

Memo about the talks between Bulgarian and Ethiopian delegations in Moscow,
9 November 1977

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MEMO*

REFERENCE: Meeting between Comrade Stanko Todorov and the member of the Permanent committee of the Interim military administrative council /DERG/ of Ethiopia Berhanu Baye

The meeting was held on 3 November this year in the Kremlin Congress Hall on the request of Berhanu Baye. He stated that the Ethiopian delegation was tasked to meet in Moscow the leaders of socialist countries and to brief them on the situation in Ethiopia. They have informed in detail comrades Leonid Brezhnev, Erich Honecker, Raul Kastro. They request the information be sent to Comrade Todor Zhivkov.

The Ethiopian revolution is facing a serious threat. Imperialism, together with the local reactionaries and the reactionary regimes in the region, is trying to suffocate the revolution. In fact, Ethiopia is currently in the same situation as Soviet Russia during the intervention. Ethiopia is surrounded by enemies, except for Southern Yemen.

While the revolutionary forces in Ethiopia were looking for political or military settlement of the problem with Eritrea, they were attacked in their rear by Somalia. This called for moving considerable number of troops to the Southeast and weakening the front with the Eritrea separatists, supported by Sudan. The Sudanese artillery is constantly shooting at the Ethiopian troops from its territory, while Sudanese in disguise are taking part in hostilities on the side of separatists. Iraqi and Syrian pilots are also fighting. Saudi Arabia is providing money and weapons. As a result, the situation in Eritrea has become worse. Many roads are

* Handwritten resolution by Stanko Todorov: *Comrade Lukanov. Together with comrade P. Mladenov discuss the issue what aid it is possible to be rendered.*

controlled by separatists. Some towns have been besieged for a long time and it is difficult to deliver supplies.

Still, they are not afraid of the fact that the separatists are supported by Sudan, Egypt and other countries. This is not so dangerous. The main threat is Somalia. The Somalis have promised comrades Brezhnev and Honecker, probably Comrade Todor Zhivkov as well, that they will not attack. However, they attacked from behind. At first, they trusted Somalia, but reality proved that Somalis are revolutionaries only in words. Their policy is anti-socialist.

Ethiopia has been attacked and is currently in a situation of legal defense. The enemies of the revolution are speculating with the fact about Christians and Muslims in Ethiopia, using this circumstance for propaganda.

Somalia is leading aggressive policy. It is being generously supported by Saudi Arabia.

So far, the best have been killed. Regular army and militia are comprised mainly of insufficiently trained young men. They are using light shooting weapons well, but they have not mastered modern fighting techniques. They are trying to train men for the regular army, however this requires more time. They have to defend themselves and train men simultaneously.

So far, Ethiopia has received assistance mainly from socialist countries. With the current serious threat, revolutionary forces in Ethiopia are depending on help from Bulgaria, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. They are convinced that the revolution has gone far ahead and will triumph.

Socialist countries need to think over how to help the Ethiopian revolution. Everything goes to the front line, therefore the economic situation is very difficult. Assistance could be coordinated by the Council for economic mutual assistance, or on bilateral basis. This issue was put forward to the ambassadors of socialist countries some time ago. They believe that their request has reached the respective leading authorities.

B. Baye mentioned in a reply to a question that their relations with Libya are good. There might be some problems on religious basis, but they were not important. Relations with Algeria are normal. Relations with the Iraqi communist party are excellent. It is hard to trust the leaders of Syria and Iraq. They used Cuba

and Yemen as mediators to set meeting with important people, but this had no result.

Comrade Stanko Todorov said that he would inform in detail Comrade Todor Zhivkov, and the issues would be discussed. Bulgaria will continue to provide assistance in future, within its capabilities. He said that along with the help from socialist countries, it would be advisable to ask for help other friendly countries like Libya, Algeria, etc.

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[Translated by Greta Keremidchieva]