EPLF AND TPLF JOINT STATEMENT

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) have scored spectacular victories over the past ten months. The regime in Addis Abeba has suffered heavy defeats. The Derg is in deepening crisis and its downfall is accelerating.

The heavy defeats of the fascist regime and the quickening pace of its downfall have created favourable conditions for the struggle of the Ethiopian peoples for democracy and justice, for the oppressed nationalities to exercise their right to self-determination, as well as for the Eritrean people's struggle for self-determination and independence. The day is fast approaching when the Ethiopian peoples, through their united struggle, will destroy this anti people regime which has caused them much suffering for so long, and a democratic state based on voluntary unity and equality will be established. Favourable conditions for the consolidation of their struggles are being created.

At the same time, the just anti colonial struggle of the Eritrean people is pressing towards a final victory. Favourable ground is being laid for the Eritrean people to determine their destiny, for a lasting solution to the protracted war, for peaceful development in Eritrea, and for peace and stability for the peoples of Ethiopia and the Eritrean people.

The fascist Derg is making all out preparations to drive the Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples into a much bloodier war, with the aim of clinging to power at the expense of the blood and suffering of the two peoples. It has begun, with the support of its backers, to implement its declarations of intensifying and escalating the war whose aim is to wage a campaign of extermination in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

The Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples must confront the threat posed by the regime's desperate and brutal war of extermination by intensifying their struggle and heightening their mutual cooperation. Realising that the opportunity for the attainment of their aspirations for peace and democracy and the realization of their rights is greater than ever, they must now coordinate their efforts to crush the tottering anti people regime.

The various organisations leading the struggle of the two peoples should handle their differences democratically, and intensify and consolidate their cooperation for the attainment of common goals on the basis of their common views. The Derg and its backers must not be given the chance to mount the suppression and counter-offensive which they are preparing in order to paper over the cracks threatening the regime. The various organisations should bury the regime with coordinated struggles and blows without respite.

Properly assessing the present situation and conscious of the great responsibility that places on each of them, the EPLF and TPLF had meetings from 20th-24th April 1988 at Politburo level, with the aim of reviewing their severed ties and coordinating their struggle. These meetings, which were held with a deep sense of solidarity and responsibility, ended in success.

The two organisations believe that differences between them, existing as well as future, ought to be handled democratically and should not become obstacles for meaningful cooperation based on common views on basic issues. They agreed that this understanding should also serve as the basis for their future cooperation. The two organisations confirmed that they have the following common fundamental views which make joint work and cooperation possible. They believe:

- 1. The expansionist and anti democratic regime in Addis Abeba must be destroyed. It is a regime that does not hesitate to crush the struggle of the peoples of Ethiopia and the Eritrean people, a regime that cannot satisfy the demands for democracy and the rights to self-determination of oppressed nationalities in Ethiopia and the demand for decolonisation in Eritrea.
- The intervention of the superpowers, the Soviet Union and United States, does not solve the problems of the region but creates and exacerbates them. Their intervention at the present time, especially that of the Soviet Union, should be opposed and condemned.
- 3. The struggle of the Eritrean people for independence is just and legitimate.
- 4. The struggles of the Ethiopian peoples for democracy and the right to self-determination are correct and just. National and multi-national organisa tions must unite their forces and struggle for the voluntary and equal union of the Ethiopian people in a way which serves best and to the highest degree, the rights and interests of the oppressed nationalities. The peoples' democratic union is realised only when the right to self-determination assures that they and only they, decide in a free and democratic way to unite.
- 5. Since the struggles of the Eritrean people and the peoples of Ethiopia are directed against a common enemy, there is a natural alliance which demands close cooperation.

To accomplish these joint aims and frustrate the enemy's plans for intensifying the war of extermination, the EPLF and TPLF have agreed to cooperate and consolidate the struggles of the Ethiopian peoples and the people of Eritrea for the realisation of their just goals. The two organisations believe that other combatant organisations should similarly handle the issues that separate them and cooperate in the struggle for common aims.

Oppressed Peoples of Ethiopia and Eritrea!

Although the Derg has been weakened, with the support it can get from its backers it is preparing to carry out a campaign of atrocities and extermination against you. In order to foil this sinister plan and create a region of peace and democracy by uprooting the oppressive regime, and thus crown your just goals with success, you must now, more than ever before, step up your efforts to coordinate your struggles. The time when the days of darkness under this oppressive and brutal regime will end and when your just goals and aspirations will be realised is not far away.

Combatant Ethiopian and Eritrean Organisations!

Now more than ever the situation is favourable for the fulfillment of the just goals for which you have fought for so long. Resolutely implement the imperative of the day, the coordination of the struggle against the regime!

Down with the fascist regime! Forward with the consolidation of the struggles of the Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples!

ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT TIGRAY PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT