

## Interview

**“Realizing the Election Code requires huge commitment and sacrifice.”**

**- Ato Muktar Kedir**

Diverse political parties are making preparations for the National and Regional Election. In connection with this we had an interview with Ato Muktar Kedir, Head of the EPRDF Council Office. Excerpts follow:

**Question:** What are the goals of EPRDF in the 2010 election?

**Ato Muktar:** The EPRDF has designed a strategy and the goals of the party are spelt out in that strategy. The three major goals of EPRDF are complementary. The first goal is making the election free, fair and democratic; the second holding an election credible to the public. The third and final goal is to win a majority vote and emerge winner in both the federal and regional elections. We have thus striving to meet those three goals.

**Question:** What does the activity of EPRDF look like with regard to the election?

**Ato Muktar:** The party has prepared a detailed plan that will help it meet the goals. The plan has been effectively implemented. The detailed plan has clearly set the works and implementation directives to be carried out up until the conclusion of the election. Hence close follow-ups and support have been provided for the implementation of those. The people have to actively participate in the election. For that to happen, our structures should operate diligently and effectively. EPRDF, following the endorsement of the Election Code, has been undertaking enormous activities to meet its stated goals. Thus far the works undertaken by the party are successful .We shall further exert efforts for the holding of a successful election.

**Question:** What role did EPRDF play in the formulation of the Proclamation of Election Code for Political Parties?

**Ato Muktar:** The initiative for writing a code that governs all parties was taken by EPRDF. That is to mean it has exerted immense efforts not only to generate ideas that will help cultivate the culture of holding peaceful and democratic election in the country, but also saw to it that it evolved into a law. The issuance of an election code, which enforces the supremacy of law and

makes political parties abide by the law when engaging in politics, demonstrates that we have taken a big leap forward.

On the other hand the issuance of the proclamation does not yield results by itself. I believe that realizing the Election Code requires far more commitment and sacrifice than the negotiation and sacrifice paid for its becoming a Code. EPRDF has been conducting various training and awareness creation works on the Election Code so that its members from the leadership down to Woreda level could fully comprehend it .The main rationale for this undertaking is the belief in the need of the awareness of the cross-sections of the society so as to fully implement the Code.

The Code also raises one important issue about the establishment of a joint national council of parties. This task was accomplished, and the council is indeed a crucial institution towards realizing the Election Code.

In brief the EPRDF is fully committed to the realization the Code and it will further intensify its activities for the actualization of this same cause.

**Question:** What agendas has EPRDF identified so as to emerge victorious?

**Ato Muktar:** We have tested economic, social policies as well as other policies on building of a democratic order and good governance. All were designed and effectively implemented over the years. Those fruitful policies have helped in registering better results during the past years. To cite an instance, recalling the rapid economic growth registered during the last six years in particular may suffice here. EPRDF will therefore take up the agenda of sustaining and consolidating this rapid growth during the election. It has also the agenda of examining shortcomings and filling the gaps in the pursuit for the establishment of a democratic system. EPRDF will hold on to its successful and fruitful policies. Its main agenda is of course the consolidation of the development and good governance works it has been undertaking. And to

deliver these EPRDF is the kind of organization that has the determination and capability to consolidate its gains and rectify shortcomings.

**Question:** What does the selection and composition of EPRDF candidates look like?

**Ato Muktar:** EPDRF will be contesting in four regional states (Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and SNNPR) and two cities (Addis Ababa and Diredawa). Candidates' selection was rigorous and is expected to bear fruit. The composition of the candidates centers cross-sections of the society and pays special attention to women. At least 33.3 percent of EPRDF candidates are female. It should be noted here also that our candidates are not new recruits but experienced members which took part in various fields of work and as leaders, subsequently winning credibility among the public.

**Question:** Can the negotiations conducted with the opposition on the formulation of the Election Code reflect shifts in the stand of the EPRDF?

**Ato Muktar:** This was not a negotiation on political programmes. Some people might have misunderstood this process. But the community should correct this erroneous view as it is a distortion. The negotiation points focused on the ethics leaders of parties, their members and candidates should observe during the election, and on the ethical issues they should heed to during campaigning. Subsequently those points were clearly stated in the Election Code. We negotiated with the opposition to make the election successful, and this had nothing to do with the political programmes of the parties. It was in no way related to shifts in political position.