

PRESS RELEASE

Millions commemorate the passing of visionary leader Meles

Thursday 21st August 2014

LONDON

Millions of Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia congregated around the world yesterday to commemorate the untimely passing of Ethiopia's late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, and to celebrate his remarkable life.

Commemorations began with a memorial service held at Gulele Botanic Centre, Addis Ababa where a memorial park is being laid out to honour the late Prime Minister and where tree seedlings were planted in commemoration of the second anniversary of his death.

In a speech, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desselagn said the government is working with determination to attain the vision of the former Prime Minister by greening the Ethiopian economy. He said the government has been "working day and night to realize the legacy of Meles who "laid solid foundations that ensure the interest of his country and that of Africa in general at international forums."



(left) PM Hailemariam Desalegn, President Mulatu Teshome and W/ro Azeb Mesfin at the event

Meles Foundation Board President, Azeb Mesfin, the late Prime Minister's wife, said he was a leader who served his country and its people without respite. She expressed her heartfelt gratitude, on behalf of her family, for all the comforting messages of condolence and support they had received. An unveiling ceremony with a photo exhibition revealed the design for the Foundation's future building.

Foreign Affairs Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, said he would work without rest to realize the vision of the great leader to create a prosperous Ethiopia. Meles had done so much to extricate the people of Ethiopia from poverty and integrate the region by creating peace and stability in East Africa, he said. The minister recalled that the diplomatic principle of the late prime minister was outward looking and based on mutual benefit.

Ambassadors and foreign diplomats who took part in planting tree seedlings said Meles has earned international recognition for his country and made Ethiopia the voice of Africa.

Mexico's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Juan Alfredo Miranda Ortiz, said Prime Minister Meles Zenawi had boosted the relationship of Ethiopia with other countries. "He is a great leader who opened a new chapter in the relationship of Ethiopia and Mexico."

Political Advisor to China's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Qin Jian, said the strong relations Ethiopia has created with Asian countries, and particularly with China, were a result of the efforts of Meles Zenawi. Meles was a great leader who made Ethiopia an investment destination and built the image of the country across the globe, he said.



President Mulatu Teshome, ministers, high government officials, ambassadors, diplomats, and religious leaders attended the tree planting ceremony.

Candle lit ceremonies took place in Addis Ababa and in cities nationwide and around the world.

In London, hundreds gathered at a candlelit vigil where many spoke of PM Meles' legacy and the confidence that he has engendered in Ethiopians to carry forward the innovative and inspirational policies which have transformed the country and will continue to do so into the future.



Meles' legacy will be the future total transformation of Ethiopia, a legacy now being taken forward by "the Meles generation". The Abuna of the Ethiopian Orthodox church gave spiritual comfort to those who mourned and spoke of the

hope that Meles had instigated which had inspired so many.

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