
Conference on Good Governance, Peace, Security, and Sustainable Development in the Horn of Africa

Washington DC, April 9 to 11, 2010

The Horn of Africa continues to be extremely fragile. The sub-region's volatility has increased significantly in the post 9/11 period. The total collapse of Somalia and the irresponsible and imprudent intervention of outsiders in the affairs of Somalia have created fertile ground for the rise of radical Islam in the region. Hence, the complex ethnic, religious and inter-state tensions make the Horn of Africa one of the most volatile places in the world. The Ethio-Eritrea boundary conflict remains unresolved. The absence of democratic institutions in the Horn of Africa and the new tension in the Sudan further makes the sub-region one of the most conflict-ridden and with a potential for more explosive scenarios ahead.



The purpose of this conference is, therefore, to bring together scholars, civil society leaders, activists, diplomats, journalists of the free press and representatives of the international community to one forum to highlight potential tragic conflicts that have escaped the minds of many in the past. The focus of the discussion will be on how to democratize Ethiopia, the biggest entity, in the Horn of Africa. The democratization of Ethiopia will certainly pave the way for peace, security, democracy, good governance, and sustainable development in the region at large.

The conference is sponsored by a number of civil society networks and advocacy organizations. In many respects this conference will be a unique and historical forum. At the end of the conference, a public meeting will be held where distinguished personalities will address the participants and the community at large. The viability of bringing change through the ballot box will be examined and how to clip the wings of the dictatorship will be outlined. Participants will make commitment to a roadmap for democratizing Ethiopia. Focus will be given to the state of the free press in Ethiopia and the plight of journalists who faced extreme difficulties, persecution and exile for doing their jobs. The conference will also hold a special program to honor those who have made notable sacrifices in the struggle for freedom and democracy. Civil society leaders and academics from the US and rest of Africa will share their experiences.

The three-day long conference will be in Washington DC. It is scheduled to be held from April 9 to 11, 2010. We are expecting it to be the biggest conference that has ever been organized to exclusively focus on Ethiopia within the context of the Horn of Africa.

The State of Governance in Ethiopia:

Past and present elections, post election scenarios; the state of governance, the state of human rights, freedom of the press, ethnic relations in today's Ethiopia; the quest for a lasting democracy and good governance, etc.;

The role of civil societies, independent judiciary, independent security, freedom of the press in democratizing Ethiopia, etc.;

The State of the Ethiopian Economy:

Poverty, dependence, debt and foreign investment; the role of the TPLF as a Business Empire and a political party; economic inequality and the lack of equitable and sustainable development ; opaque land grab deals with foreign companies and implications for food self –sufficiency , national security and the environment; etc;

Peace and Security Challenges and Prospects in the Horn Africa:

Mr. Meles Zenawi's policies in the region, the policies of foreign powers in the Horn of Africa, border issues; Prospects and Solutions for the Future of Ethio-Eritrea relations;

The threat of terrorism in the region; absence of good governance, ethnic politics, environmental degradation, climate change, consequences of being landlocked, etc. as causes for interstate and intrastate conflicts, instability, and insecurity in the Horn of Africa sub-region; Conflict prevention and resolution.

The papers must be short and presentable in 20 minutes or less. They must also be in either Amharic or English. Other Horn of Africa indigenous languages are acceptable provided there is translation and an interpreter is available at the cost of the presenter. Tables and annexes must be kept to the minimum.

This is an independent forum that does not advocate the political view of any single party or organization. Papers should be sent to the e-mail address below by March 26, 2010. The organizing committee calls upon all concerned to support and attend this historic conference.

Contact e-mail: HornofAfricaGPS@gmail.com

Concerns and queries could be addressed to Horn of Africa Conference Organizing Committee secretariat Telephone number @ 202-386-3037

Horn of Africa Conference Organizing Joint Committee
Advocacy for Ethiopia (AFE)
Ethiopian National Priorities Consultative Process (ENPCP)
February 8, 2010

Horn of Africa map: Courtesy of University of Minnesota