



GERD Support Group in Belgium

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9 July 2020

Press Release

EGYPT SHOULD ABIDE BY INTERNATIONALLY AGREED PRINCIPLES ON FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF WATER RESOURCES

In the last few months, the dispute over the filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) has become the subject of international campaign by Egypt based on false claim of serious harm to it. The GERD is a non-consumptive hydroelectric power project on the Blue Nile River. It does not, in any significant manner, affect the volume of water flowing to the Sudan and Egypt.

About 65 million Ethiopians have no access to electricity; two-thirds of school children in Ethiopia are forced to stay in darkness while virtually all Egyptians have access to electricity. When the dam is completed, not only will it provide electricity to millions of Ethiopians, but it will also mitigate environmental degradation caused by the need for firewood.

Lifting its population out of poverty is a question of survival for Ethiopia. A nation of 110 million people, Ethiopia must, among other things, be able to use its water resources if it is to achieve its development goals. A post-colonial treaty of 1959 between Egypt and the Sudan, to which Ethiopia is not a party, allocated 67 per cent of the Nile waters to Egypt while the Sudan gets 23 percent and the remaining 10 per cent is reserved for evaporation loss. Yet, Ethiopia, the source of 86 per cent of the Nile waters, gets no share whatsoever.

It is against this reality that Ethiopia launched the construction of the GERD dam in 2011 with 100 percent local financing. Ethiopians from all walks of life have contributed, through donations, and sale of bonds. We believe that the unfair allocation of the waters of the Nile which Egypt seeks to maintain at the expense of Ethiopia needs to be rectified. Internationally accepted principles on equitable and reasonable utilization of shared water resources must be respected by Egypt.

We, therefore, urge the international community, including the EU and the UN to:

- understand Ethiopia's desire and determination to lift millions of its people out of abject poverty;
- lend its support to the ongoing AU-led negotiation process; and
- urge the negotiating parties to commit themselves to a peaceful negotiation as the only solution to the matter.

Coordinating Committee
GERD Support Group in Belgium

Enclosed: Fact Sheet

For further information: contact GERD Support Group in Belgium

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The GERD support group is composed of Belgians of Ethiopian origin and Ethiopians residing in Belgium