all human rights documents humanity is universal and the rights of individuals to dignity, life, liberty and happiness, equality, justice and the rule of law are declared, in practice these universal values are often disregarded for reason of national self-interest. Tyrannical regimes do not adhere to these universal values of humanity. When they pretend to do so it is only for the purpose of acquiring economic and military assistance from the West. In other words, they play on Western hypocrisy and expediency. These universal values cut across racial, religious, language and ideological lines. As long as cultural peculiarity, or state sovereignty, or client dictatorial regimes are allowed to frustrate international morality humanity will always remain in jeopardy.

In this connection, let me make a brief point on the ghastly terrorist act in New York and Washington DC. September 11 was the New Year of 1994 for Ethiopians. We were having a quiet family dinner when we saw the tragedy on CNN. My mind was numbed. My body reacted to the shock with an excruciating headache that lasted for four days. Believe me America was not alone in suffering the pain from that inhuman and barbarous act. All tragedies have a way of impressing what is often overlooked. In this case the tragedy of New York and Washington DC has brought home to humanity the need for universal human morality that was suggested by the French philosopher, Henri Bergson, about seventy years ago. America's diplomatic, economic and military leadership in the international arena has to be augmented by moral leadership.

Dictatorial regimes breed hatred and despair, and despair, according to Kierkegaard is ***an impotent self-consumption***. He also calls despair "***the sickness unto death***."⁴ What else but such sickness unto death will drive people to disown their own lives and turn it into a weapon of destruction of other innocent lives? How else are we to understand the diabolical act of September 11 with its meticulous planning, preparation and co-ordination? Or is this diabolical act a case of wounded pride? A wounded pride is like a wounded lion; it will inevitably attack. "***Pride***" said Jean Paul Sartre "***is the reaction of a mind which has been beleaguered by others and which transforms its absolute dependency into absolute self-sufficiency***."⁵ Whether the cause of such a diabolical act is despair or wounded pride, it is humanity's sickness. Whenever human beings lose their individuality and turn into a herd on the basis of race, ethnic affiliation, religion or even ideology they dehumanise themselves and become less than animal. Human history has demonstrated this sickness over and over again. I believe this sickness can be cured when individual human beings guard themselves against forces that desire to rob them of their

⁴ S. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling and Sickness Unto Death*, New York, 1954. For the meaning of despair see also Paul Tillich, *The Courage To Be*, London, 1971.

⁵ Trans. Bernard Frechtman, *Saint Genet: Actor and Martyr*, New York, 1964, p.69.

individuality and when international relations is based on universal morality rather than on expediency.

The survival of humanity, the survival and extension of the American spirit of democracy, liberty, justice and the rule of law as well as the confidence, creativity and accommodation depend on whether or not the international community will have the foresight and the courage to act on moral principles rather than on mere practical considerations. Given financial power and negative motivation the probability that critical technologies will be in the hands of socially and morally undeveloped individuals and groups is very high, and with it the probability of a catastrophe. The recent fratricidal war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, two of the poorest countries in the world, serves to demonstrate what can happen when two dictatorial regimes disagree.

The United Nations ought to be the vanguard for promoting effectively the universal values of humanity. As it is presently constituted, however, it is largely made up of states that do not by any standard represent their own peoples. Many of them are there to sell their votes to the highest bidder on very important issues. Of course, those who buy votes are as guilty as those who sell them.⁶ Right at the start in 1945, the erudite US Senator, J. William Fulbright, referred to the issue of sovereignty as applied in the UN Charter “*an unfortunate principle to begin with.*” He explains his position by saying that “*the ultimate objective of international cooperation and peace necessarily involves the development of rules of conduct universally accepted and enforceable. Any rules or laws universally accepted and enforceable are inconsistent with the absolute sovereignty of present-day nations.*” If the UN is to be an international moral force it will have to be reconstituted with only legitimate governments that are practically implementing the declared universal values of humanity.

It is within this context that I would like to submit to you that democracy is not a luxury for any people. It is a desideratum for any people. If the major powers in the world are guided by international morality rather than by expediency we can make it a safer world through democracy. It is in that spirit that I will briefly talk on the governance in Africa, especially Ethiopia.

2. GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

It is painful but true to say that Africa is hardly showing any significant signs of joining the march of humanity toward the ideal. In fact some are of the opinion that Africa is marching backwards. Nearly half a century after decolonization Africa is still muddling through drifting from left to right without discovering yet the road to a hopeful

⁶ There is much information of this in Zewde Retta's recent book in Amharic Beqedamawi Haile Sillase Zemene Menghist Yeertra Guday; 1941-1963, Addis Ababa, 1999.

⁷ Ed. Karl E. Meyer, Senator Fulbright: A Legislator's Thoughts on World Issues, New York, 1963, 53.

future. Africa is like a child who is having a jolly good time on a swing, always moving back and forth along the same arc.

With reference to Africa the use of the term governance has been in vogue for more than a decade now. It will definitely be a misnomer to dignify most African regimes by the term government. Notwithstanding the diplomatic language, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, describes the predicament of Africa rather sharply as follows:

The nature of political power in many African States, together with real and perceived consequences of capturing and maintaining power, is a key source of conflict across the continent. It is frequently the case that political victory assumes a “winner-takes all” form with respect to wealth and resources, patronage, and the prestige and prerogatives of office. A communal sense of advantage or disadvantage is often closely linked to this phenomenon, which is heightened in many cases by reliance on centralized and highly personalized forms of governance. Where there is insufficient accountability of leaders, lack of transparency in regimes, inadequate checks and balances, non-adherence to the rule of law, absence of peaceful means to change or replace leadership, or lack of respect for human rights, political control becomes excessively important, and the stakes become dangerously high.

In these few and short sentences the Secretary General has stated nearly all the major maladies of Africa. It is necessary to remember, however, that as a direct consequence of this malady Africa has the largest number of refugees and is still the continent of conflict, starvation and famine. To be honest, these facts do not show that Africa is on course toward the ideals of liberty, justice and democracy. It may in fact be moving toward chaos and abject poverty. Recently, the Prime Minister of Britain said: *“The state of Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world. But if the world as a community focused on it, we could heal it.”* He also said that Africa needs *“true democracy, no more excuses for dictatorships, abuse of human rights, no tolerance of bad governance.”*

In the formal sense, forty-six African states call themselves republics, two call themselves federal republics, and one is an Islamic federal republic, one socialist, and three monarchies. For almost all of them, however, these formal designations are, as the Ethiopian proverb has it, beautiful names to cover ugliness. One can easily see through this thin veil of deception. There cannot be a republic where the people are not empowered. There cannot be a republic where there is personal rule and not the rule of law. Not only African “governments” are republics, they also have “parliaments” and “elections”. They have

“constitutions” and judicial systems. What one observes in Africa, however, is lawlessness and anarchy. Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, Algeria, Sudan, and now Zimbabwe are only the extreme manifestations of the African malady of poor governance. The ugliness of African governance is often explained away by culture (which implicitly means barbarism), by colonial heritage, and by tribal strife.

Because I live in it I shall attempt to show the prevalent poor governance in Africa by taking Ethiopia as a case.

3. GOVERNANCE IN ETHIOPIA

Let me first bring to your attention four rather amusing facts that will demonstrate the mind-set of those who rule Africa. First, the official name of the country under Haile Sillase was the Empire of Ethiopia, under the Derg it became the Ethiopian Peoples Democratic Republic, now under the Weyyane it is the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Second, the flag, although maintaining the same colour (green yellow and red stripes), had different insignia under the three different regimes. Third, the national anthem was different under the three regimes. Fourth, there were three entirely different constitutions under the three regimes. Previous constitutions were not amended; they were simply discarded and replaced by brand new constitutions. As an additional amusement I may add that under the Weyyane Ethiopian history was shortened from over three thousand years to a mere hundred. These facts remind one of Ortega y Gasset’s statement “*breaking the continuity with the past, wanting to begin again, is a lowering of man and a plagiarism of the orangutan.*”⁸ Dictators neither remember nor have any use for records of the past because they are totally possessed by the present.

Holding on to the framework I have tried to establish at the beginning of my talk, it will be more reasonable to talk about democratisation as a process or as a movement toward the ideal rather than democracy as a finished product. As the Prime Minister in Ethiopia never misses a chance to tell us, there is no perfect democracy in the world. Obviously, there is no problem with the explicit meaning of the statement. The problem is with the implicit meaning, which is that democracy in Ethiopia is no worse than any other. That is, of course, humbug! If we take some critical indicators of the democratisation process such as empowerment, election and participation, rule of law, transparency and public accountability, and the enjoyment of all freedoms the Ethiopian regime fails abysmally.

First and foremost, I believe that the foundation of any democracy worthy of the name is genuine and real empowerment of the people. Empowerment means the recognition and acceptance of the sovereignty

⁸ History as a System and other Essays Toward a Philosophy of History, New York, 1961, p.81.

of the people, as individuals and as a people. Sovereign people own and control the government, and not the reverse as in Ethiopia where the law and the instruments of the law such as the police and the judicial system are used to oppress the people.

Furthermore, empowerment is inextricably related to freedom. If empowerment does not mean freedom it becomes only an empty slogan for dictatorial regimes. In fact the very essence of empowerment is freedom, freedom which will release the physical, mental and spiritual energy residing in every individual and therefore in the people as a whole. The characteristic abject poverty in Ethiopia and other African countries is the consequence of lack of freedom. It is not a consequence of lack of material resources. It is a consequence of the degradation of man, the end and the means of all resources. Freedom as empowerment should not be understood only in its political sense, but also in its economic and social senses as well. With such empowerment comes freedom from fear, freedom from persecution, and freedom to make an honest living in the area of one's choice. Creativity becomes a function of empowered freedom.

Unfortunately, however, in Ethiopia generating fear and stifling creativity is the preoccupation of those who are in power by force of arms, fraud and deception.⁹ Extra-judicial killing, torture, arbitrary detentions are used routinely to instil fear into the Ethiopian people in order to reduce them into docile clients. In fact generating fear is the most important business for those in power today. The irony is that the perpetrators of fear are themselves so gripped by fear that they, too, have lost their freedom. In ten years the Prime Minister has come out publicly in Addis Abeba only once, and that in a bulletproof glass cage!

There is perhaps nothing more that scares dictators as freedom does. Freedom that brings out the worst in man they consider to be their domain and a monopoly in which no competitor is allowed. On the other hand, freedom that brings out the best in man is anathema to them, and exposes their barbarism, greed and backwardness. Therefore, in spite of the lip service they pay to freedom, their suppression of freedom is total. It may sound strange but the President of Ethiopia complained recently that he could not have his views published.

The empowerment of the people, people as free and sovereign citizens is the foundation for a range of choices for selecting their representatives for various offices of government. Free and fair elections become the expression of the will and the power of the people, and of their capacity to change governments peacefully. This is, I think, the essence of democracy. Freedoms of assembly and of association as well as freedom of expression are effective tools only for empowered people.

⁹ Recently, the President, Dr. Negaso Gidada, accepted the responsibility for being deceived by the Prime Minister and that he will not be duped any longer. Reporter, (an Amharic newspaper, Meskerem 21 (September 30), 1994 (2001)).

Otherwise, these become instruments for dictatorial regimes to manipulate the people, as is the case in Ethiopia.

In Ethiopia those who hold opposing views to that of the regime in power are declared “enemies”. Free associations of any kind are almost impossible in Ethiopia today. Any person who has a different view from that of the Weyyane is considered to be an enemy. That is why Dr. Taye Wolde-Semayat, the President of the Ethiopian Teachers Association is in jail on a fabricated charge. That is why the legitimately elected President of the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions, Dawi Ibrahim is in exile in Holland. That is why the Ethiopian University Teachers Association was practically demolished by dismissing about forty of the best and most experienced faculty members by one stroke of the pen. The most recent casualty is the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, which is now suspended, and its bank account blocked. Clearly what the Weyyane regime wants are associations that are puppets without will or power.

Organizing meetings for political parties is very difficult. The halls become suddenly occupied by another group of the ruling party. The Council of Alternative Forces, by All Amhara Peoples Organization, and by Ethiopian Democratic Party, has encountered such problems as recently as last month. Since May numerous political parties including the Council of Alternative forces, the Ethiopian Democratic Party and the All Amhara Peoples Organization have had many of their members detained and tortured

The Constitution provides for broad and comprehensive freedoms of expression (Article 29), freedom of assembly (Article 30), and freedom of association (Article 31). In practice, however, these freedoms are not only stringently restricted but they also have serious risks. Take political parties, for instance. They can have offices in Addis Abeba because there are the embassies and international organizations, but outside Addis Abeba it is extremely difficult for them to have offices and to have people come to them. Private newspapers are plenty in Addis Abeba, but they cannot be distributed freely outside this city. Even in Addis Abeba newspaper vendors have been harassed, beaten and detained. So although the printing of newspapers goes on the regime makes absolutely sure that it will be both risky and unprofitable. In addition there is the harassment of journalists, detention and the penalty of stiff fines. All this may be surpassed. The most serious problem with newspapers is that the regime has turned a deaf ear to them preventing any sort of meaningful dialogue with the people.

Article 38 of the Constitution provides for free and fair elections. The practice, however, is the contrary. Ethiopian elections are nothing more than farcical. In spite of the Constitution even the election laws are full of serious contradictions flaws deliberately injected for purposes

of manipulation. As the reports of many observer groups testify,¹⁰ campaigns of intimidation and terror have been common from the days of registration to the Election Day. Numerous persons have been killed, wounded, tortured and detained during these periods for no reason other than being supporters of opposition parties. The most recent examples are in the Southern Region, the Gambella Region and in Addis Abeba. The actions of the Weyyane during these farcical elections suggest that they want nothing short of total control.

The regime may legislate on anything at any time even against the provisions of the constitution. Very recently the regime enacted a law in just one day to deny bail to people detained on suspicion of corruption. A few years back it legislated a law for recall, which is nothing less than passing an order to the people to remove the “elected” members. This is a mechanism that will help it purge the so-called parliament of unwanted members. They have done this many times and have done it recently to their own dissenting group from Tigray. The people of Tigray were asked to recall the persons for whom they had voted unanimously in the May election. They did. They asked the people to vote for new candidates. They did. The people have no power. The people have no will. The dismissed members tried to bring the matter to the courts, but they were unsuccessful. In effect the Weyyane appoint who shall represent the people, and remove them when they no longer serve their interests. That is what is called election in Ethiopia. Those who are familiar with communist elections recognize it readily. Where elections of party cadres are totally guaranteed by coercion, there is no reason for accountability or for transparency. In fact most Ethiopians have never seen most of those who ruled them for ten years. Even the names and pictures of some of them came out publicly only recently, after the internal split of the Weyyane.

The Weyyane has successfully deceived the Western world by its rhetoric on democracy for ten years. The Western world remained totally blind to the gruesome human and political rights violations of the Ethiopian people. The diplomatic, economic and military support provided to the Weyyane regime strengthened it and encouraged it to be even more high-handed. So much so that now by making Revolutionary Democracy its open policy and by reintroducing the old communist anti-imperialist slogan with a feigned commitment to market economy it hopes to deceive the Western world for another ten years more. The Weyyane has publicly declared that liberal democracy is unfit for a backward country like Ethiopia.¹¹

4. CONCLUSION

¹⁰ The Ethiopian Human Rights Council, The 2002 Ethiopian Local Elections, A Report on EHRCO's Monitoring Activities and findings, Addis Abeba, April 2001.

¹¹ EPRDF, Yeabiyotawi Demokrasi Yelimat Mesmerochina Stratyjiwoch, (in Amharic) Addis Abeba, 1992 (Eth.Cal.), The date is false, the book came out in 1993 (Eth.Cal.)

Judging by what has been happening for the last ten years in Ethiopia the process toward democratisation is effectively blocked. The new policy of Revolutionary Democracy is the final signal for demolishing any lingering hope for liberal democracy, as we know it. The strange concept of Revolutionary Democracy is founded, as are all rationalizations for tyranny, on the faceless, mindless and voiceless mass whose interest is held to be the paramount concern of the dictatorial regime. Anyone who dares to criticise Revolutionary Democracy, therefore, stands automatically not only against the regime but also against the masses; one may also be labelled an imperialist stooge.

The previous regime that had openly declared itself to be Marxist-Leninist had nationalized all urban and rural land, all industries and financial institutions, as well as nearly all houses. The present regime that declares that it has a market-oriented economic policy still continues with the nationalized means of production and enterprises after ten years in power. Today, therefore, the regime in power has the monopoly of control of all urban and rural land and of all the nationalized houses, financial institutions and industries. In addition, it has total control over employment in all government institutions. This is not all. The ruling party, using its political power, has built a large multi-million dollar business empire ranging from news agency and entertainment to financial institutions, industries and large commercial enterprises. Private businessmen find it very difficult to compete with these politically powerful firms. This is the acme of abuse of power and of corruption.

The whole world knows that Ethiopia is the poorest country in the world. The Economic Report of the Ethiopian Economic Association bluntly states that “the miserable condition of the Ethiopian people is reflected in every sector and by all standard social and economic indicators one chooses to use.”¹² Where there is no freedom there cannot be development. Ethiopia’s poverty has its roots in malgovernance of the people and mismanagement of resources. The country has abundant agricultural resources that could enable it to produce a wide variety of crops, fruits, vegetables and cash crops like coffee. Neither is Ethiopia short of trained manpower. The best educated and most experienced Ethiopians in many fields are exiles in all parts of the world. They are in exile because the high school or college dropouts in power are anti-intellectual and attract only mediocrity. As a result the investment climate is perceived to be very risky.

The Ethiopian peasants who form the great majority of the population are under permanent risk of starvation. The explanation for the recurrent famines that decimate Ethiopian peasants is not, as is often believed, the aberration of natural conditions. Rather, it is the

¹² Ed. Befekadu Degefe and Berhanu Nega, The Ethiopian Economic Association, Annual Report on the Ethiopian Economy, Vol. I, 1999-2000, p.1.

excessive oppression and exploitation of the powerless and voiceless peasants, which, on one hand, becomes a clear disincentive for raising the productivity of peasants, and, on the other, allows no possibility for saving either in cash or in kind. About two-thirds of Ethiopian peasants cultivate fragmented plots of land that is less than one hectare. Successive regimes fool the deliberately gullible donors that they could modernize these miniscule and fragmented peasant farms, especially when the peasants do not own the land. There is no way that these small and fragmented plots of land could be modernized. There is no way that Ethiopian peasants will be free from famine unless they are liberated and become masters of their own land and of their own destiny.

Assistance coming in form of relief aid for the last thirty years has been automatic and thoughtless. The donors never stop to ask themselves why the problem continues or whether it has any chance of ever being resolved. Relief assistance is business, so it must go on. Moreover, dealing with the animal needs is simpler and more profitable than dealing with the higher human needs like democracy, liberty, justice, and the rule of law. We are often told that these higher human needs are an internal matter. This is an excuse for inaction. The same Western governments do not believe that strengthening a tyrannical regime economically and militarily and equipping it with all the instruments of oppression is an internal matter.

Today the world is so interconnected that all countries affect each other in more ways than one. Helping and strengthening dictatorial regimes at the expense of the people under their rule cannot be acceptable. Regional peace and security cannot be ensured when dictatorial regimes sacrifice the basic interests of their peoples for their military prowess. Hatred and violence cannot be contained within boundaries when those that are rightly or wrongly perceived to be the supporters of the oppressors are beyond. Economic and military assistance to countries that do not have a democratically elected government is fruitless because it burns in the perpetual conflict that is generated by dictatorial regimes. Ethiopia is a very good example of the build-and-destroy economic assistance program. Bestowing credibility and respectability to terrorists when they acquire political power does not serve even as an expedient tactic for long.

If the peoples of the world desire to live in a condition of peace and security in freedom, it will be necessary to realize that we are in the twenty-first century and not at the beginning of the twentieth century. In this age of information technology relationships between countries have to be based on new foundations consistent with instant transmission of all kinds of knowledge and travel. Knowledge without morality like power without morality can be dangerous. When despair squeezes the joy of life out of most individuals under dictatorial regimes, the common good, morality and human values may seem the luxury of

the affluent and the contented. We have to redefine sovereignty. We have to redefine national self-interest. We have to redefine intervention or interference. We have to formulate, as Senator Fulbright suggested nearly half a century ago, rules of conduct that are universally accepted and enforceable. I am convinced we live in a new and different stage of human development. In the past differences accentuated disproportionately dictated human relationships. In spite of the recent and still ongoing retrogression, humanity is moving away from herd instinct of whatever type to individuality and rationality; from isolation to integration; from self-sufficiency to interdependence; from war and destruction to peace and prosperity. The achievements of Europe and America, not only in science and technology, but also more importantly in the enjoyment of freedoms and in the security that generate creativity, are the aspirations of humanity. Our vision of the future, therefore, is that no part of the stream of humanity may be dammed or polluted, because it will certainly have an effect on the movement and direction of the rest. This is the reality of the present era. That is the reason for my plea for international morality. Humanity can achieve peace and security in freedom when international relations are based on moral principles that transcend all differences.