

# Press Release

## Sidama National Liberation Organization, SNLO

August 20 2006

### **Sidama Liberation Front (SLF) Rejects Sidama National Liberation Organization's Offer for Political Unity.**

The Sidama National Liberation Organization (SNLO) is a political organization that represents over 5 million people of Sidama. The organization is a continuation of the Sidama liberation struggle that started toward the end of the feudal monarchy in the country in early 1970s. The organization draws its support from the Sidama people at home and in Diaspora.

In July 2006 the executive committee of SNLO unanimously endorsed the agenda of forging greater political unity with other Sidama political organization and particularly with the Sidama Liberation Front (SLF) in order to strengthen and speed up our struggle to alleviate the continued suffering of our people.

Accordingly, the selected members of the SNLO executive committee led by the chairperson of the organization carried out series of discussions with the leader of SLF between mid June and August 13, 2006. The discussions were aimed at forging a greater unity between SNLO and SLF in order to create a conducive environment for members of both political organization to work together in the context of the recent political developments in and concerning Ethiopia.

In the discussions, the SNLO leadership repeatedly expressed its willingness to forge a greater unity between the two organizations in the interest of the Sidama people. Therefore, to speed up the unity and create a conducive environment to work together, the SNLO leadership requested SLF to work and/or revise on the following information that will serve as the basis for the future arrangements so as to strengthen the structural foundation and add the values of transparency and accountability in the organizational operations. These were:

- 1) SLF was requested to provide its organizational structure, operational systems, strategic plans, resource mobilization and utilization mechanisms, article of association with details of job description for discussion
- 2) SLF was insisting on working and revising the memoranda of understanding signed between it and various other likeminded liberation fronts and democratic organizations and with the recently established Front of Ethiopia n opposition parties to serve as the basis on which the future arrangement between SLF and SNLO can be made.

- 3) Sign a memorandum of understanding between SLF and SNLO to pave the way for the anticipated unity between the two organizations.

However, although the leader of SLF initially agreed to work or revise on these documents and indicated his readiness to work together with the leadership of SNLO, he later failed to stick on the agreements reached so far to work on these basic information. Moreover, he emphatically rejected the idea of signing any memorandum of understanding between the two organizations.

Therefore, the opportunity to strengthen the isolated political activities that are being carried out in the name of the Sidama people have been wasted because of the vested interest of the SLF leadership rejecting the consensus reached so far.

Therefore, the executive committee of SNLO decided that:

- 1) It is not possible to create any unity with an organization that does not have a clear organizational structure, operational plans and systems and strategic directions and or is not willing to share and/or work on these basic information with those who are ready to work together with its organization
- 2) SNLO is a well organized political organization with a clear and well developed political programme, short, medium and long term operational and strategic plans as well as a clear organizational structure which is filled with capable Sidama individuals both at home and in Diaspora. These individuals are fully committed to liberating the Sidama people. SNLO's support structure emanates from the Sidama people at the grass roots level. SNLO is not a one-man-one-computer organization. Based on the overwhelming support of the heroic Sidama people both at home and in Diaspora the SNLO will continue its struggle for emancipating the Sidama people with or with out the support of other political organization that claim to represent the Sidama people.
- 3) SNLO deeply regrets the rejection of its offer for greater unity by SLF and would like to inform the likeminded Ethiopian opposition political organizations to make their assessment of the situation and arrive at the necessary conclusions and thinking over alternative options regarding their future support for the emancipation of the Sidama people.
- 4) Finally, however, the SNLO leadership would like to reiterate that it will keep the door open for any future negotiations with SLF and other Sidama political parties as long as the latter is willing and able to laid conducive working environment for greater unity. SNLO also offers the same willingness for other liberation fronts and democratic organization on top of expressing its unprecedented support for the recently established unity of the main Ethiopian opposition parities in The Netherlands.

SNLO Executive Committee  
August 20, 2006.