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Press Release

CALL TO ACTION!!!

STAND UP FOR LIBERTY, AND AMERICA WILL STAND WITH YOU!
George W. Bush

**WORLDWIDE 100,000 LETTERS-IN-TEN-DAYS CAMPAIGN
TO STOP HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ETHIOPIA
AND PASS H.R. 5680**

Prof. Alemayehu G. Mariam today called Ethiopian Americans and other Ethiopians throughout the world to begin a campaign to deliver 100,000 letters in the next 10 days to the White House and express appreciation to President Bush for his promise: "All who live in tyranny and hopelessness can know: the United States will not ignore your oppression, or excuse your oppressors. When you stand for your liberty, we will stand with you." He also urged all freedom-loving Ethiopians to ask the President to support H.R. 5680 in their letters.

In a passionate letter to the President, Prof. Alemayehu described the dire human rights situation in Ethiopia. He suggested to the President that there are two kinds of Ethiopians in the world today, "those who live with dignity, respect and hope in the free world, and millions who live in their homeland seared in the flames of withering tyranny and oppression."

He told the Coalition for HR 5680 that "Ethiopian Americans have a special duty to stand up for human rights in Ethiopia because they have the constitutional right to demand their tax dollars not be used to support a ruthless dictatorship." He asked, "if we in America, with all our liberties fail to stand up for the human rights of those we left behind in Ethiopia, who will stand up for them? It is not fair to expect Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the other human rights organizations do the heavy lifting while we stand on the sidelines with folded arms. The old saying is still true: 'God helps only those who help themselves.'"

Commenting on the supposed relationship between terrorism and human rights that the Ethiopian regime has been trying to establish, Prof. Alemayehu wrote the President, "You should rest assured that Ethiopians will never abandon America in its struggle against global terror. Never! Never! Never! But, Mr. President, America must also never, never, never abandon the cause of human rights in Ethiopia."

Asking the President to support H.R. 5680, Prof. Alemayehu wrote, “Mr. President, in the words of the great American civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, in H.R. 5680, America offers Ethiopia a promissory note for \$20 million in down payment to promote freedom, democracy and human rights. But instead of accepting and cashing this note in the bank of democracy and human rights, the present rulers in Ethiopia have hired a mighty army of lobbyist to defeat the bill, thereby extinguishing forever the yearning for freedom of the Ethiopian people.”

Prof. Alemayehu asked every freedom-loving Ethiopian Americans and Ethiopians to write a personal letter and ask President Bush to support H.R. 5680. He urged all Ethiopians committed to justice and human rights **to write letters of their own, or endorse his letter with their signatures and send it to the President.**

He concluded by stressing the importance of engaging the American people: “I make a personal plea to all Ethiopians throughout the world to write the President a letter, but I plead with Ethiopian Americans to get their friends, neighbors, friends, church members, co-workers, classmates and others to join in our struggle for human rights in Ethiopia. Let us ask them to write letters of support on behalf of our cause -- the cause of freedom, democracy and human rights.”

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500