



Date: February 21, 2022

Congratulations to Ethiopians and Friends of Ethiopia on the first power generation of the GERD:

Today, Sunday, February 20, 2022, heralded the long-awaited success story of the Ethiopian's GERD generating 350 MW of electricity. This is a breaking news of epoch proportion for millions of Ethiopians living darkness for far too long. It is no surprise the news sends waves of jubilation and euphoria from Addis Ababa to Africa, Australia, Europe, America, Asia, Middle East and Canada. The power generation electrified the dream of aspiring Ethiopians for a bright future through the light generated by GERD. It's a true testament of what unity can bring to our impoverished country. UNITED WE STAND-DIVIDED WE FALL.

Alliance For GERD in Canada (AFGIC) sends a warm congratulations to the people of Ethiopia and for all diaspora communities in Canada who worked actively to see the successful completion of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and its power generation. On February 20, 2022, history is made as the turbines of the GERD roared to start generating the much-needed electricity to 60 million Ethiopians. As always today's history proves that an untied Ethiopia wins, GERD is one testament of the present. It cannot be done without your support and cooperation. Thank you and congratulations to all Ethio-Canadians.

With this occasion, we would like to note that the month of February has a special place in Ethiopia's up and down socio-economic and political history. This month Ethiopia showcased its power of winning and gaining through Ethiopian's unity of purpose. It is in February Ethiopia defeated invading Italian forces in 1896 and became a symbol of freedom for colonized countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Some eleven (11) years ago the seed of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) was planted in the wilderness of Benshangul, Ethiopia. It brought together tens of millions of Ethiopians irrespective of ethnicity, religion, political persuasion or background including those in the diaspora from all corners of the planet.

Ethiopians' common denominator has been to bring every citizen out of poverty, a desire clearly shown to ensuring a prosperous and democratic Ethiopia. To this effect Ethiopians have had little, if any, time for petty squabbles that often permeated their politics for far too long.

In the absence of funding support from the international financial institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF), Ethiopians decided to tighten their belt to self-finance the GERD, which costs a colossal amount of USD \$4.5 billion dollars of Ethiopia's coffer. Ethiopians coalesced under the banner of self-aggrandizement got united to contribute whatever they have to fulfill their dream of completing the construction of their national power generation plant.

Over 80 million Ethiopians whose income per capita often is below the UN poverty line of \$1.25 per day contributed. Government, business, students, intelligentsia, diplomats, diaspora, kids, elderly men and women, religious institutions, the army and police force, all contributed wholeheartedly to make their dream of flagship project a reality.

The most heartwarming of all is the act of a selfless little 9 years old boy in Addis Ababa who tenders his living by selling chicken needs our collective praise and appreciation. The boy chose a heavier chicken, among his few flocks of chickens to sell and contributed it to the authorities as his commitment to the GERD. It is this type of selfless generosity of Ethiopians that brought the GERD to today's jubilation.

As we express our joy and excitement, and sometimes the pride of accomplishment, we would also like to note that Ethiopians have always worked in unity for the betterment of their country whose hard work is always blessed by their almighty creator-GOD. AFGIC firmly believes that the success achieved at the GERD today needs to nurture our indomitable spirit in furthering our resolve of bringing Ethiopia from the abyss of poverty. **LONG LIVE THE UNITY OF THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE. YOUR UNITY BRINGS WONDERS.**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF AFGIC