

Remarks made by the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign  
Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
**H. E. Ato Hailermariam Dessalegn,**  
at the occasion of the dedication ceremony of the new U.S.  
Embassy Building in Addis Ababa on 31 January 2011

**The Honorable Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. James Steinberg**

**The Honorable Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Ambassador Johnnie Carson,**

**The Honorable Ambassadors Donald Both and Michael Battle,**

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is an honor and a distinct privilege to be here today on the opening of the new premises of the United States Embassy in Addis Ababa. The dedication of the new Embassy building demonstrates not only America's historical links with Ethiopia but also the current strength of the wider relationship between the United States and Ethiopia. What we celebrate today is in fact the richness of our cultural and economic ties as well as the strength of our diplomatic relationship that has been tested over time.

**Excellencies**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

The relationship between the United States and Ethiopia dates back way far even before the signing of the treaty of Amity and Commerce between Emperor Menilik and President

Roosevelt in 1903. I would like, therefore to take this opportunity to give some highlights of the close relationship that has been established on the basis of mutual understanding, respect and dignity well over a century.

As much as the United States has been an inspiring influence in the advancement of science and technology, democracy and good governance; Ethiopia throughout history has also served as a powerful source of motivation for the American people in their struggle for civil liberty and equality. The image of Ethiopia as a bastion of freedom and independence became particularly widespread in the 19<sup>th</sup> and well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The subsequent victories over Fascism during the Second World War stimulated the energies of American people and in particular captured the great African American thinker and philosopher Du Bois, in the distinguished company of Dr. Martin Luther King who all have taken up the spirit of Ethiopia as a source of enlightenment; They saw the courageous struggle of Ethiopia as a representative of the whole community of Africans everywhere, persisting into final victory in their long march to civil liberty and freedom.

Similarly the contribution of the United States to Ethiopia has inspiring precedents. The role Americans in supporting Ethiopia during the Italian invasion was historic in such a way

that people all over the United States protested against the invasion; raised funds and medical supplies for Ethiopia relief. People in Harlem, Jersey City, Chicago, Oklahoma, Texas and many other cities of the US parade in support of Ethiopia. More than 17,000 Americans enlisted to fight for us and many more came here to assist in the post war reconstruction effort. In subsequent years the US contribution in the field of aviation, education, health, telecommunication, military and many other sectors has been monumental.

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to seize this historic moment to thank the United States Government and its people who actively supported Ethiopia, both in times of hardship and tranquility over the years. And in particular I would like to recognize US citizens who went to the extent of giving their life for the cause of Ethiopia. I believe it is right to remember those who in the spirit of the late Congressman Mickey Leland work hard to built our relationship on the basis of dignity, faith and hope.

Today as we celebrate our long standing and time tested relationship; I believe and hope many of you will share my thoughts that our affinity and closeness is clearly expressing itself in new birth and new life. The energies of our two peoples are clearly awakening at a new level of vitality. I believe we can

work in close and creative harmony; and by doing so we can honor our great for bearers.

With that in mind, ladies and gentlemen, we in Ethiopia want to inject a new impetus and commitment to our relationship with the United States. We want to elevate our links by exploring fresh opportunities as well as building a network of activities that strengthen our bilateral relationship.

Here I believe the Ethiopian and American ingenuity and creativity; and the relationship that has been built on trust and respect will play a crucial role.

Finally, after I arrived at the Embassy compound and looking at the new building, I just thought that the enormity of the size of the building, the modernity of the architecture, the size of the work force, the Variety of the service it provides made me think that it perfectly mirrors the magnitude and the depth of the relationship that exist between our two countries. Having also seen the size of the building I know that it can accommodate more than two American Ambassadors.

**Congratulations**

**Thank you**