ETHIOPIA BETWEEN "ELECTION EVENTS": THE IMPACT OF THE 2005 AND 2010 PRE-ELECTION POLITICS ON COMPETITIVE ELECTIONS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES OF ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ART IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BY

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ADDIS ABABA

JUNE 2010

25

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BY

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Acknowledgment

No accomplishments in life without the cooperative effort of many gifted people who willingly and passionately dedicate themselves to excellence and quality. This research is no different. Most of all, I am grateful to my adviser Dr BT Costantinos for his unreserved consultations. Indeed, my mother Medhin K/Mariam is always mentally with me. Ato Biruk Gebremedhin, Mussie Desta and his Wife Meheret Mehari, Tesfay Berhe ,Teklit Berhe, Tekie Gebremedhin, Almaz Haile, Helen Yitayew, Membere and all other friends I thank them for their grateful support in realizing this output. Finally, my little sister Amleset Taddele deserves mentioning.

Thank you!

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Acronyms

AAPO	All Amhara People's Organization
AEUP	All Ethiopian Unity Party
ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
ANDO	Argoba Nationality Democratic Organization
ANDM	Afar National Democratic Movement
ANDP	Afar National Democratic Party
ATDS/Arena	Arena Tigray for Democracy and Sovereignty
AU	African Union
CUD/Kinijit	Coalition for Unity and Democracy
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EU-EOM	European Union Election Observation Mission
EU	European Union
EDP	Ethiopian Democratic Party
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GPDM	Gambela People's Democratic Movement
EFDUF/Medrek	Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum (Forum)
HNL	Hareri National League
NEBE	National Electoral Board of Ethiopia
OFDM	Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OPC	Oromo People Congress
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization
SEPDC	Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Coalition
SEPDM	Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Movement
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UEDF	United Ethiopian Democratic Forces
UJD	Unity for Justice and Democracy
WPE	Workers' Party of Ethiopia

Ethiopian Names/words

Andnet	Unity
Arena (Tigrigna)	Coming together, cooperation, Justice …
Ato	Mr.
Dergue	Military junta
Kebelle	The lowest level of local administration
Medrek	Forum
Quakhito (Tigrigna)	Kind of Thorn
Shengo	Parliament (the named used for during Dergue)
Ternafi (Tigrigna)	Cadre, kebelle (local) official
Wereda	District
W/rt	Miss

Abstract

The pre-electoral period of 2005 was a historic opening of democratic space in Ethiopia. Despite continuing obstacles, the country had benefited from the ruling party's desire for a' flawless' election that would show Ethiopia's democratic progress. The incumbent for the first time had to face a democratic challenge. However, its fruit had a bitter taste. In the after math of the election, the major opposition 'irresponsibility' discarded the Verdict of the public. On the other hand, the 'rigid' political behavior of the ruling party had led to a political deadlock. In 2008, the government expanded its full control over the local administration. Surprisingly enough, it ensured a total monopoly over the federal parliament in the current election 2010; a situation that remind us the last decade of the 20th century. In between the 'election events', repressive laws were enacted that curtailed the political space. This coupled by political intimidations against the 'neutralized' opposition, the pre-election period of the 2010 election became gloomy. The study argues that there is the tendency of a return to 'authoritarianism' in the country. The research reviewed the weakness and the strengths that the 2005 election had, and its impact on the 2010 pre-election process. It also tries to assess the situation and major activities carried out in 'Between the Election Events' that help to caste light on the political direction to which the country is moving.

Elections are the heart of democracy…If elections are defective; the entire democratic system is at risk - Jimmy Carter, 2009:1

Chapter One

Introduction

General Background

At the end of 20th century, the nation has gone through the dawn of new era. The succeeding to power of EPRDF in May 1991 in Ethiopia apparently heralded a new paradigm of multiparty democracy. Characterized by complex processes of post-conflict political transitions where rules and institutions are inadequately developed; the conduct of elections so far has been both commended and criticized by internal as well as external observers. While some predestined the democratic transition to fail for various reasons, others hesitated whether elections in then selves could bring an end to or be a beginning of a transition. (Tronvoll, 2009: 450 also see Henze, 1998 and Vaughan, 1994)

Since the down fall of Dergue, Ethiopia has experienced several general, local and by-elections. While the first general election of 1995 was viewed as a democratic one by some observers like Henze (1998:Page), others like Joseph (1998) and Harbeson (1998) considered it as undemocratic. Similarly, accompanied by allegations from oppositions and civil society organizations, the government declared the 2000 elections as a "free and fair" (IFES, 2004). Others criticized the event to be "subordinate and irrelevant role of elections as power distributing institutions" (Pausewang, *et al*, 2002: 57).

The last 2005 general election also produced a potential challenge for future democratization in Ethiopia. Unprecedented before, the competitive, fair and open process leading up to the Election Day was characterized by most to be fundamentally new in Ethiopia politics. As such, the process was even to be marked as 'founding', 'formative' and 'genuine' for true democracy by leading political scientists (Clapham, 2005; Harbeson, 2005, Lyon 2006). Whereas other observers who viewed the whole process from different and wider contexts , particularly the political culture and the agrarian nature of societies, regarded it as mere "continuation of authoritarianism" (Abbink, 2006 : 175 & Lefort , 2007 :252-3). Others further argue 'electoral politics [in Ethiopia] are governmental posture only'. Viewing from political and judicial reforms and human rights situation, these concluded that" the overall political transition in Ethiopia is

markedly negative and political space is restricted partly because of the electoral race itself' (Tronvoll, 2009:451; also see Aalen and Tronvoll, 2009:116).

Most observers were in difficulty as how to reconcile the positive process leading up to Election Day with the tragic events followed in the after math of the 2005 election. The problem is that the post election period of 2005 was to be fundamentally deviated from pre-election process flawed by controversy and bloodshed. 'At least 200 people were killed by security forces during protest over alleged election fraud, and the government arrested an estimated 30,000 people' (HRW Report, 2010).

Kjetil Tronvoll (2009: 467-8) differently analyses the Ethiopian electoral politics with other contextual factors, qualitative perceptions and non-electoral issues. In his "thick description", the scholar casts light on the crucial impact of the Eritrean aggression on Ethiopia's 2005 election, and concluded "the advancement of democracy through multiparty elections in Ethiopia under the current ruling party has failed".

In the years to come after the contested election 2005, there appeared to be highly shared concern that the country may get back to one party system. Allegations of killings, harassment, threatening and intimidations of opposition members and leaders in the 2008 local elections are well recorded by many governments and international watchdog organizations. (US state department 2008; HRW, 2009). For that matter, two major political oppositions, UEDF and OFDM, boycotted the election. Others, including Ato Lidetu Ayallew's party EDP, took part in the process merely for participation. Consequently, except few, nearly all local and the by-election the ruling party predominantly won the seats. (Aalen and Tronvoll, 2008:111-3, 115)

Furthermore, several controversial and restrictive laws on press, terrorism, political parties and civil society and charity organizations were passed by the parliament with almost entire rejections from the oppositions. Although the government categorically always dismisses any such allegations, saying "baseless and unfounded" accusations, as the 2010 election is approaching, the opposition's leaders are accusing it with politically motivated killings of candidates and harassment against their members. The state media too is criticized for serving the mere political interest of the ruling party.

Having this in mind, it is inspiring to question as to what the political space of the 2010 election compared to the last one would be. This is the aim of the paper. The impact of the last election on future democratic prospects of the country is dealt. As a 'necessary' consequence of this, the paper also attempts to analyze whether the country is moving on the right political track to make a truly democratic transition or otherwise. Then it would be possible to analyze the general democratic trajectory of the country if viewed from the perspective of how the survival strategies and cohesion of the political parties, both the ruling and the opposition, were affected by the scenario. Equally, important point requiring focus is how the general public attitude was affected by the 2005 election and its aftermath crisis.

Hypothesis of the Study

The paper seek to analyses the political atmosphere of the country in-between and during the 2005 elections and 2010 pre-election processes, and strive to prove or disprove the following major arguments.

Argument One

The Political Space (*Electoral environment*) of the 2010 pre-election period is much narrower than that of the 2005.This entails that the truly competitive election of the 2005, rather negatively affects long plans for democratic prospects by the ruling party. This is because a first competitive election that failed to cause a regime change or a structural change in the composition of the parliament negatively stimulated the ruling party leadership to come up with highly controversial legislations, reforms and proactive repressive administrative measures to avoid another reply of the 2005 election.

Argument Two

On the other hand, such *unsuccessful government change attempts through election* consequently discourage its major actors while it benefits the ruling party in the end .This is because it led to the exposure and worsening of little political differences among the leaders eventually leading to the disintegration of the political parties. Thus, while some of the major actors lost hope in the process, the rest compete each other. This would benefit the ruling party to restructure itself, get

a political and vote advantage over its contenders as the opposition supports' vote left scattered. This eventually leads to a political system characterized by a one party zone.

Statement of the Problem

The disputed elections of May 2005 were concluded with violence and bloodshed. Dozens of opposition leaders along with media and civil society activists were arrested. As such, contrary to the negotiations and power sharing arrangements employed as remedies to similar electoral crises in Zimbabwe and Kenya, the Ethiopian government opted to go to the court, an institution that is considered by most opposition groups and external observes to be partial.

Ethiopia has gone through its fourth national elections. However, the country's general political development is not healthy. In the after math of that election, following series of political discussion among its members and with almost all sections of the society, as some say seeking "forced" legitimacy, the ruling EPRDF allegedly worked to control all the local administrations recruited millions of youngsters through 'carrot and stick' strategy (Aalen & Tronvol, 2009: 115 ; Addis –Neger ,May 2 , 2009).

During the 2008 local and by-elections, opposition member's killing, harassment, and arrests were widely reported by most international watch dog organizations; Amnesty International(2009), Human Rights watch (2009,2010), and US states department (2008, 2009) annual reports demonstrates this with no or little difference. Consequently, while two major oppositions, UEDF and OFDM, boycotted the election, others took part in the process just for participation (*ibid*).

These government actions and repressions have been worsened in the 2010 pre-election period. However, the government officials categorically dismissed such allegations, including killings; the major opposition groups claimed their supporters are harassed and intimidated. As to some credible international reports, these repressive measures are even unprecedented before in the country (HRW, 2010).

The Ethiopian parliament, HPR, also passed some controversial law. These include legislations on the press, civil society organizations, Anti terrorism law and political party's' registration. There is high concern among media society, civil society activists and the oppositions against

these 'negative' developments claiming that the ruling party was putting them in place intended to narrow the political space. (Addis Neger, August 1, 2009).

In addition, there is a serious debate among the EPRDF, its opponents and commentators that the ruling party governing Ideology, *Revolutionary democracy* cannot lead to multiparty system. Most people outside the ruling consider it to be fundamentally in contradictions with the very ideals of liberal democracy, which historically and theoretically provides the pillars for democratic elections (Addis Neger August 8, 2009)

There is also a claim that the state media is running against all oppositions and is purely serving for the ruling party's propaganda. Contrary to the last election, there was no live televised campaign. There were also complaining that there was a sort of censorships made on the political debates. The government warns through the state media and during parliament discussions that some of the oppositions have hidden agendas and intentions to provoke violence and later would boycott.

This all lead to a scenario by which the country may unfortunately get back in to a one party system. The paper assessed the political atmosphere for competitive election among the political parties after the 2005 election and particularly analyzed how the above measures have negatively affected the democratic value of the electoral environment of the 2010 elections. It strongly argues that the irresponsibility of the political parties in the 2005 post election, with the ruling party taking repressive measures to avoid another replay of the 2005, resulted in the shrinkage of the political space and a return of the country in to Authoritarianism.

The paper never claims to be exhaustive in assessing all variables of electoral and 'contextual' factors. It only tries to consider major factors and to caste light on the direction of the political development of Ethiopia.

Research questions

Some of the questions that this research strives to answer include

1. What is the impact of 2005 Ethiopian election on the democratization process?

2. Is the 2010 election qualitatively and quantitatively an advanced process to that of 2005?

3. Were the laws passed by the legislature as reaction to the post 2005 election events and proactive measures aimed at creating a constraining environment in the run up to the 2010 election?

4. Do the new *controversial* laws enacted in between the two elections guarantee citizens the right to make a free political participation and choice of their government or do they pose constrains?

5. Are there a fair and level playing field and impartial electoral institutions in Ethiopia?

6. Is there any a shift of political strength between the oppositions and the ruling parties?

7. Is the Ethiopian public still confident in electoral process and the contesting political parties?

The empirical task in ensuring free and fair elections entails answering three electoral questions. First, are questions Of ***Electoral quantity*** .Are second elections held at all? A positive answer is required for the survival of democracy to be even on the cards. If elections are held, do they take place on time? The answer helps ascertain how strictly office holders are subjected to an electoral rule of law and the constitution (Costantinos, 2010).

Second are questions of ***electoral quality***. Are there opposition boycotts? Whereas the results of elections held in the face of boycotts are ambiguous, did the victor 'really' win? The absence of a boycott helps to indicate that the electoral process is generally free of major deficiencies. One would like to know, furthermore, whether boycotts were called before, during or after the polls, with the latter amounting to a rejection of the election results. Analysts are trying to distinguish among several electoral malpractices: In setting the rules, conducting the campaign, and administering the vote and the count. This is because the quality of African elections highly varies across stages. Just as contenders strive to win votes and seats, they also struggle to control the interpretation of outcomes. (ibid)

Third are questions of ***electoral meaning***. Does the election result in leadership alternation? If not, does the vote enhance or reduce the mandate of the incumbent? In part, objective indicators such as the winner's shares of votes or seats determine the answers to these questions. Nevertheless, each is also subject to interpretation, for example in the light of voter turnout rates or considerations of electoral quality. One would expect that manipulated elections are generally prone to different interpretations. Various audiences -- winners and losers, domestic and international, elite and mass -- regard outcomes differently, especially concerning whether the election provides a popular mandate. Winners deploy the informational and coercive instruments of state to reinforce a claimed victory, while losers try to sabotage the election by claiming that results were rigged. Under these circumstances, 'opposites' are conjoined 'in perpetual antagonism, a circle of advocacy and defense'. (ibid)

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the research is to investigate the potential for democratic regime change in Ethiopia through the prism of the 2005 and 2010 elections.

Specific objectives

- To assess the new laws enacted on press, civil society organizations and Antiterrorism, have negative roles on the democratic space of the 2010 election and political freedom of oppositions ;
- To see any contribution by the new Electoral Code of Conduct in making the process stable, friendly and peaceful.
- To see if any administrative measures and actions of the government restricts the freedom of oppositions to mobilize support and campaign.

Scope and limitation of the paper

The paper tries to overview only two successive (2005 & 2010) pre-election periods. However, in between the two events, the 2008 local election, other major activities and their implications to enhance or multi party democracy is discussed.

Nevertheless, the paper never exhaustively goes through all electoral and contextual factors that may have their own impact on the issue. Only major internal factors are considered as variables .For example external factors like the war on Somali, the Eritrean factor and foreign involvement in detail are not considered. In addition, insurgent groups, and ethnic politics (conflict) are also not part of the analysis.

Methodology

Method of data collection

Data Collection

The Researcher mostly opted for use of Secondary data. Secondary sources include local and international watchdog organizations' reports, media outlets, journals and internet resources. However, interviews with government official, opposition leaders and activists conducted.

Some structured questionnaires with some opened ended questions are distributed in Addis Ababa for purposefully selected key informants to assess the public attitude and confidence on elections and electoral institutions. It has been attempted to make the compositions of the respondents from all ages, educational level and ethnic groups.

Data Analysis

The nature of the study tends to be qualitative that the researcher mostly employed descriptive and qualitative analysis. However, the public opinion on major actors of the process and the credibly of the process are gathered through questionnaires distributed for key informants are analyzed based on quantitative means.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire helps with collecting; organizing, presenting and analyzing the data obtained from the key informants. It passed through the following process:

1. Collecting data; to obtain the required information for the research under taken, having prepared 57 questioners try to looking for the different scenario between the 2005 election and 2010 per election process;

2. Organization the data; in accordance with the academic status, age and gender differences of the informants ;

3. Presentation of the data; organized the above data through different software's methods (Microsoft Automations add SPSS);

4. Assessing the findings of the data, through yes, no and other variables.

Variables of the questionnaire

In general, the questioner has twenty-five questions along with a number of self-expletory. For this particular purpose, the respondents' responses are squeezed into three major variables; those are-

1. Respondents attitude towards the 2010 election,
2. Respondents involvement , whether taking part in the 2010 election,
3. Respondents Comparisons between 2005 and 2010 elections; regarding to political pace, status of political parties and debate on mass media

Structure of the paper

In the first chapter of the research, we find the general introduction of the study along with its methodology. In the second chapter, the paper asses the relevant conceptions and historical facts related to elections in the country. When we go to the third chapter, the study deals with the presentation and findings of the research bear out the questioners and the interviews. In chapter four, the paper analyzes the findings of the paper. In the last chapter, the researchers put his concluding remarks and forwarded his recommendations.

Chapter Two

Historical and Literature Review

2.1 Elections and Democracies

2.1.1 The place of Elections in Democracies

Elections provide a peaceful and democratic means for societies to guide competition for political rule and make shared decisions. By casting votes to choose who can represent them in state office, citizens express preferences about the policies those representatives will pursue (US State Department, Jan 2010).

'Elections have become the measure of democracy in Africa' (ECA, 2009; 3) and of course in every corner of the world. In Africa the most 'glaring and vigorously' debated aspect of democratization has been elections. The focus on elections in the democracy debate is that 'elections do not amount to democracy even though they form an important component or ingredient of democratization'. An election cannot provide a sufficient ground upon which democracy could be ensured. However,' the value of elections to a democracy is surely beyond any shadow of the doubt even among the strident cynics of multi-party democracy today. (http//www.eisa.org.za/events/negdifonz.htm)

Elections play a valuable role to any democracy including those listed by NEPAD;

> *Allowing the electorate to choose freely their national and local leaders; Renewing or terminating the mandate of those leaders after a constitutionally determined tenure of office; According both central and local government national and international legitimacy and credibility; Assuring the national and local leadership the moral title to rule on behalf of the electorate; Ensuring accountability of leaders to the people, representation of the governed by the government, participation of the people in the governance process through ballot rather than bullet politics. (ibid)*

Elections serve two vital functions in a democratic order. They hold government accountable to the governed, and they facilitate peaceful transfers of political power. These two effects, in turn,

legitimize democracy. Citizens of a healthy democracy view representative government as the "only way" to conduct Politics. (US department of state, Jan 2010)

In the course of modern political history, election systems, which determine how citizens express their will, vary widely around the world. Each election must have internationally acclaimed rule that determines how votes are translated into seats. Eric Bjornlund has to say some this;

> *For election for representative or deliberative bodies—such as parliaments, national legislatures, or local councils—candidates can be elected from defined geographical areas or districts, or they can be elected on a proportional basis from party lists on the basis of a nationwide ballot. In some systems, voters choose individuals; in others, they vote for political parties or lists of candidates.* (Bjornlund, March 21, 2010)

After the Cold War was over, many nations have experienced elections, but all can not be said genuine democracies. Sometimes elections are rigged, incumbents enjoy unfair advantages, and/ or with military support, they overturn the results. But in healthy democracies citizens expect that elections will be fair and insist that the results be respected, beginning with a peaceful transition of power from one leader to the next. (US Department of State, Jan 2010).

For example, in sub -Saharan Africa, from 2005 to 2007, 54 elections were held, but 'the quality of elections remains suspect' in most of them. They are less a peaceful means of transfer of power than a trigger of violence, as evidenced in Kenya and Zimbabwe (ECA, 2009: 3).

2.1.2 What Constitutes Fair Elections?

According to Eric Bjornlund of the *Democracy International* (March 21, 2010), the essential elements of election have attempted to enlarge the fundamental criteria, i.e (1) universal and equal suffrage and (2) a secret ballot, to other requirements as "equality," "transparency," and "accountability." The standard of *equality* requires that one citizen's vote be given equivalent credence to that of other. To be *transparent*, an election must have conventional procedures, have published results, and ensure security against fraud. *Accountability* would require that those elected be properly installed in office and recognize their accountability to the electorate.

Others have developed highly detailed checklists of requirements free and fair election. The common understanding that observers should assess substantive issues, including the administration of the election; the legal and institutional framework for the election; and the political context and environment in which the election takes place. Moreover, observers should monitor all phases of the election process, the pre-election period, including the formal or informal campaign period; the voting and counting process on Election Day; and the post election phase, including the aggregation and tabulation of votes, the adjudication of complaints, and the formation of a new government (*ibid*).

2.2.3 Elections and 'Competitive Authoritarianism'

Levitsky and Way (2002:7; 2006; 5-6) distinguished between two 'hybrid' regimes: closed and competitive authoritarian. They defined competitive authoritarian regimes as "civilian regimes in which formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the primary means of gaining power, but in which fraud, civil liberties violations, and abuse of state and media resources so skew the playing field that the regime cannot be labeled democratic." However, they regarded such regimes as *competitive* because 'democratic institutions' and opposition forces can use legal means to contest for power; but they are also *authoritarian* in that opposition forces paralyzed by a "highly uneven—and even dangerous—playing field" entailing unfair competition(Levitsky and Way, 2002: 5).

As per to the Levitsky and Way's (2002:2; 2006) discussion, 'competitive authoritarian' are distinguished from closed authoritarian regimes in that legal environment exits allowing opposition parties to compete for power. Elections are held regularly, and opposition parties are not legally barred from contesting them. Civil liberties are sufficiently respected for opposition parties to mobilize support. Leading opposition figures are generally not exiled or imprisoned. Yet competitive authoritarian regimes fell short of democracies in that competition is unfair, and opposition parties are highly challenged in their effort to challenge incumbents in elections, the legislature, the courts, and other public arenas. Competitive authoritarian regimes fall short on *at least one* of three defining attributes of democracy: (1) free elections; (2) broad protection of civil liberties; and (3) a reasonably even playing field.

According to the scholars' view , in democracies, elections are *free*, in the sense that there is virtually no fraud or intimidation of voters, and *fair*, in the sense that opposition parties are able to campaign on relatively even footing: they are not repressed, harassed, or systematically denied access to the media and other resources. In closed regimes, multiparty elections either do not exist (e.g., China, Saudi Arabia) or exist but are non-competitive in practice. Competitive authoritarian regimes fall in between these two extremes cases. In some cases, they are stained in the form of 'manipulation of voter lists' (Dominican Republic), 'ballot stuffing' (Ukraine 2004), or 'falsification of results' (Belarus, Cameroon, Gabon). They may also be marred by large-scale voter intimidation of opposition activists, voters, and observers including the creation of a "no go" territories (Cambodia, Kenya, Zimbabwe) (Levitsky and Way, 2002:8).These regime classifications are also in agreement with the conceptions of Larry Diamond's (2002) 'hybrid regimes' and Andreas Schedler's 'electoral Authoritarianism' states.

2.2 **Electoral contexts; Mass Media and Civil Society**

Mass media and civil society are instruments to make effective and fair election process. These are part and parcel of 'the political space' where citizens can debate, join groups, and mobilize for exercising their political views without being threatened or intimidated. Legitimate governments can extend their legitimacy by being accountable to the people, which is often the ultimate check on the abuse of power. Hence it is true that a vibrant civil society, supported by a free press and other independent organizations, not only supports electoral outcomes by ensuring fairness, legitimacy, and compliance, it also supports post-electoral follow-through (US state department, 14 December, 2009).

In a democracy, citizens are the essential actors to participate in their political process. The media and CSOs are the 'principal channels for citizens to express critical and supportive opinions on public affairs'. The freedom and independence of these actors are the measures of the opening of the public space. In Africa, it is common to blame the governments for a limited expression of the public voice but reports also shows that 'governments rarely constitute the only obstacle to effective public opinion'. Heterogeneous nationalities, multiple language, illiteracy and geographic barrier to contribute to the problem (ECA, 2009:28).

2.2.1 Media and Election

Openness and accessibility of the public to information about the functioning of government have become a vital component of democracy and also an aspect of good governance. Hence, Ethiopians constitutional right to access of information should be discussed within the general framework of access to information as practiced in other democracies.

The growth of free media is considered to be an instrument for a democratic state. Good governance itself may be described as a general array of practices that maximize the common good of citizens and their participation. According to the United Nations Development Program (1997:5) the major attributes of good governance includes among other things Transparency, which entails the free flow of information as its number one.

Political stability and the independence of the judiciary, arguably, have a symbiotic effect on free access to information. A by-product of open government is political stability, just as a judiciary that is supposed to be fully independent encourages openness in governance. The role played by a free flow of information and free access to information, though remarkable, is usually neglected, especially in developing countries. (Arko-Cobbah, 2007)

Government accountability and transparency rely on the media's circulation of information, opinions, ideas and views. With regard to elections media plays a key role in the process. by facilitating debates and discussions on political and economic issues , media help citizens to make intelligent and informed decisions .In particular , with the advent of multiparty politics , democratization, and liberalism , privately owned media- news papers, radio and Television stations and Internet- informs and educates people and serve as a watchdog on governments.(ECA, 2009:134-135).

There is little or no doubt, that Media is an important tool in educating and informing society and creating awareness. History of modern democracies shows that Media has contributed in the growth of nations and in the rise of democracy by allowing room for plural ideas to be entertained. (Berhanu Olana, 2009)

Election and social movements relies on the media for three main services, (1) mobilization of political support, (2) legitimization (or validation) in the mainstreams discourse, and (3) publicizing of conflicts .Consequently, the quality and nature of the media coverage that social movements obtain strongly influences how they are perceived in the public eye – to the extent that good or bad coverage can help to make or break a social movement (Barker, 1987).

Social movements that are long-lived and effectively institutionalized within society, tend not to challenge the status quo directly, and so consequently are less dependent on media coverage for their survival *(ibid).*

Understanding the relationship between election and the media's coverage is crucial, especially if this increasingly important political resource is to be utilized effectively for progressive political change.

Most political movements are not the focus of regular news beats. This means that unless political movements stage big public events, they struggle to get their message heard as "the vast majority of demonstrations are ignored by the mainstream media...Governments are often openly critical of social movements that undermine their authority, but perhaps what is more damaging is the subtle nature of the mass media's marginalization of the activities of many social movements". (Linda Kensicki, 2007 PP).

Gaining positive media coverage is crucial for many political movements, as the way they are portrayed in the mass media can have important implications for their ability to mobilize citizens to participate in their protests. Indeed, in 1987, social movement researchers found out that only 5% of the people who agreed with the objectives of a 'peace protest' were motivated enough to participate in the subsequent protest. (Klandermans and Oegema 2009?)

Despite its paramount contribution, media faces high constraints from within and outside. To come to Africa, the African Governance Report II (ECA, 2009 :136) study revealed that while some governments 'affect the media's ability to build capacity'; others 'shape the environment it operates'. Some are also handicapped by the lack of trained manpower for investigative and quality reporting.

Not all African governments view the media as partners .Indeed, some African governments perceive the media as agents of foreign interests while some media seem perpetually to criticize governments irrespective of what [they] are doing .In countries where private interests own and control the media, the owners tend to abdicate their traditional roles of disseminating objective information and providing reasoned editorial views (*ibid*).

Despite political differences, there seems to be a common need of all Ethiopian citizens to have a free and non-bias media in this country, citizens also appeared to be fed up with biased free media. The media have a duty to examine all the contending parties and the candidates in terms of their ideologies, agendas as well as to reflect the needs and aspirations of the people to the parties and politicians. They should never favor some elites or some parties and deny others access to explain themselves (*Harego Bensa, 2010.*)

Putting this as a pillar principle of free press the writer criticized the practice of the free media in the country as follows;

> *So far, the great majority of the "private" media have failed in this regard. For example, none of them criticized Medrek [Forum] party when it walked out of the... inter-party dialogue on the electoral code of conduct. On the other hand, none of them tried to clarify by interview as to why the party did not want to sit together with some of the oppositions in that dialogue. In fact, some of the unprofessional newspapers even hailed the party's move as courageous one and almost tried to call for others to follow its initiative*. (*Ibid*)

There seems a general consensus that Mass Media is the ability of citizens to obtain information in the possession of the state. That is real information capable of helping the citizen to make an informed opinion on an issue and not simply government's propaganda. Moreover, access to information regarded not only as an essential ingredient in democratic governance, it is also considered as a fundamental human right.

2.2.3 Civil society and Election

U.S. President Barrack Obama, in his speeches in Moscow and Accra in 2009, referred to the role of civil society for democratic change from the grass root level. As he rightly put it in Accra:

"Across Africa, we've seen countless examples of people taking control of their destiny, and making change from the bottom up." The president went on to say, "This is about more than just holding elections. It's also about what happens between elections" (Bruce Gilley, Jan 2010). [1]

African Governance Report also makes the same point: "between elections a CSO can keep the government on its toes by reminding ministers of their promises and keeping alive the democratic process". The report noticed that in Africa there is mushrooming of CSOs shifting the relationship between the sate and the society, from 'state centric- big government in to people –centered governance'. However, it cannot be wholly generalized. While Zimbabwe, South Africa, Ghana, Botswana, and Benin are exemplary in this front, Egypt and Ethiopia constrained them by 'stringent laws' (ECA, 2009:131; also see ECA, 2007).

Recent experiences have shown that elections alone do not assure democratic rule. Nations that hold fair elections where the winners are accountable to clear standards of good governance share a major advantage: the presence of strong civil society institutions. 'Civil society and democracy are mutually reinforcing', a prominent scholar, Bruce Gilley pointed out (Jan. 10, 2010). "Strong civil societies empower healthy democracies. By assuring fair elections and then holding the victors to standards of good governance, they cultivate the political conditions within which democracy can thrive."

A political transition from 'authoritarian rule to democratic governance' has to do with progress on decentralization of power to local communities. Whether the democratization process takes place at grass root level is, however, a role of civil society organizations by ensuring wider participation in the process. (EISA NEPAD conference, 2010) [2]

The promotion of democracy in Africa requires concerted and collaborative efforts of various stakeholders including civil society. The democratization project will not achieve the desired results if these complex processes could be perceived as the sole affairs of governments and electoral management bodies. A whole range of stakeholders should be included in both

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[1] *http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:dpMF2Om-5-MJ:www.ifes.org/+Civil+Society,+Democracy,+and+Elections&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=et*

[2] http://www.eisa.org.za/events/nepadinfo2.htm

processes of governance and democratization in order to ensure inclusively, 'representatively, accountability, transparency and legitimacy of responsible institutions and systems'. *(Ibid)*

It is believed that Africa is moving away from 'bad' governance towards 'good' governance. The key element of the governance being whether 'the process is institutionalized effectively and sufficiently'; the extent to which civil societies get involved in existing institutional framework is what matters most. *(ibid)*

The author of *The Right to Rule: How States win and Lose Legitimacy,* Bruce Gilley (2009), took Indonesia as the best current instance. Since the overthrow of longtime authoritarian ruler Suharto in 1998, the country has experienced several peaceful electoral transitions; according to him, there were democratic gains in that period. Despite widespread fears of conflict and political ruptures, an active and organized civil society helped Indonesians adhere to democratic expectations and norms. He argued Indonesian civil society institutions 'forced politicians to play by the rules, keep their promises, and remain accountable to voters in the periods between elections.'

Civil activist Dr. Hadi Soesasto told a U.S. audience in 2001 that the country's new democracy "is still so fragile and, of course, the major risk is that we might see a reversal in the process." Civil society was the only one that the activist hoped would prevent this reversal." It is the number-one priority for us." Nine years later, in February 2009, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton congratulated civil society leaders in the country for their role in forging a 'tolerant, democratic, and rights-respecting country'. "...over the next years, I will be saying to people, if you want to know whether Islam, democracy, modernity, and women's rights can coexist, go to Indonesia," she said was reported .(quoted by Bruce Gilley ,Jan. 2010).

There is also similar witness in Africa where CSO played a role in managing conflict. During the wars in Sierra Leon and Liberia , CSO were critical to the informal negotiations and pressures on warring parties to come to the peace deals.(ECA , 2009;134).

However, in Africa civil society is highly regarded as weak and nonfunctional. This arises partly from civil society's failure to reconstitute the coercive state in line with liberal democracy. In Nigeria, for example, the contradictions are, the state suppress civil society and prevent the

consolidation of democracy. Elections remain a ridiculous situation, while protecting the electoral mandate is regarded with humor. Civil society in Nigeria as in most African countries is generally too weak to perform its functions for promoting multi party democracy (Global Rights, 2005).

In spite of this, however, a glimmer of hope remains. In 2003, elections that were rigged in parts of the country could not happen in state elections. A civil society coalition protected the mandate of Shekarau of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), despite the determination of the ruling PDP to return the incumbent Kwankwaso to power through rigging *(ibid)*.

Between 1998 and 2004, five post-communist states (Georgia, Ukraine, Slovakia, Croatia, and Serbia) experienced successful "democratic revolutions." Civil society played a similar role in each. Again, the initial mobilization of civil society was grounded in the desire to uphold fair and clean elections. So-called "free election movements," which energize civil society and orient it toward a more overtly political function, are seen across the globe as nations struggle to transition to democracy. Recent examples in Africa include Ghana, Iran, and Kenya. (Bruce Gilley, Jan 2010)

Apart from Elections, civil society also engage in a daily struggle to head off restrictive laws, expose corruption, and ensure the fair representation of all groups, interests, and ideas. It strives to compel government accountability, and to assure that officeholders continue to play by the rules of the game. The 2005 Award-Winner with her book *From Elections to Democracy*, Yale University professor Susan Rose-Ackerman considered only a vibrant civil society has the potential to consolidate democracy. She argued that creating institutions that channel and manage public participation by individuals and groups in policy making should be high on the reform agenda of the post-socialist states and of consolidating democracies throughout the world (Quoted by Gilley, ibid)

'Election in the absence Civil Society'

Scholars use phrases like "feckless democracy," "controlled democracy," "illiberal democracy," and "competitive authoritarianism" to describe countries featuring semi-competitive elections and have too weak civil societies This has been most common in the post-communist states

where "democratic revolutions" have failed — such as in Belarus (2005) and Kyrgyzstan (2008). Other countries where a shallow or weak civil society has assisted the establishment of elected authoritarians include; Malaysia, Russia, and Cambodia (Gilley, Jan 2010).

Once civil society is set free, it is very hard to contain. Both President Obama and Secretary Clinton rightly recognized the significance of civil society in enhancing democracy, during and after elections. Both proudly aim to strengthen U.S. civil society and democracy. Particularly President Obama understands deeply the 'symbiotic relationship of civil society and effective democracy' (*ibid).*

Bruce Giley (2009) also believes that Ethiopia once had reflected this "bottom-up" development democratic consolidation. The nation achieved its first truly competitive national election in 2005, he said, helped by Ethiopian civil society. While writing his story after all the Ethiopian government passed the new legislation on humanitarian organizations that clearly prohibited for no sound reason not to get financed by more than 10 % from abroad, the scholar failed to make any point on it and its potential pressure on the working of these institutions.

To sum up, strengthening institutional capacity and broadening social bases could gradually overcome civil society's limited and weak engagement with the state. The intelligentsia can commence positive actions on matters of governance, including elections. This can open the political space for other professional, community-based, and religious associations to turn proactive in protecting the electoral mandate, demanding accountability in governance, and, ultimately, transforming the nation into a true democracy.

3.1 Transitional Attempts and Elections in Ethiopia

3.1.1 The No party, One Party Elections - pre 1991

Ethiopia is one of the oldest nations in Africa with a civilization that dates back several thousands of years. However, historically power in Ethiopia was either 'God given' or seized by coup or by force through armed struggle as the EPRDF did in 1991. Hence, with such dominant history it is not difficult to guess that there have been only limited elections and election related experiences in Ethiopia. (Abraha, 2008)

With The 1955 revised constitution, the first such document being that of the 1931, Emperor Haile Selassie recognized the need for the creation of parliament elected by the people .The same constitution also institutionalized another house, which was called the House of the Senate whose members were appointed by the Emperor himself (Art.97&101:1955).

Until the Emperor was overthrown by a military coup in 1974, various parliamentary elections were held. The first election under 'universal suffrage' principle was held in 1957 on an individual contest basis. Including this, the imperial regime conducted Five similar elections up to 1973 (Clapham, 2000).

However, the elections held were far from being democratic. The revised constitution gave the Emperor undisputable power. As stated in the constitution '... The Emperor is sacred, His dignity is inviolable and His powers indisputable'. (Article 4:1955)

Moreover, the system totally failed to allow the exercise of freedom of speech and free press though they were mentioned in the constitution. The revised constitution and the then 'elections held then actually gave absolute power to the Emperor despite their attempt to appear to be Democratic image (Abraha , 2008).

In 1974, the autocratic system, which was characterized by a 'total absence of civil liberties and democratic rights of citizens, rampant corruption and social injustice, as well as ethnic and religious oppression' was overthrown (Merera, 1997:77 also quoted by Hagos, 2006) and State power was assumed by a military junta. Although the military regime took some popular measures in its early years in power like the 1975 Land Reform, its authoritarian nature made it unpopular in subsequent years. For instance, the political organizations working in a clandestine and semi- clandestine manner with left and centrist orientation were annihilate as a result of dictatorial measures of the military regime (*ibid* & see Kassahun, 2003:117).

When Dergue came to power, the previous constitution, which set forth monarchical form of government, was absolutely abolished along with the feudal system. Ten years after the fall of the Emperor, the new military regime propagates another constitution officially declaring the founding of the Peoples Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE). According to the new constitution, the National Shengo (the parliament) was to be elected by the people. However, as

the only legally operating party in the country then was the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) .Candidates for the Shengo would be nominated mainly by this party. The constitution stated that: 'Candidates to National Shengo shall be nominated by organs of the WPE, mass organizations, and military units and other bodies entitled by law' .The constitution also declared the WPE, guided by Marxism-Leninism, as the vanguard party dedicated to serve the working people and protect their interests (Article 6 &64:1987).

Accordingly, election was conducted in the country in 1987. However, the election did not bring any change compared to the situation under imperial rule .Like its predecessors, it failed to be competitive among candidates (political parties) and made it necessary to make choice between alternative candidates on the list of single party. Hence, no room was left for democratic participation. (Hagos, 2006).

Hence, all elections held during this reign failed to bring a representative democracy as the system overall was a one party system with total suppression of freedom of speech and press.

Pausewang, (2002:31) noted the elections so far were merely used for mass mobilization to give the incumbent government some resemblance of legitimacy.

3.1.2Attempt of Peaceful Transition - post 1991

A new regime of EPRDF, like its predecessor, came to power through force after waging a prolonged armed struggle against the Dergue regime. However, unlike the Dergue and other preceding regimes, the EPRDF called on various political organizations and groupings to discuss the future of Ethiopia and facilitate a conducive environment for a peaceful transition of power.

The *Ethiopian Peace and Democratic Conference* that brought various political groups convened from July 1 to 5, 1991, was discussed and endorsed the charter laying down the rules governing the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE). A Transitional Period Charter was also designed to serve as an interim constitution of the country. Accordingly, an 87 seat Council of Representatives (COR) was formed and an EPRDF led- Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) came in to being. Among the 87 seats; EPRDF, Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and other parties represented 32, 12 and 30 seats respectively. Moreover, the Charter provided a favorable

legal ground for the establishment of political parties with varying orientations.(Abraha, 2008 & Hagos , 2006)

As such, The EPRDF regime introduced multi-party election for the first time in the history of Ethiopia. The EPRDF regime was then regarded as sponsor of democracy when it declared multi party elections as the only way to control power. For the first time, Elections were held in 1992 for Local and Regional Assemblies. The main purpose of the elections was to offer for local autonomy through decentralization of governance (Clapham, 2002; Merera, 1997: 82). However, the elections were unsuccessful in providing any meaningful choice to the electorate due to the absence of contesting parties -the All Amhara People's Organization (AAPO) and OLF boycotted the elections. (*ibid*)

As Tronvoll's (2009) and Aalen and Tronvoll (2008) observed this 'landmark event', which was intended to symbolize the change to plural politics, rather caused the 'continuation of authoritarianism' in the country. First, it incited the withdrawal of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and other political groupings from the TGE. This showed the growing domination of EPRDF and the curtailment of political space. The OLF had constituted the second biggest party in the TGE, next to EPRDF block. It was a vital component in legitimating an all-inclusive transitional government.

This was because of 'prevalent partisanship, intimidation and harassment' against others by EPRDF. Thus, the elections became the exclusive affair of EPRDF which won 1,108 (96.6%) out of 1147 regional seats. The elections were not 'free and fair', even from the point of their procedural aspects. There was lack of campaigning and information among voters on the stakes and candidates, and shortage of ballot papers. All in all, the 1992 elections only served as the furtherance of institutionalization of EPRDF's rule in the country. (Abbink, 2000:168, Hagos, 2006; Merera, 1997:83)

The major factor that detracted the process was the controversy over 'which front should administer the south-eastern parts of Ethiopia' that immediately escalated into armed clashes between EPRDF and OLF troops. In fact, new agreement was reached in February 1992, with the help of the United States and the then Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF).The agreement

required all troops in the Oromia region to be encamped before the elections were conducted (DE Waal 1992/93: 772 quoted by Tronvoll, 2009: 451).

However, due to the nonconductive political atmosphere the agreement reached between the two parties helped none. OLF was determined to immediately withdrawn from the process and the transitional Government. It also called back its candidates from the upcoming election. Hence, this created a situation by which OLF tried to take out its troops from the camp, which led to some skirmishes with government forces.

Tronvoll (2009:454) correctly stated the situation as;

> *The 1992 local election was thus carried out in a context of fear and armed clashes in several parts of the country. Obviously, the country was not ready, either politically or logistically, to carry out such a complex Political Endeavour.*

The UN Observer Group's mission was aborted and observers evacuated due to the then confrontations. Observers reported that the election was stained by irregularities and the post-election period was marked by political crackdowns. In the aftermath of the election, other non-EPRDF parties also left the much-awaited Transitional Government. Since then the process was completely controlled by the EPRDF *(Ibid)*.

In such away EPRDF might have been successful in systemically alienating its major contenders, the OLF and AAUP, from electoral Ethiopian politics forever. However, this doesn't in turn help for the Oromo politics, which still, now after 18 years, represents the most unaddressed political repercussions to itself and to the rest of the country as well. Perhaps the only beneficiary body might be the Ruling one, which for long time enjoyed the fruit of political power in Oromia without a significant democratic challenge.

As to the critical observations of several researchers of Ethiopian politics, discussed above, the political consequence of the 1991/2 period have thus hang on throughout all Ethiopian elections.

Four years after the transition, a new constitution sponsored by EPRDF was drafted and ratified on December 8, 1994. The new constitution of FDRE stipulated that the form of government would be a federal one and constituted a multi-party system with free and fair elections. The

constitution adopted a bicameral parliamentary system. Members of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR), as stated in the Constitution, shall be elected by the people for a five-year term on the basis of 'universal suffrage and by direct, free and fair elections…' (Constitution, Article 54(1), 1995).

Three successive elections for the HPR were held following the ratification of the new federal constitution. The political context under which these elections were conducted was, however, not as such, appreciated by most observers of Ethiopian politics. In this regard, there was in fact some crucial improvements that most recognize in their analyses; positive developments from one election to another, the last of them, the 2005, being the best attempt.

The first federal election held in 1995 was intended to stand as a democratic conclusion of the transition period. Nevertheless, amidst serious claims of closure of political space, it is reported that the main organized opposition, AAUP, continued its earlier boycotts. For the 2000 federal and regional elections, the opposition, however, was committed in its engagement strategy and for the first time voters almost at all levels were given concrete alternatives to the EPRDF and its affiliated parties. Nevertheless, generally characterized by poor organizational capacities, harassment and intimidation, the opposition did not pose a real electoral threat to the EPRDF. Nevertheless, the capital city , Addis Ababa, showed promising degrees of openness, as the government allowed some political 'space' to opposition leaders to conduct rallies and to be interviewed in the press. However, in most rural areas, the opposition faced restrictions and harassment by local officials and cadres (Pausewang *et.al.* 2002 ; Tronvoll , 2001 & 2009).

From 1995 to 2004, despite the mushrooming of political parties in the country, the freedom of opposition parties to operate had been so constrained that none of them even had the slightest chance of competing with the EPRDF .The maximum they did was exposing the situation through boycotting the elections.

Unlike its predecessors, the 2005 national elections actually constituted a rupture. During the electoral process, the electorate witnessed unprecedented political contexts of openness and plurality of political views through campaigning and state media. For the first time ever, 'politics' as open critique of the ruler was initially accepted, and the collective uneasiness, which had existed in the country since the uncelebrated brutal and horrendous Red Terror era , was

washed out . Moreover, in the 2005 election the incumbent party was for the first time truly challenged through peaceful political means. Two opposition coalitions, the United Ethiopian Democratic Front (UEDF) and the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) fielded candidates in most of the country's constituencies, posing a real Political alternative to the EPRDF government party.(Tronvoll, 2009, See also Tegegn, 2008: 290,).

The 2005 election was, however, a highly disputed one with the main opposition groups claiming fraud. Though the Carter Center approved the pre-election conditions, it has expressed its dissatisfaction with post election matters. The 2005 EU election observer mission continued to accuse the ruling party of vote rigging. Many from the international community are divided about the issue with Irish officials accusing the 2005 EU election observers of corruption for the "inaccurate leaks from the 2005 EU election monitoring body which led the opposition to wrongly believe they had been cheated of victory." In general, the opposition parties gained 172 parliamentary seats compared to the just 12 in the 2000 elections. Despite most opposition representatives joining the parliament, some leaders of the CUD party along with several activists and journalists were imprisoned following the post-election violence.

Generally, Ethiopia's democratization process and party development have passed three main phases: the no-party elections of the imperial period, the one-party election of the military government, and the "multi-party" parliamentary elections of the EPRDF administration

According to The Economist's Democracy Index survey (The Economist, 2008:6) Ethiopia is a "hybrid regime" situated between a "flawed democracy" and an "authoritarian regime". It ranks 105 out of 167 countries (with the larger number being less democratic). Georgia ranks as more democratic at 104 and Burundi at 106 less democratic than Ethiopia.

Chapter Three

Data Presentation and Findings

1. Data collected from the structured surveys

1.1. Respondents attitude towards the 2010 election

According to the data by the key respondents, it can be able to find the public attitude towards the 2010 election. Thus, the following findings are reached and have been well considered as an input for analysis.

Out of all respondents, 38.6% are happy, 42.1% are not happy and 19.35% are indifference on the 2010-per election process. Regarding on looking forward the day of election, out of all respondents, 26.3% responded positively while 73.7% are against. With regard to the inclusiveness of the 2010 election 36.8% saying yes, 43.9% are against and 19.3% did not comment. Whether or not violence might take place in the 2010 post election period, compared to that of 2005, out of all respondents 14% said yes, 26.3% said no and others refrained to make comment on it. The research also touched upon whether there is the stronger opposition party for the public in 2010, and out of all respondents12.3% said yes, there is the qualified political party, 72% said no and the rest refrain to comment on it. Regarding on whether the ruling party was willing to peacefully hand over power to the winning party; out of all respondents, 68.4% said no, 18.3% said yes in 2005 election. Whereas for 2010 election, 61.4% are against, 19.3% are pro and rest is refraining to make comment on it.

1.2. Respondents involvement and taking part in the 2010 election,

According to the data by the key respondents can be able to find their involvement and whether they are taking part in the 2010 election:

Regarding on having polling cards out of all respondents, 73.7% are registered and the remaining 26.3% are not and out of these who have taken polling cards ,47.4% will vote, 42.1% will not vote and the rest 10.5% had not decided yet. Regarding on openly supporting of their respective parties 31.6% saying yes, 36.8% saying no and others could not comment on it .

Respondents Comparisons between 2005 and 2010 elections;

The respondents further more compared the political space, status of political parties and debate on mass media for both 2005 and 2010 election. Out of all respondents, for 2005 election 80.7% said there were strong opposition and only 12.3% said yes for 2010 election, 3.5% didn't comment on it. According to the data, out of all respondents, for 2005 election 66.7% said yes there were political pressure against the opposition parties from the ruling party, 29.8 % refused and 3.5% have not commented on it. On the same comparison, out of all respondents, for 2010 election 56.1% said yes there is political pressure from the ruling party, 40.4% said no political pressure and the rest 3.5% refused and others have not commented on it. Whether the opposition parties have a tendency to overthrow the government through violent methods, out of all respondents 40% said yes, 47.4% said no in 2005. Where as in the same comparison for the 2010 election out of all respondents 21% having said yes, 66.7% are against and others 12.3% have failed to comment on it.

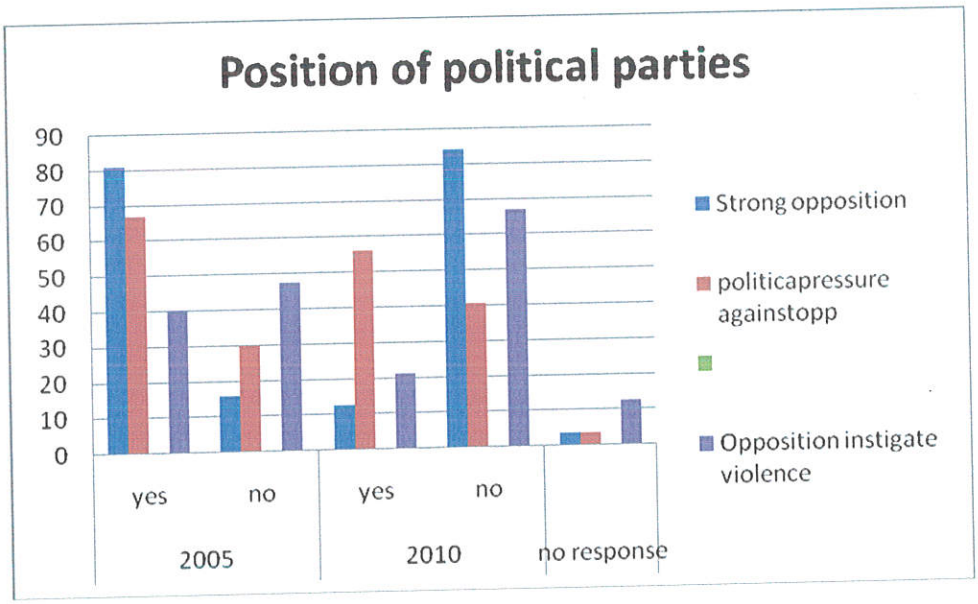


Chart 1.Position of political parties in 2005 and 2010 elections.

According to the data, out of all respondents based on the 2005 election experience, in 2010 per election process 45.6% said there is a narrow political space, 31.5 % said there is enough space and the rest 22.8% have not commented on it.

According to the data, out of all respondents in both elections 86 % have seen the debate, between political parties on the media, 14 % have not seen the debate. Furthermore, the data noted that out of those who followed the debate 14% have said it was mature debate in 2005 and 68.8% said not mature. Whereas for the 2010 election, 54.4% said the debate was matured, 28.1% have said it was not matured and the rest 17.5 % have failed to respond on it.

In addition to these, while 55.4% of the respondents believe that the debate in 2005 was not policy centered, only 28.1% of the respondents believe that the debates in 2010 again have not been policy centered. Contrary to that, 56.2% of the respondents believe that the debate in 2010 has been held on policy issues.

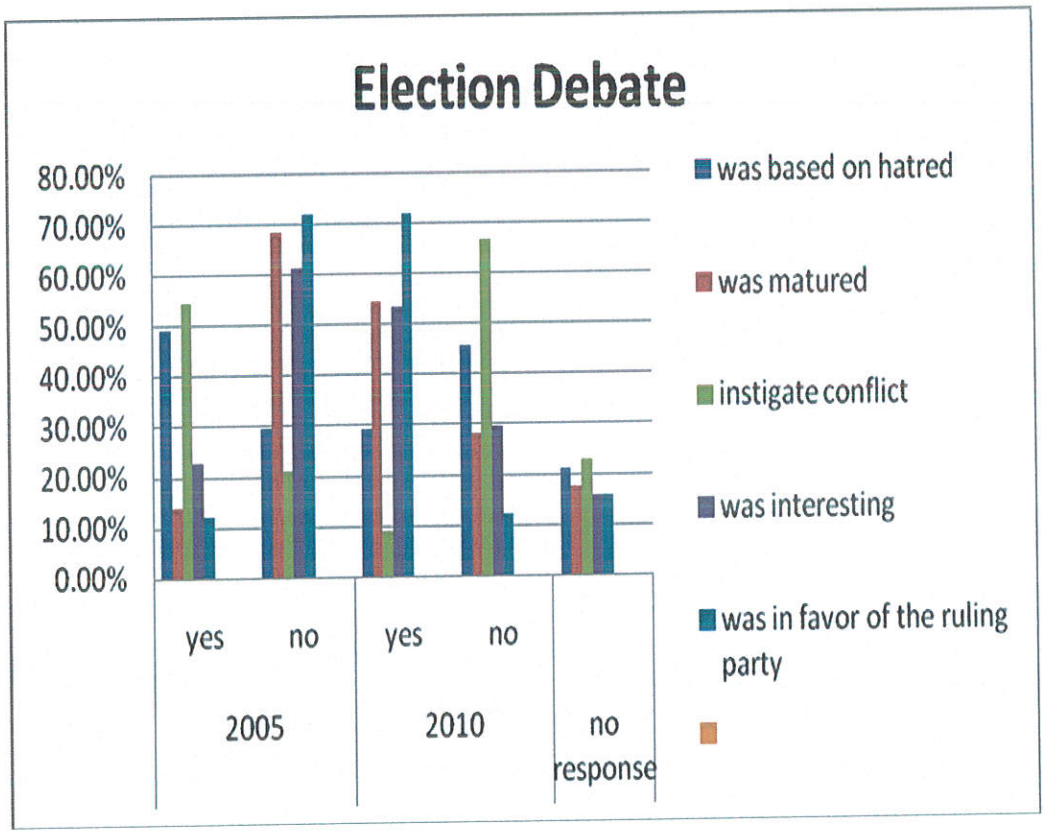
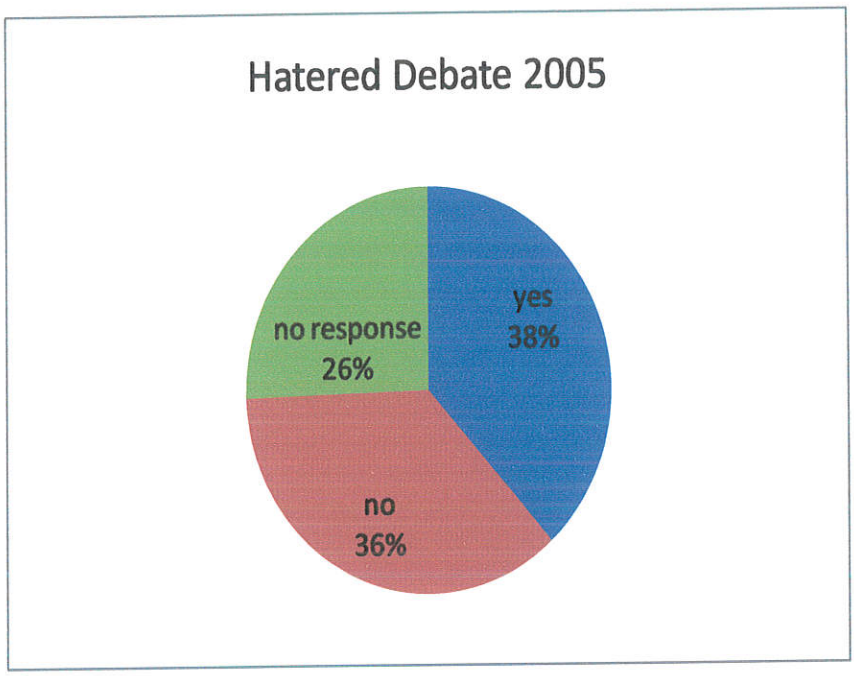


Chart2. Nature of Debates in 2005 and 2010 elections.



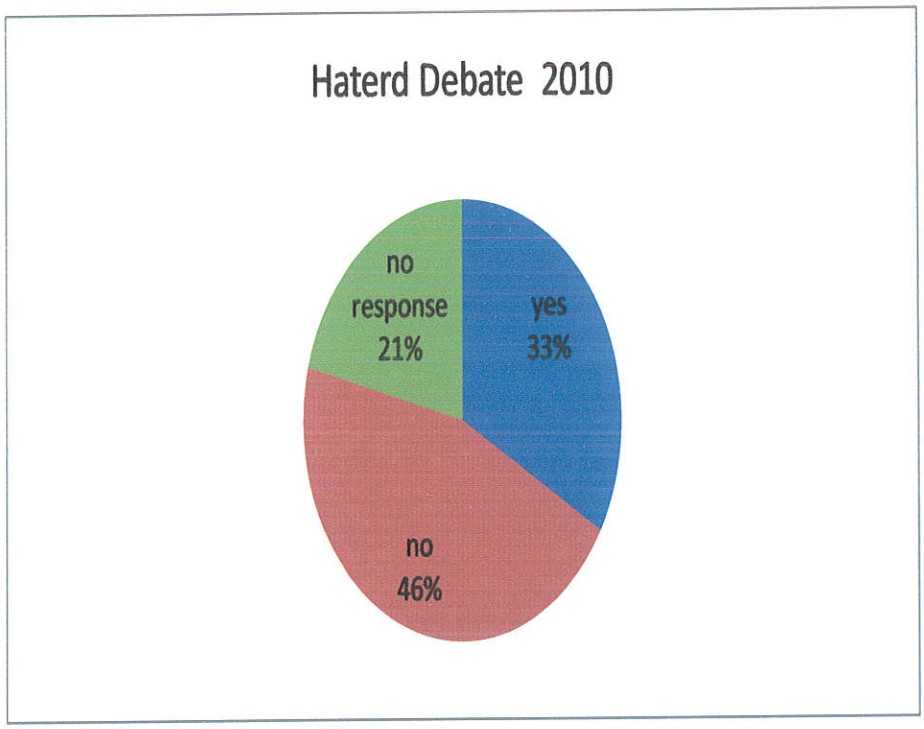


Chart 3.The extent of debate based on Hate Speech in 2005 and 2010 elections.

2. Interviews

This interview section has accommodated different personalities' views from opposition parties, ruling personalities, National Electoral Board and media Activist. It deals with several issues regarding to 2005 and pre 2010 election process. The interview has different unstructured questions. The main topic of the discussions and interviews being comparisons between 2005 and 2010 elections; regarding to political space status and debate on mass media and their aspiration towards the 2010 election. I have forwarded different questions to each personality. Following is excerpts of the interviews. Most of the interviews are tape-recorded. Others are sort of informal discussion and not recorded.

2.1. Dr Negasso Gidada

He was the president of the Federal democratic republic of Ethiopia and currently he is the member of the Parliament and Member of UDJ (member of *Medrek*). In his interview, he compared both 2005 and 2010 election. According to him, the ruling party has excessively used government's resource for pre election process. He also added that government forces have intimidated the people in all forms of life. Furthermore, he claimed that the political sphere and access to the public is deteriorated. One of his major reasons is that the ruling party portraits the opposition as agent of violence and non-democrat 'rent seekers'. These were the objective realities observed in his village where he was born, he said.

At present, there is no difference at all. He himself represents the *Medrek* party, believes NEBE has not playing its responsibility to encourage and promote any political party as long as it strengthens the peaceful democratic process. Despite all these difficulties, he expresses his strong conviction having to take part in the upcoming election.

2.2. Engineer Hailu Shawl

He was the president of former CUD. Currently he is president of the All Ethiopia Unity Party. In his interview, he compared both 2005 and 2010 election. According to him, the ruling party has unacceptably utilized public's property for election process. He also added that the government forces have intimidated his supporters in all corners of the country, particularly in

Oromya and Amhara regions. He further noted that he could not able to get media coverage for his political rallies and public meetings.

According to the president's interview, he considers that NEBE is not playing its responsibility to support opposition political party to strengthen the peaceful democratic process. In spite of all these intricacy, he strongly expresses his confidence having to be the victor in the upcoming election.

Furthermore, he compared the political sphere and accesses to the public both 2005 and 2010 election, which he said, have deteriorated in the latter.

2.3. Ato Gebru Asrat

He was the president of the Tigray State and currently he is the president of the Arena Tigray/*Medrek* Party. According to him, the government forces have intimidated his supporters in all corners of the country, predominantly in the Tigray region. He further noted that he could not be able to make a rally as well as getting media access for campaign. To mention some of the hindrance it currently faces are tearing up election poster and break up meetings. And the most interesting story according to his interview, that has happened to one of his party member is that, his priest (quees) discriminates from the community in a form of GIZET' (excommunicate someone's faith in ritual forms).

In addition, he declares that the political sphere and access to the public has been deteriorated. According to his interview, he reflects NEBE is not playing its responsibility to support any political party as long as it strengthens the peaceful democratic process.

2.4. Dr Addisu Gebregziabher

Dr Addisu Gebregzhiabher is the Deputy Chairman of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia. He has talked about the election code of conduct and other issues pertaining to the upcoming elections and The Electoral Board. According to him, his institution serves all parties equally. He further noted that NEBE (National Electoral Board of Ethiopia) has the responsibility to encourage and promote any political party as long as it strengthens the peaceful democratic process.

He refutes the partiality of NEBE. He says, "What is the measure of partiality? It should be measurable. NEBE is here to serve all political parties and we feel we are giving the proper service. We have registered all political parties and given them the necessary training to make them active participants since the formation of the new NEBE and we will continue to do that. We are now endeavoring to facilitate a level playing field for all parties. We are prepared to make the political parties active participants when election time arrives. We have the responsibility to facilitate making a level field for everyone. If we have prepared a level field for everyone it is their choice to participate or not. We do not understand what they mean when they say we are partial. There is no one who can clearly tell us why they say that.

In addition, he declares that the political space and access to the public has been greater than before.

2.5. Ato Amare Aregawi

I also held long discussion with Ato Amare Aregawi , the former Editor in chief and currently the owner of The Reporter and *Reporter* (the Amharic version) newspapers .He is prominent activist for the advancement of free media in Ethiopia. We talked on pertinent issues ranging from the politico-electoral environment up to the functioning of sate media and private media particularly since the enactment of the Press law, which he had opposed. With regard to the study, the researcher attended a one-day workshop, which held at May 2 2010 in commemoration to 'World Press Day'. During the workshop, Ato Amare argued that the functioning of the state media highly lacks quality, professionalism and accountability. He also noted some powerful individuals are manipulating the media. He expressed the 'media corruption' like this; "ERTA is working in the principle of 'if you don't like the news, buy your own news' for some investors". After the workshop, we had a discussion on which he argues that the current pres law is so much restrictive, repressive, and further explained how it practically affected the industry. However, he told the researcher that the free media in Ethiopia lacks ethics, professionalism and impartiality. He further noted that during the 2005 election, particularly in the post election period, the 'free' media had played a major role in aggravating the crisis.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi

Ato Meles Zenawi was the leader of the struggle as young rebel fighter until 1991. He is the chairman of the EPRDF, an alliance of four groups: the Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization (OPDO), the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the South Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Front and the Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF). He was the president of the Transitional government of Ethiopia and currently he is the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Meles has expressed his government's commitment towards successful election process and building democratic society. 'Despite' he said, "My feeling is the intent of some of the individuals is not to contest the elections in a serious manner. The intent is to discredit the election process from day one, not to participate in it in any meaningful way" at a press conference on *September 16, 2009*.And on *April13, 2010*, Meles also accused opposition leaders of whipping up passions with inflammatory rhetoric, and charged that some oppositions like *Medrek* elements were collaborating "covertly and overtly" with Eritrea and other insurgent groups including OLF and ONLF. "These accusations are meant to incite public unrest and violence. I would like to remind you [opposition] that this would result in dire consequences on yourselves" he warned. (ETV transmission, Sep 16, 2009 and Apr. 13, 2010).

"Those parties [with in Medrek] that apparently are concerned about harassment are not concerned enough in the devising of the code of conduct that is designed to put an end to it if it exists or prevent it from happening".

Chapter Four

Analysis on Elections and Ethiopia's Political Atmosphere

4.1 'Ruling and Opposing': positions and inter-party relationships between 'election events'

According to the ECA (2009:1) recent report, there is a 'continuing liberalization of politics' and high 'development of multiparty politics' in Africa. The report found out that particularly political representation, voter turnout rates and political participation is significantly improved. However, democratic political culture is yet to be institutionalized. Moreover, Authoritarian nature of some of the governments is threatening the democratic process and the politics of accommodation. Hence, the report indicated that "political tension, conflict and crises are emerging patterns" in African elections. The nature of elections and the inter party relationships in Ethiopia need to be viewed in the light of these facts.

The ruling coalition, Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), is an alliance of four other groups: the Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF), the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the South Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Front (SEPDF) and the Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization (OPDO). EPRDF, led by its Chairman and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, has radically reformed the Ethiopia's political system. The regime transformed the hitherto centralized state in to the federal structure of government (ICG, Sep 4, 2009). Its governing ideology is the Revolutionary Democracy, which the opposition believes is all anti multi-party system, having rooted itself to the Marxists-Leninist socialist principle propagated by TPLF since its inception in 1975 as a guerrilla group in Tigray. The TPLF, as the founding father of EPRDF, has quickly institutionalized its 'socialist' *revolutionary ideology* and federal form of government, that guarantee people's right to self determination and self rule, to the Ethiopian political scene.

At the last quarter of the 20th century, the current Revolutionary Democrats started struggle as young rebel fighters with a vision and developed themselves in the wilds in line with the beliefs

that they stood for. Not afraid to die for what they whispered, the youth of the recent past and the leaders of these days be obliged to stick to the active political consciousness they had so many years ago are more than a political grouping. Since they come to power defeating in 1991 the military dictatorship led by President Mengistu H/Mariam, they have transformed the Ethiopian political landscape over the past 19 years, 'bringing it to a point of no return'. However, they are as much a force of transformation in society as they are in politics (Fortune, May 4, 2010).

The governing ideology, Revolutionary *Democracy,* is also not less a concern of several people whether it can prove liberalizing the economy and the politics. For instance a critic by Abebaw Ayallew (Addis-Neger , Aug 1 , 2009) argues, against the EPRDF analysis, that 'rent seeking behavior is the result of the revolutionary democracy' itself. On the contrary, the ruling party labeled most of the oppositions, media and civil activists and some investors as a 'rent seekers' in its organ, *Addis Raey* (July – August , 2006 , April- May , 2010).

The FDRE constitution (1995), which recognizes and incorporates most international human right conventions, was highly celebrated for its commitment to liberal democracy and respect for political and civic freedom. However as time passes, many questioned its effective implementation by the ruling party itself.

Since 1991, Ethiopia has fitted the description of 'hybrid regime', a conception developed by Larry Diamond (2002) and noted by Aalen and Tronvoll (2008:111) .For these researchers, Ethiopia has a "democratic constitution and a form of multi party elections normally liked to the liberal democracies" but in practice it has an authoritarian regime that undermines basic human rights. In such regimes Andreas Schedler (2006) has argued "multi party election are a means to sustain the incumbent regime's own power"(quoted by Aalen and Tronvoll , 2008: 111-2).

Since the downfall of the Marxists' dictatorship, Ethiopia has passed through Transitional and constitutional forms of government. After the formation of TGE, several national and local elections were held. Hitherto 2005, the ruling party had secured all (over 95 percent) but few seats of House of People's Representatives in these elections (also refer Chap.2).Free competition was not allowed and 'voters have been under severe pressure to vote for the ruling party' (Aalen and Tronvoll: 112).In all the elections held until 2005, with limited room for free competition, the major oppositions (AAPO and OLF) had frequently opted for disengagements.

Most observers including the ruling party agree that the political space of the country was not encouraging.

However, in the 2005 national elections in which democratic space was for the first time opened, most opposition groups were well organized and took a challenging political engagement. Particularly, the two strongest coalitions were the United Ethiopia Democratic Forces (UEDF) and the coalition for unity and Democracy (CUD), which collectively won 172 of the 547 federal seats.

However, the results of the last legislative elections were not accepted by all contesting parties. The disagreements led to a prolonged crisis and public unrest. The ruling front claimed to have won 327 of the 547 seats. The opposition, which claims widespread fraud and intimidation, claims that the two major oppositions, CUD and UEDF, coalitions together would form a majority. Though one of the major opposition parties, CUD, won Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa by a landslide, it did not have the stronghold, which the EPRDF has, in rural Ethiopia. (Carter Center report, 2005).Hence, it appeared to be true that their landslide victory over the major cities which only constitutes 15pc of the total population has perhaps accounted for the CUD leaders to believe themselves they had won at the national level.

In 2005, early unofficial results that were circulating from the polls showed no clear winner. However, the National Election Board, when the counting finally resumed, declared the ruling coalition as the winner; the opposition rejected and contested the results (EU EOM report, 2005).

For the ruling party, the Ethiopian opposition was provoking violence. The disputed 2005 poll ended with street riots and the jailing of politicians. The government said that the violence was planned to force an 'unconstitutional change' of government. It was in such way that the first truly competitive election was ended. Since then the two sides were politically challenged; the ruling party was in crisis of legitimacy while the opposition was exposed to arrests, internal conflicts and strives. Consequently, in 2008 by-elections and in the pre-election period of 2010, the relative strength between the opposition groups and the ruling party seemed to be unmatched.

In 2005, though the major opposition , CUD, had won the capital city of Addis Ababa, it declined having take the power .As a result, the ruling party setup caretaker administration until

in 2008 the local election are held. In that local election two things have happened: the over dominantly wining of ruling party and at this 2010 election there would be no ground to have local and regional election in the city .

A 'neutralized' opposition

In the aftermath of 2005 election, following the rejection of CUD to join the parliament, crackdown of the Opposition leaders, their supporters, journalists and civil activists, the two major opposition parties were paralyzed because of their internal troubles and government interference.

By 2008, while it seems apparent that internal conflicts within the opposition parties, particularly CUD, have influenced their ability to mobilize, it is clear that the ruling party has exploited the splits in its favor. Especially the ruling party had actively undermined their position collaborating with the dissenting and less popular factions. Following the release of the CUD leaders from prison in July 2007 after admitting 'mistakes committed both individually and collectively 'and charges of 'treason' and trials to change the 'constitutional order through violent means', conflicts between the different leaders were erupted and the coalition was collapsed. Since their release from jail, many of the leaders had spent time abroad without contact with their home constituencies (Aalen and Tronvoll, 2008: 113).The consequence of the collapse of CUD was irreversible. The CUD party name and license were given to a 'minor splinter group' led by Ayelle Chamiso while the V-sign ballot symbol given to EDP-Medhin (later changed to EDP)led by Lidetu Ayallew. ONC, which was member of the UEDF and was led by Dr Merera Gudina, was also targeted. The party license and name were given to a 'marginal splinter group', allegedly government –friendly faction, to undermine the party and create confusion among the voters (*Ibid*: 114)

Hence, in the 2010 election most opposition was disorganized and neutralized multiplying like amoeba. There were over 90 political parties legally registered. Conflict that arose with in CUD was worsened and eventually the coalition totally collapsed (Addis –Neger, Dec 14, 2009). Ato Lidetu's EDP , Eng Hailu Shawl's AEUP , and Ato Ayelle Chamiso's new CUD and W/rt Birtukan's *Andinet* (UJD) were operating independently and sometimes against each other. Former CUD members are found in countless groups. A few like Dr Berhanu Nega have dumped

peaceful struggle and have declared war against the incumbent through their "Ginbot7" group. Upset with the 20 month prison term followed by a life sentence, they escaped after a government pardon on the eve of the Ethiopian Millennium (Capital, May 23, 2010). Other colleagues have been in prison or constituting different groups and coalitions running their own way.

The other strong coalition in 2005, UEDF, was also not in its prior position. The alliance had squeezed in by different positions taken within it in the 2005 post election period over the issue of joining or not to the parliament. It is believed that it has lost most of its external wings in Diaspora, which were the main financial sources.

Nevertheless, one unprecedented kind of opposition coalition was formed in the pre-election of 2010. *Medrek (*Forum) which evolved itself from *Forum for Democratic Dialogue in Ethiopia* is unique in that Unforeseen before it brought together political parties both from Pan-Ethiopian and Regional/ethno-linguistic origins. In the past, in the history of opposition parties' alliances in Ethiopia, such political parties were hostile to each other. Particularly, the joining of a Pan Ethiopian party, the UJD, which claims itself as the moral and legal successor of CUD, had attracted public attention. The coalition was also unique in that an opposition group for the first time had to take in high ex-government officials, including, former Defense Minister, Ato Seeye Abraha, Former Ethiopian President, Dr Negaso Gidada , Former Tigray President, Ato Gebru Asrat. Indeed, most of these veteran politicians were even at the forefront in organizing the forum. "The Architects of Medrek were Seye Abraha and Dr Negaso Gidada" , Gizachew Shiferaw , acting chair of UDJ with Birtukan Mideksa in jail told Capital(May 23, 2010).

Prominent opposition leaders like Prof. Beyene Petros and Dr Merera Gudina were also among the group. Thirdly, it was also different in that it was the first opposition group to incorporate people from all corners of the country and all major ethnic groups. Generally, *Medrek* was first a coalition of six political parties (UJD, UEDF, ARENA TIGRAY, OFDM, SDFC, EDFM) and two Prominent Personalities, Dr Negaso and Ato Seeye , who later joined through the UJD.

In bringing all these 'different' actors, *Medrek* has witnessed strong and weak sides. Although it accepts the 'supremacy of the Unity', it also recognizes the 'right of nations and nationalities', perhaps the first major coalition to do so. Abiye T/Mariam, former executive Editor and political

analyst of *Addis-Neger* news paper (Sep 19, 2009) had analyzed its political program, language and ethnic policy viewing through its manifesto and found out *Medrek's* internal strength over dominating its weakness. Its brought political parties of various political programs and backgrounds together through "Consociationallism" and Abiye concluded that it has came up with a new kind of middle position 'democratic experiment'. Despite its 'hugeness', critics believe that Medrek lacks 'clear and cohesive policy' on major controversial issues including land ownership, base of federal structure and 'national question'. In contrary to 2005, in which CUD enjoyed a good faith with UEDF and other opposition groups, *Medrek* had tense relationship with most opposition parties and particularly with EDP, led by Ato Lidetu Ayallew. *Medrek* leaders allegedly perceived EDP and its President as 'mere agent of the ruling party' and refused to seat for any negotiation in the presence of the party's representatives (The Reporter, Oct 31, 2009).

Some parties had predicted to win the election. Medrek as the biggest coalition group, running 460 candidates for the parliament, had vowed to win the majority in the current election." we are confident of winning the majority votes but it is only if the EPRDF doesn't rig our votes", Dr Merera Gudina told Capital (May 23, 2010). Hailu Shawl of the AEUP also had expressed his hope to win by saying," we are in it to win. There is no wavering –we will win" (*ibid).*

EDP and its leader Lidetu Ayallew are considered to have highly dominated the debates on the media.

EPRDF's 'Lessons of the 2005 Election'

Is it now possible to have a free and fair election? An observer asked claiming it is the question facing the people of Ethiopia today. Of course, it is the inevitable question one must answer after reading Dr. Negasso Gidada's reportage article on his visit to Dembi Dollo, Wallaga Zone of Oromia Region. In his report, Dr. Negasso definitely declared that there was "no level playing field" in Dembi Dollo, and by implication anywhere else in Ethiopia, to have a free and fair election in 2010. The writer also agreed with the opposition leader and concluded that 'it is a foregone election' (http://www.ethiomedia.com/course/4303.html*).*

An article published on Ethiopian review (March 11, 2010) by Fekade Shewakena argued that the Prime Minister has had devastating lessons from the 2005. As he repeatedly keeps reminding, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has taken 'lessons from the debacles' of the May 2005 election and will not repeat the same mistake. He even said that his organization (TPLF) 'had never made the same mistake more than once'. The lessons he learnt and action plans derived are simple. This time there is no taking a "calculated risk" as in 2005 by a slight opening of any door for democracy. The only thing left now is how to hold something that can be referred to as an election and satisfy the donors, to show them that they are spending their money on and with an "elected" government. "Meles knows that as long as he gives them the illusion of a stable country, they don't give a hoot for democracy or the rule of law. Armed with this knowledge, Meles has made a plan. It is a simple plan – move the election violence from the post election to the pre election period and spread it over time," Fekade concluded.

It is simple to see that the political and legal context is now set for a round up of opposition leaders once official victory is declared over the coming election. A flow of distortions, accusations and allegations of "incitement to violence", charges of "acting against the constitution" and" anti Democratic / peace forces" and other hateful overstatements are flooding the media as part of a calculated pre-emptive intimidation campaign against potential contenders. This is also an instrument of incapacitation, neutralization and paralysis of all opposition in Ethiopia (*ibid*, The Reporter, April 14, 2010).

Muktar Keder, head of the office of the ruling party, accused Seeye Abraha of "paving the way for violence" by allegedly stating that if he did not win in Tembien district (Tigray), it meant the elections were rigged (WIC- news, 2010).

These pre-election tempers understood by the opposition as an intimidation of opposition leaders to take in to a permanent silence or if they insist on challenging the ruling, to set them up for court. In other words, for the oppositions, the ruling party's 'grand plan' is now to demonize and isolate the opposition leaders from the public at large and jail them after the election is over (Seeye Abraha, on April 16, 2010 Interview ; Allafrica.com , 24/09/2009).

This goes parallel to the ECA (2009: 2) survey major finding that although democratic space continued to expand across Africa and more political parties compete for power, in many African

Countries including Ethiopia, 'frequently ruling parties suppress the opposition parties'. "The ruling party often gains undue advantages by deploying its power of incumbency to corrupt the electoral process .It denies campaign permits to..., it prosecutes, harasses, intimidates and sometimes imprisons opposition party leaders".

In light of this, although the research is not intended to analyze or give any legal judgments on the arrest of the W/rt Birtukan Mideksa , it must be noted here that most people believe she is a 'political prisoner' . HRW (2010), US State Department (2010) and UNHR Council (2010) regarded her as apolitical prisoner. Among several commemorative programs by her party ,UDJ, celebrated in honor of her was that of March 28, 2009 coined as "kale", the title of her publicized letter/article in response to the governments call for her to request pardon for the speech she made in Sweden that allegedly violets the 'Presidential pardon' that she was offered in July 2007.The day was celebrated in the presence of opposition leaders like Dr Yakob H Mariam, Dr Merera Gudina and Ato Seeye Abraha who have made speeches and presented papers. Ato Seeye Abraha , who was at that time facilitating the foundation of *Medrek,* presented a study paper entitled , "Constitutionalism , Revolutionary Democracy and the arrest of W/rt Birtukan", in which he argued that the arrest of the opposition leader is part of the ruling party's long time "grand plan" to permanently silence the opposition. Concluding that the measure "targeted not only Birtukan but all oppositions", he urged all to be united and fight against such 'illegal' acts of the government.

Since then throughout the pre-election period of 2010, the opposition leaders were expressing the harassment and intimidation they faced. They were complaining that over 200,000 election officers prepared for the May election are either members or supporters of the ruling party. However, Prime Minister Meles blasted them: "These accusations are meant to incite public unrest and violence. I would like to remind you [opposition] that this would result in dire consequences on yourselves." In the few months ahead of the election 2010, the Premier and other higher officials have repeatedly threatened to arrest and prosecute opposition party leaders who have violated the Election Code of Conduct after the May election is over. (The Reporter, April 14, 2010).

Of course, it is also true that as in most African countries conducted by Economic commission for Africa (ECA 2009:3), in Ethiopia most of the opposition parties' internal structure largely remains undemocratic. Parties are not sharply distinguishable by their programs and policies. This exacerbated by the 'hostility of incumbent party to the frequently splintered opposition parties and their inability to form viable and competitive blocs remained less effective in challenging the government.

Some people consider Prime Minister Meles as a 'renaissance man' of Africa but for his adversaries he is just 'another tyrant'. His opponents are worried that his party, if not himself, would cling to power as long as possible through undemocratic means'. The fact is that it seems Ethiopians are exhausted of whatever kind of long rule in the country: 50 years of Emperor Haile Selassie, 17 years of Mengistu Haile Mariam and now 18+ years of Meles Zenawi. This might take the country into the everlasting political uncertainty and has weakened the spirit of unity (http//allafrica.com/stories/printable/200909240874.html).

This year, the fashion politics with in EPRDF camp is the issue of 'succession plan', *Metekakat* .The issue became a public agenda particularly because the long time Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, was to leave power. Had this been materialized, the public opinion indicated that he would have been remembered in the country's history as first man to abdicate power willingly. The PM had told several foreign journalists that he 'had got enough'. However, lately he had to tell the Financial Times (Sep 10, 2009) that his proposal need be accepted by his party i.e. it is up to the permission of his party. Of course, the plan was not only about Meles; it was rather all about replacing 'the old leadership' with a new generation in order to prevent 'degeneration'. Unlike Senior colleagues such as Seyoum Mesfin , Bereket Simon, and Tefera Walwa , the most looked-for subject was Meles' issue of stepping down from power was however postponed five years more and he run for a parliament seat.

Kirubel Taddese of the *Capital* news paper (April 4, 2010), in his feature article, "Let Meles Go!" criticized the EPRDF's decision that Meles Zenawi should serve another five years term. The journalist argued that the ruling front by doing this committed a grave mistake and asked for revision of the party's decision. "PM Meles has been our leader for a very long time or at least it feels that way", he pointed out. Kirubel continued to say that, "people differ in their assessments

of what the EPRDF has accomplished and where it has failed, but I think there is unanimous agreement that both are no small part connected to Meles". He has continued to lead both the nation and the party, as the EPRDF has survived several challenges, like from the TPLF split and the CUD in 2005.EPRDF and its Chairman are criticized for a "one man rule" for the last 18 years.

4.2 Between Election events: 2005 and 2010

People usually evaluate government by election events. However, to be considered as democratic government having periodic elections in every five or four years is not sufficient. What ought to be is one must take into account political activities which are performed in-between these election events. That is what president Obama stated in Ghana Accra 'democracy is what happens between elections [events]' .This is because they set forth conducive environment for the coming elections on one hand and it is the only way that voters have to oversee whether those elected have been accountable to their promises they made during election campaign seasons .

In light of this, it is relevant to the study to asses major activities performed during the period that ranges between the highly contested 2005 election and the seemingly less competitive 2010 election.

2005: Playing with fire

Preceded by entirely open political space and extremely competitive electoral context voting was conducted On May 15, 20005 peacefully and smoothly. It was generally well administered, despite some shortages of material resources and some incidents of disturbances. Political party representatives were present in most of the polling stations observed by Carter Center and EU observers' mission. Domestic observers were present in around half of the polling stations visited. Turnout was very high and voters often waited for many hours to give their vote. Procedures were generally well followed in nearly all polling. (EU EOM, 2005; Carter Center, 2005)

EU observation Mission (2005) found the 'closing and counting processes negatively in almost half of urban polling stations and even worse in rural polling stations' observed. Counting was

very slow in most areas. Very significant numbers of ballot papers were considered invalid during counting. Delays also occurred with re-counting and aggregation at the constituency level. The mission also witnessed cases that suggested serious irregularities with election results, including figures that were unbelievable.

Opposition parties made an unusually strong performance in the 2005 elections .The results of election 2005 was officially announced in September after a controversial critique by some of the observer missions. The EPRDF and its affiliated regional parties won a parliamentary majority of 372 and the opposition gained an unprecedented third of the parliamentary seats, 172 and control over the nation's capital. (HRW, 2009).

Some of the opposition politicians opted to take their seats in parliament and capitalize on the historic opportunity to share power and govern Addis Ababa. Those, particularly the hard-line leaders of the CUD and Diaspora communities, called for the opposition to boycott parliament and organize public protests in reaction to what they called a stolen vote, despite the government's June warnings that it was prepared to deploy the security forces with deadly force. (Aalen and Tronvoll, 2009 and see HRW Report, 2009)

During a demonstration called by the opposition in Addis Ababa on 8 June 2005 it was reported , security forces killed at least 36 citizens and in the aftermath arrested thousands of persons, mostly linked to the opposition, who were accused of spreading 'political unrest'. Leaders of the opposition were harassed and threatened, and some were kept under house arrest. Opposition offices were raided and staff was arrested *(*EU EOM, 2005*)*. Charged with a variety of offenses, including treason and attempt of removing the constitutional order, the politicians were convicted but subsequently pardoned and released from prison. (US State Department, 2009*)*

Carter Center (2005) documented that Preliminary election results from the political parties, which were circulating on election night, showed that the opposition parties had scored significant electoral gains. On the other hand, on the night of the Election Day, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi declared a one-month ban on public demonstrations in the capital and ordered that the Addis Ababa security force be immediately under the control of his office.

Consequently, in the post Election Day period, both the Carter Center and EU Observation missions (2005) reported that, the human rights situation was seriously deteriorated. Along with government's ban on the freedom of assembly in the capital, Media coverage also worsened. State media published statements of the government claiming victory in the elections while failed to publish opposition statements.

The hard liner opposition leaders were operating in a manner that went very unacceptable. Repeatedly warned by the government to be responsible to the consequences of all their actions and present their claims in civilized manner, CUD opted for inciting violence that negatively affected the country. (Addis Raey, July-August, 2006).

With the exception of only very few newspapers, the 'free' media too generally failed to be responsible and came up with credible reportage of the contested election results , further playing a major negative role in aggravating the problem (Dague Ethiopia, May 22, 2010). Along with the high partisanship of the media toward them, the opposition was aggressively marching to held national demonstrations throughout the country by which they asked the people to bring back its cards. According to *Addis Raey(* July –August 2006, 4 -7), the organ of EPRDF that gives detailed analyses of the 'revolutionary' Democracy , the Oppositions were being fooled and become 'arrogant' by what they had already won huge seats which they didn't expect. In addition, that their strategy was to bring the government down by any means including unconstitutional one, guided by the Negede Gobeze's book (2005) written on how to topple the incumbent government through all possible means.

Despite efforts by the NEBE to establish a system to deal with complaints, it failed to be effective. First, there were concerns about whether the established Complaints Investigation Panels (CIP) provided a level playing field. While appeals against NEBE decisions could be made to the Supreme Court, both institutions were led by the same person, in turn raising questions as to whether the judiciary offered an effective remedy for such cases as well (EU EOM Report, 2005).

Overall, the Carter Center and the EU Mission concluded that in spite of the positive developments in the pre-election period, the 2005 electoral process did not fulfill a genuinely democratic process. The period following the Election Day was marked by 'highly charged

political tensions, inflammatory rhetoric from all political sides'.(EU EOM and Carter Center, 2005 reports)

EU EOM remarked in its final report 'this [2005] showed the eagerness of Citizens to make use of new political freedoms' which should serve to inspire the future.

Did the 2005 election really serve this purpose, inspiration for the future, in the times that had to come forth? On the other hand, it was the time when hope for peaceful change was lost? The direction of the country's political destiny is determined in the times to come, which is the topic of discussion below.

2008: The start of the U-turn

In the 2008 local and by-elections, polling went smoothly and peacefully, and there were no post election mass arrests or violence. However, the Pre-election weeks and months were marred by wide spread harassment, intimidation, arrests, and killings of opposition candidates and their supporters. There was also incomplete compliance by the NEB with the Electoral Law, prompting some of the major opposition parties to boycott the election. Ruling party and NEB officials mostly denied these incidents and, with few exceptions, they failed to investigate the claims (US State Department, 2009).

The ruling party was busy in coercive tactics and manipulation of the electoral process, including intimidation of opposition candidates and supporters in the pre -election period. Consequently, two major oppositions, OFDM and UEDF, who allegedly said their members, were victims of the ruling party's political intimidation decided to withdraw from the process. *(Ibid)*

As result, in the absence of any competition the local elections of 2008, nearly all of the seats, which reported to reach at 3.6 million, were won by the ruling EPRDF and allied parties (Aalen & Tronvoll , 2008 , 112-3, 116-7). This election manifests itself as the first stage of concern after the 2005 election, that the government had erected its total control of the local administrating.

Unlike the very essence and the spirit of the country's 'law of the land' that provides for free participation of citizens in their country's political affairs , most stake holders of the process

were accusing the government for narrowing and closing the political space of the country that was for the first time opened in the 2005 elections .

The ruling party tried to justify the lack of competition in the 2008 local and by-elections through the fact that the opposition was 'factionalized and disorganized' and accused that the oppositions' boycott was 'merely a tactic to escape defeat'(Aalene and Tronvoll, 2008:113).

4.3 Electoral contexts

Debate on Mass Media: 2005, 2010

A free and fair election is possible only where the rule of law prevails and fundamental human rights are respected. In this account, there is no ambiguity to having free and fair elections. The role of media is crucial to make the election process truly competitive and free. In this regard, there would not be logical reason why there could not be free and fair elections in Ethiopia.(Alemayehu G/Mariam , Jan 2010)

Most People believe that the debates held in both consecutive national elections were fundamentally different. According to the findings from the research questioners, most respondents noted that the debate held in 2005 was more informative than in 2010. Moreover, over 60 percent responded that the debate was in favor of the ruling in 2010.With regard to the maturity of the debate, most informants noted that in 20005 it had high potential of instigating conflict,(Chart 1).Hence , It can be implied that the code of conduct could have affected the mode of the debate both positively and negatively. Although the current debates were peaceful and calm, the political tempo of the debate was not as strong as that of 2005.

The FDRE constitution which describes itself as the "supreme law of the land" guarantees voters and candidates full freedom of speech and expression; ensures freedom of press, which guarantees the right to publicly disseminate political messages and information in the run up to elections and post-election period. Nevertheless, some observers noted that the current code of conduct signed highly restricts these freedoms. (Alemayehu G. Mariam, Jan 2010)

The Fortune paper (May 9, 2010) has also found the comparison of the content of the debates' for both the 2005 and 2010 elections. Most of them are similar in their thematic aspects. The

topics are mainly on social and political scenario of the country. One of the drawbacks of their debate is there is no contextual debate on economic issues.

Table 1.Topics of debates on media both in 2005 and 2010 elections

Debate topics in 2005	Debate topics in 2010
Civil society	Democratic system and multi party system
Federalism and democratic governance	Federalism and decentralization
Human rights	Good governance, human rights and supremacy of law
Land policy	Health affairs
New education policy	Education
Free market	Foreign relation
Social services	Infrastructure
Agricultural policy	Agriculture, land possession and development
Urban development	Urban and industry development

Source : Fortune , May 4 , 2010 (Minutes)

Table 2; Political parties' debate that broadcasted through mass Media 2010.

Political Parties	Rounds								
	1st	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**5th**	**6th**	**7th**	**8th**	**9th**
EPRDF	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
EFDUF/Medrek	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
EDP	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
CUDP	.....	....	....	.....	....	....	....	.....	.....
AEUP			....	....	....	....	....	.....	.....
EVP	....								

EJDFF	....			....					
BJDE		....							
AENM		....							
AEDP			....					....	
EPDP									....

Source: ERTA, table compiled by Researcher

Table 3: Time allocation of Political parties' for each round of debates, 2010.

Political parties	1st round	2nd round	3rd round	Total
Ruling Party	22	30	14	66 Minutes
Oppositions Party	38	25	51	114 Minutes

Source: ERTA.org/. ; Compiled by Researcher

The researcher's findings and literature show that, in 2005 election the media coverage had been stronger than 2010 pre-election media converge. Comparing to One characteristic that strongly influences a political movement's media treatment are the degree to which they are perceived to be 'stronger' which takes the ruling party into challenging the status quo and in their tactics; whereby, the more extreme and opposition group, the more critical the media coverage (Michael Barker, 23 April 2008).

The wide variety in the quality and quantity of the media's coverage of campaigns: but how might these differences be explained, and what are their consequences for election process? Answering these questions is particularly important, as it is fundamental to the maintenance of democratic institutions that citizens are able to participate actively in the administration of their society to determine their collective objectives.On this point, it is important to reflect upon the 'revolutionary democracy' environment in which the media currently operates. This is because 'revolutionary democrats' politics facilitates the rising power of media business and serves to marginalize the majority of them from meaningful participation in media policy making. Consequently for any social movement to draw beneficial attention to its activities in the media

the first barrier they must overcome are the structural constraints of this communicative medium itself. (*ibid)*

As part of election campaigning, nine debates among contesting political parties on various issues were broadcasted on national television and radio. Some of the candidates of the political parties that are running in the forthcoming national elections believe that they have gained from participating, while others point their finger at the incumbent for shaping the debating process to its benefit. However, the standpoint of some voters is covered by a lack of interest and a disgruntled attitude, while others seem content with the way things are progressing (Fortune, May 9, 2010).

According to the newspaper and the findings of the study, the electorates did not find the debates held in 2010, compared with that of the 2005,relevant or interesting but consider them, at best, as bad electoral advertisements. "Whoever said whatever in the debates will make no difference," an informant told Fortune. "They [government leaders] have these debates only to claim that they have done something for the opposition" (*ibid).*

Accordingly, 'The debates of 2005 had a lot of excitement. It was focused more on the main issues rather than political trivia compared with the debates of 2010. The difference between the two debates was more in presentation than in topic. However, others disagreed that somehow the debates are what some voters had hoped they would be. 'Debates should have structure and integrity and that is what this year's debates managed to find' *(ibid).*

Particularly, Inter Africa Group took the initiative to organize the 2005 debates. However, it is currently not mandated to organize political debates according to the new Charities and Societies Proclamation. Apart from the allocation of time, the number of supporters that attended the debates from all the parties was also equal and the political parties were asked questions from participants who included journalists, supporters of parties, and university students. These all are not witnessed in the 2010 election.

In 2010, of the opposition parties, the All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP) did not take part in the first three debate rounds; on the Democratic System and Multiparty System, Federalism and Decentralizations, and Education. This was due to the time allocated for parties, the debates not

being televised live and not having a live audience. However, it started debating by the fourth one, which was on Health (Reporter, May 13, 2010)

Other opposition parties have also expressed complaints with the lack of a fair debating process. *Medrek* , not signatory to the Electoral Code of Conduct, unlike AEUP, that has been participating in the electoral debates, but believes that opposition members did not benefit much from the debates. They blame the incumbent for seizing most of the time in the debates (The Reporter, April 2010; Fortune, May 9, 2010).

However, EPRDF justified this claim that it demanded more time parallel with the number of issues raised against it by all the opposition." Since every party is attacking the EPRDF, we need more time, and I believe that it is a fair allocation," said Sekoture Getachew, head of public relations for the EPRDF. He further noted that the political parties requested that the debates be broadcasted live, but it was not agreed upon, since the electorate will get the information anyway (Fortune, May 9, 2010). Beyond that, the debates were edited and censored; so *Medrek* just accepts what is broadcasted since they cannot do anything about it.

Independent media

Independent media in the West, like their counterparts in authoritarian regimes, have often been targets of secret state-led 'wars' (Mackenzie, 1997). The implications of such revelations are huge for the promotion of independent media organizations overseas .However, rather than just focusing on revolutions supported by foreign so-called 'democracy promoters' it is enlightening to examine a case of an unsuccessful election in which the independent media played a supportive role for the would-be-revitalize (*Barker, 2008).*

Harego Bensa (2010) argues in his article, 'what the media should do in the upcoming Ethiopian elections', free and independent media plays a crucial role in consolidating democratic process. Media consolidates democracy when, among others, it provides balanced and unbiased information to the citizens, when it serves as a forum for political expression and debate and when it discloses violations of human rights whenever there is any. Despite the fact that the role of media during elections process is vital it provides

voters with unbiased information regarding political parties policies and their candidates political background to empower the society and provide with an informed choices.

This becomes more relevant when one considered Ethiopia's endorsement of Access to Information Act and civil society Act before the 2010 election which Shimeles Kemal (May 2 , 2010) regarded as one of the most progressive legislation on public access to information in Africa. However, this press law was highly criticized and regarded as the most restrictive law by nearly all international watchdog organizations such as HRW (2009, 2010) and the local media society and oppositions as well.

In contrary to the government's statements, Ato Amare Aregawi (May 2, 2010) said that currently the Ethiopian media is paralyzed. The government controls most of the electronic media. Citizens are irritated by state sponsored propaganda on ETV and other state media's targeting the free media. Ethiopia continues to lag behind almost all sub Saharan Africa including neighboring Kenya when it comes to media. Kenya has many radio and TV stations that are privately owned and operated.

The media must make available room for all candidates in an election by ensuring the highest profession. According to Amare; no candidate should be disadvantaged or given unfair advantage over the others. However, this is one of the major problems that usually manifest itself in the Ethiopian media during election times (Amare Aregawi , May 15 , 2010 Interview).

With regard to the current election, Addis Ababa University and Electoral Reform International Service (ERIS) has monitored media coverage on political parties. Hence, Reporter, Fortune, Ethio-chanal and Nega-dress newspapers were among those who gave a balanced coverage for all political parties (Ethio-Channal, June 12, 2010). The legal framework for media will be discussed in later sections.

Election and Civil Society

A free and fair election is achievable when and where the rule of law triumph, fundamental human rights is respected, freedom of association to form civic organizations is recognized and all put into effect.

An active citizenry is an essential part of a prospering, sustainable, and democratic society. Voting is typically the most visible way for people to engage in public life, but elections alone are not sufficient. To hold public officials accountable, citizens need timely access to information about the workings of government as well as the freedom to come together to advocate on their own behalf. The state, in turn, has a duty to honor their concerns and act on them responsibly (Trust Africa, March 12, 2010)

According to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (2009) report, in many parts of Africa, nominally democratic regimes exclude, marginalize, or diminish the role of various social and economic groups. They engage citizens in ways that are largely symbolic, rather than allowing for the real and meaningful participation of autonomous and competent actors. The recent proliferation of civil society organizations in Africa holds great promise for strengthening democracy, but these groups' efforts frequently fall short due to lack of coordination, duplication of efforts, competing agendas, perceptions of elitism, and insufficient transparency.

Ethiopia, Since 2005 post election, the ruling party monitor national policies on key issues including freedom of association, freedom of expression, free movement of people, and civic participation in setting development priorities and conduct advocacy campaigns aimed at securing and safeguarding the right to exercise these freedoms .

Civil society's imperfect and frail commitment with the state in Ethiopia could gradually be overcome by strengthening institutional civil society into a social force. Democratic development has definitely slipped backwards. Less than two years ago, the country seemed to have been on the verge of a democratic breakthrough, when opposition political parties made dramatic gains in national elections. However, in the run-up to the 2010 elections, they were expelled from the

country's electoral process despite the local civil societies that have been starting their activist only to observe the election process. (http://news.newamericamedia.org)

Afterwards, when opposition became threatening to the government, a brutal crackdown ensued. However, in the wake of the current crackdown, most of the leadership is in either prison or exile, and its operations have been largely stifled, despite some efforts to help them. Only few civil society organizations or media have been able to find little space to work in Ethiopia. *(ibid)*

4.4 Electoral Administration

NEBE: Establishment and Mandate

Election, which is the right of the people, makes the nation peaceful, democratic and prosperous. Its mere value has been transcended generational for the last so many years. From all this anyone can understand election is not only the vital instrument for democracy but also such a vital instrument needs proper management. The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia is responsible for administering elections at national and all local levels; elections, by-elections, recall elections and referenda("Powers and Duties of the Board", the Amended election law of Ethiopian Proclamation NO. 532/2007, Art.7).

As per the Constitution of Ethiopia, NEBE is independent of any influence and tasked to "conduct in an impartial manner free and fair election in Federal and State constituencies." (Art 102). According to the latest revised Electoral Law (Art.7(1-23), 2007), the NEBE is composed of nine members appointed by the House of Peoples' Representatives upon the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Conversely, the Prime minister does this after "sufficient consultations forum with political parties" that have seats in the parliament to ensure that the nominees are "independent and impartial". Members must not have any political affiliation and be selected on the basis of their good conduct and Professional competence. The term of office is now amended to be five years; in the former legislation, the term of office was six years. Board decisions are made by Majority vote. In the case of a tie, the Chairman has a casting vote. The Vice-Chairman of the Board is elected from among its members and discharges the duties of the Chairman in his absence. The Board can issue regulations and directives and is responsible for appointing and training electoral

officers, providing the public with civic and voter education. It has the power to rectify electoral irregularities and investigate complaints that are submitted to (Electoral Law, 2007, Art.7 (1-23)

The NEBE has a secretariat headed by a Board Chairman and vice Chairman, who are both appointed by the House of Peoples representatives upon recommendation by the Board; unlike the former election law (2005) by which recommendation was made by the Prime Minister. Its administration has operational with permanent officials at the federal level, out of who are Regional Electoral Coordinators for the different states and regions. Unlike the former law, the number of these officials isn't specified in the amended Election law (Art .14-17, 2007).

Eligibility, Voters and Candidates Registration

According to the governing Ethiopian Election law, any citizen has the right to vote since at the age of 18 and beyond upon residing in the constituency in question for at least six months. The right to vote is excluded for "mentally disorder" persons and "persons serving a term of imprisonment passed by a court of law". (Amended Election Law, 2007, Art. 33(1-3)).

As we mentioned earlier, Electoral management in such country like Ethiopia, the second populace country in Africa, with an estimated population of almost 80 million needs proper management towards fair and free election for the nation. According to NEBE, some 31926,520 voters were registered for the 23 May, 2010 elections, of which some 48 percent were reportedly women. The regions with the highest turnout were Oromia (10,853,284) , Amhara (7,335,246), SSNNP (5,846,501) and Tigray (2,034,855).Though there are claims that turn out of this year is low, the official estimates shows that 85 Percent of the eligible population was registered. The number of persons registered has increased significantly since 2005 of over 25, 000,000 in line with the population growth of 3 per cent per year(NEBE website, May 20,2010)

In addition to fulfilling these conditional ties, prospective voters have to produce an ID/passport or other documents to prove their identity, age and residence. In the absence of such documents, election officials can register a voter whom they know or in rural areas establish the identity through "traditional means". (Art. 35, 36; amended election law of 2007). In line with this, 63 political parties filling some 6938 candidates are contesting. Totally, the official announcement of the Board also indicates that in sum about 189.5 million birr has been budgeted for the

election execution. With nine rounds, each also partitioned in to three sub rounds of debates were televised through the state media. Totally, it is said around 585 hours free time was allocated for campaigning and debating and in line with this is some 849 free columns in the state news papers. There were some 43 thousand polling stations, 220 election officials and the same numbers of public observers executed the election. The number of Polling stations in Addis Ababa alone was 1, 713. (www.ethiopianellections.org; www.erta.org ; Fortune, May 23, 2010).

Performances of the NEBE

The performances of any institution have been determined by internal and external factors. There is no difference for NEBE. Controversy over NEBE goes back to 1992. Somehow, many critics believe that NEBE's overall performance was mixed in 2005. Its functionality was perfect until the final day of election 2005, but the significant delaines in counting and aggregation had created conflicts. Along with Some decisions of the NEBE, this furthered concerns to the opposition's perception that NEBE was not impartial. However, according the Carter Center (2005) and EU Mission Reports, election officials at all levels generally showed their great dedication as their level best of their abilities. (EU Observation Mission Final Repot, 2005)

While noting some positive sides on transparency and efficient preparations, the international observers' reports showed that the electoral officials have lacked skill and training on how to run the whole process. There was also observed some shortage of logistics and materials. The researcher has well learnt that this and other weakness observed during 2005 election were admitted by the Board and tried to be fully addressed in the current 2010 election. Before the 2010 election period, including those at higher post of the Institution, almost all electoral officials have taken series of relevant trainings both abroad and inside the country based on their levels. Numbers of experience sharing programs have also been held with relevant international bodies. (Addisu Gebre Egziabher, May 12, 2010 Interview)

The board has also facilitated several training programs for different stakeholders that take part in the election. Besides Electoral executives, consecutive trainings programs were given to multiple people from the judiciary, to judges, to police officers and to political Parties as well.

The training focuses on each trainee's background, mostly regarding the electoral code of conduct, and voting and counting; the election process in Partnership with other government institutions like Addis Ababa University and other international partners. However unlike in the 2005 election in which several non governmental bodies including Action AID Ethiopia have been active in advocating voters education, this for no clear reason the Board admits that it prohibited any civic and voters education not to be given by anybody outside of itself. Dr Addisu Gebre Egziabher (May 12, 2010), deputy Chair person of the board , justified this decision with the 'fact' that the board has learnt in 2005 that "all the NGOs participated in this affair were found to be totally partisan and later caused political chaos…". The official said according to the newly amended electoral law (2007) it is the responsibility of the Board itself to discharge voters education. Moreover, he added, "We have effectively provided the voters with all necessary information and training on how to do it all ".

The board has also developed some 16 directives, including these like the code of conducts that guide's behavior of international observers, code of conduct on media's election reporting, complaints handling and others. While some argue that the code on international observers is restrictive because it prohibits them, for instance any usage of electronic instruments, the board refused to consider these concerns.

Table 4: Complaints of political parties in 2010 pre-election period.

Political Party	Complaints	Verified	Found legitimate
Medrek (Forum)	12	12	7
AEUDO	6	4	3
SEPDU	4	2	1
ANDM/EPRDF	6	5	4
ONC	2	2	2
EDP	2	2	2
EFDFF	3	3	3
EPDP	1	1	0
OLNP	1	1	-
ENUP	2	2	2
DPDM	1	1	0
CUDP	1	1	0
AEDP	1	1	1
AAPO	1	1	0
WLSPDM	4	4	1

OLUF	5	5	2
HPDP	1	1	1
SPDM	1	1	1
BUDP	1	1	0
EUDO	1	1	0
EDU	2	2	2
GPDO	2	2	2
MSDPDUM	1	1	0
BGPDUM	1	1	0
Total	62	57	44
(In percent)		91.935%	77.19%

Source: NEBE document; May 15, 2010. table Compiled by the researcher.

Out of table (4) above one can note that within the last 8 months in the Pre-election period in sum the institution has received 62 claims from the political parties, most of them from oppositions. According to the filed document found from the NEBE, out of the complaints 91.9 % have been resolved the rest ones not yet addressed. Amongst them over 77 % have been found legitimate and most of them are complaints related to intimidation, harassment, and arrest of members and supporters. However against these figures, Dr. Addisu told the researcher that most complaints are found out to be baseless and rather have caused the institution much unnecessary wastage in Human and material resources. Generally, most opposition groups the researcher discussed with complains that the NEBE was not in a position to respond to their claims timely and properly.

Electoral Code of Conduct: does it matter?

Code of conduct takes different party on the same mental, moral and legal altitude. Upon this, election's code of conduct makes feel good factor in the Ethiopian fair political game. This pact has became legal document after signed on a ceremony held at Sheraton Addis after a long negotiation took place among four political parties nearly for two months. The parties had also agreed to establish a joint council - *Yegara mikrbet*- through it to handle election related disputes.

The signatories of the Code of conducts were Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of EPRDF, Engineer Hailu Shawl of AEUP, Lidetu Ayallew of EDP and Ayelle Chamiso of the current CUDP. During the signing ceremony, all the party leaders' underlined that effective implementation of

the code of conduct will open a new chapter. While making a speech about the event, the PM said "the agreement would guarantee a level playing field for all competitors in the upcoming national elections."(The Reporter, Oct 31, 2010)

On the contrary, *Medrek*, which earlier had refused to continue with the negotiation claiming it ignores their major human rights concerns, said it is simply an instrument of the ruling to lengthen its rule. Professor Beyene of the Forum, *Medrek* had said that if it were to be enacted as a law, it would consider it as unwelcome law illegally imposed on all the legally operating political parties that were not party to its making. *(ibid)*

The agreed code of conduct included agreements on accepting a free and fair elections results, usage of suitable language in campaigning , and on how to deal with intimidation and refraining from instigating violence , abuse of position and corrupt practices. The code was drafted based on document prepared by International Institute for Democracy and electoral assistance, (IIDEA), translated by the EPRDF. It is reported also that it incorporated AEUP's proposal that took in to account the experience of South Africa and Ghana .In addition some views of EDP and CUDP was incorporated *(The Reporter, October 31, 2009).*

Although always dismissed by the government officials on the ground that they are baseless, many International organizations, ICG (Sep 14, 2010) taking the lead, are expressing concern that violence may occur in Ethiopia related with 2010 election. One of the main objectives of the Electoral code of conduct is then to desist oneself from violent means and resolve any political misunderstandings through dialogue. However, critics say that the pact is reached in an exclusionary way and doesn't take in to account the structural and objective human right concerns that existed in the country.

"Fairness in election is impossible as long as the Prime Minister appoints the National Electoral Board and maintained its tight control over the media." Said Gebru Asrat, who is vice-chairman of the Forum (VOA News, 2009-11-01; www1.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2009-11-01-voa13.html.)

On the same interview, Gebru highlighted "The EPRDF has discussed with parties that seem to approve or endorse its lines, not the serious parties that do challenge the EPRDF and do have

serious issues about the political space in the country," Furthermore he added "As far as we are concerned, nothing substantial has been discussed in this negotiation. This is simply a ploy to show the diplomatic community that the EPRDF is compromising with [opposition] parties" *(ibid).*

Some Analysts are also curious about the motives of the of the code of conduct; *We believe that an election code of conduct that is forged through a consensus of all the political parties and administered by an independent and impartial electoral commission could go a long way to ensure a peaceful, fair and free election in 2010...however, In the final analysis, it may all end up being the old zero-sum game, the regime has played so well for the past two decades, this time dressed up as a new game of 'election code of conduct'.(* Alemayehu G. Mariam, 2009).

The All Ethiopian Unity Party led by Eng. Hailu Shawl who is one of the signatories to the Code of Conduct widely acknowledged as a legitimate independent political force. In a VOA interview (2009-11-01), Hailu admitted that many opposition supporters are suspicious of his seeming closeness and conciliatory attitude toward Prime Minister Meles, whose government convicted him of treason and sentenced him to life in prison three years ago. "I do not blame the people for being like that. It is our history. We came through all these problems.... They suspect we made a deal, they suspect we are taking advantage of something. Whatever we did, we did it for the people. And it is our job to explain what we did, to explain why we did It.", he told VOA reporter (ibid)

The Reporter (October 31, 2009) also quoted Bereket Simon, Government Communication Office Minister, saying the pact would open a new chapter in the history of the country , criticized Medrek for its withdrawal from the process. He added that the coalition is not obliged to sign the document, but once it becomes a law he warned that "any violations of the code would incur penalties".

Medrek is widely complaining that its candidates and members are arrested and intimidated all over the country "These jailing are to stop our members running in elections," Gizachew Shiferaw, deputy leader of the Unity for Democracy and Justice (UDJ/Medrek) party, told Reuters on October 28, 2009. "It has become a strategy for the ruling party. Ethiopia is a one-party state."

Finally, the bill for the electoral code of conduct was passed on December 22, 2009, with a new article that requires parties who were not involved in the negotiation for the code to accept and sign an agreement due to be issued by a joint council formed by parties that negotiated the code and wish to be part of the council. The bill also sets forth the establishment of joint councils at all levels of electoral administration. These councils will be responsible for handling any violations of democratic rights related to the election before they are taken to the election board. (http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article32968)

Despite these efforts, allegations and counter allegations persist between the oppositions and the Ruling. Medrek had accused TPLF/EPRDF that its late candidate, Aregawi Gebereyohaness, who was contesting for the parliament representing one *wereda* from Tigray, was a victim of politically motivated killing after he was repeatedly threatened.

Several other arrests and harassments of opposing members were frequently reported. The ruling party on the other hand dismissed all complaints of the oppositions as "baseless allegations". However, Gebru Asrat of the Medrek claim that repressions were especially high to members of their coalition, as a reaction to their refusal to sign the code of conduct, other signatories particularly Hailu Shawl's party AEUP has also been dragged into tense contentions with the ruling party as the election was approaching. The party had first boycotted from the first two televised debates demanding a live transmission and without any form of censorship.

With regard the effectiveness of the code of conduct, it has been debilitated since most parties have still complaining that EPRDF has breached the bill. If we take one case, around the first march, AEUP complained that a joint investigation over its 30 cases, found only three of them to be legitimate. The party wasn't contented with the intervention and the manner the EPRDF had showed. According to Yakob Likie, the external relations of AEUP, the findings should have first been submitted to the joint council of the political parties. In addition, the ruling violated the code of conduct in that it unilaterally gave the Statement. The party further warned saying that:" If push comes to shove we know where to go ", perhaps as most people understood the power of the tone that this verbal carries is that the party would boycott the election if things gone wrong. (The Reporter, March 6, 2010; Reporter [Amharic], March 7, 2010)

Let alone *Medrek* with which the ruling from very start had no good relationship, others including the signatories are a proof that the electoral conduct is non functional. However, Hailu Shawl , chairman of the AEUP , asked if still he has not given up hope on the bill, he responded " No". He continued," our members are being extremely harassed and the media is intentionally ignoring to report our public meetings, especially if I chaired it, However, we have also to see the other extreme case ; ask yourself what would happen had we had not the code".

Medrek and its member parties have been several times openly categorized by the ruling as "one instigating violence and having links with Destructive forces" like the Eritrean rogue regime and Insurgent movements like OLF and ONLF and warned measure would be taken over them. Almost all higher officials of the government, including The Prime Minister, Bereket Simon, Sekotoure Getachew, Haile Mariam Desalegn and others have made these warnings through the state media and the free press too against Medrek leaders for their "illegal" activities

The country has been a matter of concern for all international and local observers. For a critical observer, in the absence of culture of dialogue and negotiation everything is being politicized. All political controversies are being postponed. This leads to different political and legal interpretations of elites. This is of course a broad premise. However, the current code of conduct is latest manifestation of these objective realities. The researcher's interpretation of things that were happening during the negotiation is different.

Why the *Medrek* leaders refused to take part in the *joint* negotiation, in the presence of other oppositions, towards establishing a system that would ensure a level playing field for all? How could they have issues that shouldn't be raised in front of Ato Ayelle or Ato Lidetu ? Or why did the Ruling party fail to make a separate talk with these people? Ato Sekotoure , the External Relations head of EPRDF, had told the researcher(Nov 5,2009) that it is impossible to have separate talks with over 60 individual parties for almost the same agenda. As to the writer, it is not a matter of time or similarity of agenda but they have their own different interpretations to *Medrek*'s request to hold a private negotiation. *Medrek*'s agenda that cannot be an agenda for the others can only be Birtukam Mideksa, the one who is serving a life time jail. Though Medrek did not want to say it openly before the ruling party, EPRDF seemed to know Medrek's sole issue. So it can be said they have, without eye to eye contact, indirectly negotiated and failed to agree.

But For the other oppositions, which were in good terms with the coalition, it was also a means of isolating *Medrek* from the process. This is because (I'll touch it in other sections) they, particularly EDP, had have their own controversy with *Medrek*. Now what is left with biggest coalition, Medrek -perhaps to threaten the ruling party with election plus violence or prohibiting international legitimacy in the post election perhaps by boycotting the election or rejecting the election result?

4.5 Legal and Administrative Measures: contracting political space?

Since the historic 2005, election ended with chaos and bloodshed, internationally credible reports indicate that the Ethiopian government is taking all kinds of administrative and legal measures to constrain the electoral environment. Particularly, frequent reports of HRW, and annual reports of US State department Human Rights repots need mention in this account.

The government denies that political space in Ethiopia is narrowing and points to the introduction of the electoral law, the press law, the increasing number of political parties, and the recent adoption of an electoral code of conduct to support its claims.(Bereket Simon, 2010).

The Ethiopian government is waging a coordinated and sustained attack on political opponents, journalists, and rights activists ahead of the May 2010 elections, Human Rights Watch, a New York-based lobby group, documented in a report released on March 24, 2010 in Nairobi, Kenya.

The report, "'One Hundred Ways of Putting Pressure: Violations of Freedom of Expression and Association in Ethiopia" documents several ways in which the ruling party has systematically punished opposition supporters. Since the 2005 polls, the party has used its control of local and district administrations to undermine opponents' livelihoods through withholding services such as agricultural inputs, micro-credit, and job opportunities (HRW, March 2010).

US State Department in its recent report (2009) similarly documented all government repressions and Human right violations ahead of election 2010. The US government expressed its concern that the ruling party has constrained the environment for freedom of speech through legal means in its recently published report.

While the constitution and law provide for freedom of speech and press, the government did not respect these rights in practice. The government continued to arrest, harass, and prosecute journalists, publishers, and editors. The government continued to control all broadcast media except three private FM radio stations. Private sector and government journalists routinely practiced self-censorship. (US State Department, 2010)

According to State Department report, 'Government-controlled media' solely serves the views of the government and the ruling coalition. However, it says, live radio and television broadcasts occasionally included televised parliamentary debates and broadcast the views of opposition parliamentarians.

Unlike in the pre election period of 2005, the US state Department report (2010) and information obtained from the Ethiopia broadcasting agency, shows only small-circulation newspapers were currently published. The number of private newspapers remained low. Approximately 20 private Amharic-language and English-language newspapers with political and business focuses were published, with a combined weekly circulation of about 150,000.

The HRW elaborated how recently enacted laws severely restrict the activities of the opposition supporters, civil society and the media. Africa director at Human Rights Watch, Georgette Gagnon said, "Expressing dissent is very dangerous in Ethiopia. The ruling party and the state are becoming one, and the government is using the full weight of its power to eliminate opposition and intimidate people into silence." (HRW statement, March 24, 2010)

HRW says these "harsh" new legislations on civil society and the media narrow the ability of individuals to expose and criticize continuing serious violations of human rights in Ethiopia. According to oppositions and these reports, these "punitive" measures contained the rights to freedom of expression and association, silenced independent voices, and contributes to alarming freedom of speech and opinion.

Political supporters, civil activists and journalists who try to report on state repression are held accountable through these laws.(Gebru Asrat, May 10, 2010 Interview; HRW 2010; US State Department 2009). Most respondents of this research mentioned that the political space of the

country is now much narrower than that of 2005 partly because of the earlier mentioned proclamations.

In practical terms, Government's repression and fear of the severe punishments against defamation according to the new press law, and the wide range definition of terrorism and the associated punishments in the new anti- terrorism law has led many civil society activists and journalists to leave the country. The most prominent independent newspaper, *Addis Neger,* was closed in December 2009 and currently the government jammed Voice of America radio broadcasts. Ethiopians are unable to speak freely, organize political activities, and challenge their government's policies - whether through peaceful protest, voting, or publishing their views freely (*ibid).*

According to Human Rights watch (2010) since the April 2008 local elections in which the EPRDF won over 99.9 percent of the vote, the ruling party has consolidated its full control over village and district administrations .Residents are organized into cells and local government officials, and militia monitored households for signs of dissent. Local administrations manipulated government services to punish those who criticized the government or did not support the ruling party, "a stick and carrot" strategy. Local government officials are responsible, for selecting and supervising participation in food-for-work programs, allocations of seeds and fertilizer, micro-credit loans, jobs, educational opportunities.. Opposition parties claim that their members have no option but to join the ruling party to protect their jobs and feed their families.

The Ethiopian government claims that the country is moving toward democracy given the many challenges it faces. But HRW (2010) noted in its report that "despite the lip service given to democracy and human rights, respect for core civil and political rights such as freedom of expression and association in Ethiopia is deteriorating,"

As per the lesson of the political tie between 2005 and 2008, when the local and by-elections were held, the ruling party membership had grown from around 760,000 to over 4 million members in just three years. The ruling party's membership now increased tremendously to a number about 5.5 million. In the local elections in 2008, the EPRDF won more than 99.9 percent of the 3.6 million seats. This has helped the regime to consolidating its control of the local level administrative structures. The practical implication of this development is that in an average

kebele, one of every 10 residents has acquired both a *kebele* official as well as EPRDF's membership (Abbink, 2009; US State Department, 2009&2010)

The government of Ethiopia regularly denies many of the abuses documented in HRW and US State Department Reports. In all public statements, Ethiopian government officials have dismissed allegations that opposition supporters are subjected to intimidation and assault as efforts to discredit the election, and have disputed the characterization of Ethiopia's democratic space as "Shrinking." The government also defends the new legislations it has enacted, arguing that the Charities and Societies Proclamation does not infringe on freedom of association and will promote domestic Ethiopian organizations (US State Department, 2010)

The international community has called on the Ethiopian government to take immediate measures to improve the electoral environment by releasing all political prisoners, including Birtukan Mideksa. They also called on the government to cease attacks and threats against members of the political opposition, civil society, and the media; and permit independent efforts, to investigate and publicly report on abuses (US State department, 2009 and 2010)

The watchdog organizations are calling international donors to effectively respond to the situation and put pressure on the Ethiopian government. "Ethiopia's foreign backers should break their silence and condemn the climate of fear in Ethiopia.--- Donors should use their considerable financial leverage to press for an end to the harassment of the opposition and to oppressive laws on activists and the media." (HRW statement, March 24, 2010)

Despite their diplomatic silence, many diplomats Share with these concerns about the pre-election environment, predicting that the May elections are a "dead end." Yet with a few exceptions, HRW (2009, 2010) criticizes that most governments and international donors have failed to consistently raise the worsening human rights situation as an urgent priority.

Unlike in the last national election, none of the US Observer missions is going to observe this election. The Carter Center, which is widely believed that it had contributed for the international legitimacy of the Ethiopian regime in the hard times of 2005-contested election, is not going to take part in this election. The Centre now declined an invitation to observe on the ground there

was not enough time to prepare for the May 23, 2010 vote (The Reporter, April 10, 2010; All Africa .com)

The European Union and the African Union are the only institutions considering sending international election observers to monitor the May elections. Restrictions in the Charities and Societies Proclamation make independent election monitoring practically impossible. However, coalitions of 10 domestic associations, all together contributing some 40,000 observers, have managed to observe the election. In its report, Human Rights Watch had called on all international and local observers to effectively consider the pre-election 'repression' when assessing the freedom and fairness of the polls. (HRW, March 24, 2010).

The EU EOM of 2005, led by Anna Gomez had experienced serious contention with the government. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi had accused the chief EU observer of siding with the opposition and became an actor for the violence. The current Ethiopian election is to be observed by another EU observation group. Some critics and analysts say that the EU presence at the coming election risked legitimizing a fraudulent poll. "The mission won't be able to properly observe," an analyst told reporters (All Africa.com, April 20, 2010). "At least two-thirds of the voters live more than two hours walk from a road. Unable to observe at a grass roots level, the EU will simply register complaints. The regime will deny. The mission has no mandate to investigate".

Tensions rising ahead of Election 2010: Government's Top Priority

International Crisis Group (ICG, Sep 14, 2009) had earlier warned that election related violence would occur in Ethiopia. The government had dismissed those predictions as 'irrelevant' labeling it as a "useless report". ICG in its 2009 report entitled, "Ethiopia: Ethnic Federalism and its Discontents" noted that "there is a growing discontent with the EPRDF's ethnically defined state and rigid grip on power and fears of continued inter ethnic conflict". However, the Prime Minister frequently told the parliament that his government has taken lessons from 2005; mistakes will not be repeated again noting his government and security force are well prepared to prevent and avoid any election related violence.

The NEBE Deputy chairman Dr Addisu Gebre Egziabher also told the researcher on 14 May 2010, "mechanisms to prevent conflicts before escalating into violence" are in place. However, unlike these

claims made by the government officials, current relations between the Ruling Party and major oppositions is not going healthy, particularly with *Medrek,* which is not a party to the Election code of conduct signatories; both of them has already exchanging several allegation and counter allegations.

Tensions in Ethiopia were rising with the approach of parliamentary elections on May 23 2010. The eight-party opposition coalition, *Medrek*, has alleged that a newsletter by the ruling EPRDF is summoning its supporters to harass opposition candidates. The government denies this charge and has asserted that calls for surveillance of Medrek's members are meant for evidence gathering in the event that activists must be accused. Opposition candidates say that gunmen have threatened them not to register, but the government says that no candidate has filed any such complaints (Election Guide, *02/17/2010*).Opposition leaders had been reporting to media societies and Human right organizations that their supporters are refused food aid to force them to join the ruling party.

The government denied it.PM Meles Zenawi says the opposition is trying to discredit an election that it has no chance of winning and therefore provoke the West into stopping the aid, which the poor country relies on. Furthermore, EPRDF accused *Medrek* for the murder of a police lieutenant in west Shewa, Oromya region and for the orchestrated offense of another member. On the other hand, Opposition leaders are accusing Ethiopia's ruling party of orchestrating violent acts against its candidates. Medrek accused that government mercenary's 'stabbed one candidate to death and those members of the army beat another to the point of hospitalization'. A *Medrek* candidate, Aregawi Gebre-Yohannes was killed in what opposition leaders said was part of a widening campaign of repression ahead of May elections. The candidate was assassinate at a restaurant he owned near the town of Shire in the Tigray region by a group of six men who had go after his movements for the two days. According to The Arena/*Medrek* party, "It's becoming very difficult to run" a political campaign for the upcoming election. (NYT, 03/02/2010).

Bereket Simon, Head of the government's communications office with a ministerial portfolio, dismissed any political motives for the attack and said the opposition was trying to tarnish the government's image. "What they are trying to do is search for casualties and labels them Arena [Medrek]. They are not willing to come into constructive engagement" he was quoted by NY times as saying. (ibid)

Moreover, Ayalew Beyene had previously been arrested for attending opposition meetings or distributing campaign literature, Negaso Gidada of *Medrek* added. "It is very bad news," Mr. Negasso said. "My fear is such incidents may be intensifying." Both the ruling party and the oppositions have frequently accused each other of seeking to foment violence around this year's vote.

Both government and opposition leaders were expressing concern about the potential for election-related violence. In the times well before the 2010 election, the ruling announced that its main agenda was how to avoid any election related violence. When Bereket Simon, head of Government's Communication office, kicked off the 2010 election season, the top priority of his government would be preventing violence. "This election must be peaceful. Government must do whatever it takes to ensure that our election will be peaceful," he said (VOA news, May 6, 2009).Prime Minister Meles Zenawi had also warned that government forces would have little tolerance for street protests. "The 2005 experience was enough for anybody to be able to learn from, and so I'm sure our law enforcement entities will be much better prepared for any eventuality than they were in 2005, not only in terms of handling riots, but also in terms of deterring and preventing riots," he said *(ibid).*

Oppositions were equally concerned. Much had feared 2010 could be as bad as or worse than 2005.However, practically despite some trade of allegations and counter allegations between the ruling and some opposition prior the Election Day, the election itself was the most peaceful ever. All prior election related violence concerns from almost all corners, including ICG, had to do nothing with the election.

4.6. The 2010 Elections: 'No Opposition No Democracy'

Democracy depends on free and fair election. It is a universally acclaimed principle. For EPRDF politicians, the 2010 election was expected to be tougher than the 2005 election. Hence, unlike in 2005, the party was highly prepared to take all the parliament seats in the way it did in 2008 local elections. Although already paralyzed by the internal strife and external pressure, the oppositions were making certain efforts to be organized and mobilize public support. However, it turned out to be difficult for them to get together and bring once again the political tempo that had witnessed in the pre-election period of 2005.

And there were some concerns that citizens may have lost hope in elections and would boycott the process. Prof. Sisay Assefa (April, 20010) are among those who expressed concern that the electorates may close the eyes to the current election because of the political crises and tragedies

that was witnessed in the post election 2005.The scholar argue that the government's model of development, China, can't take the country in to a genuine "Developmental State". In his study, he rather recommended that India might be good model to Ethiopia's "Democratic Developmental" process. Despite his mentioned fear, he considered the 2010 election is an important bench mark for democratization process of the country.

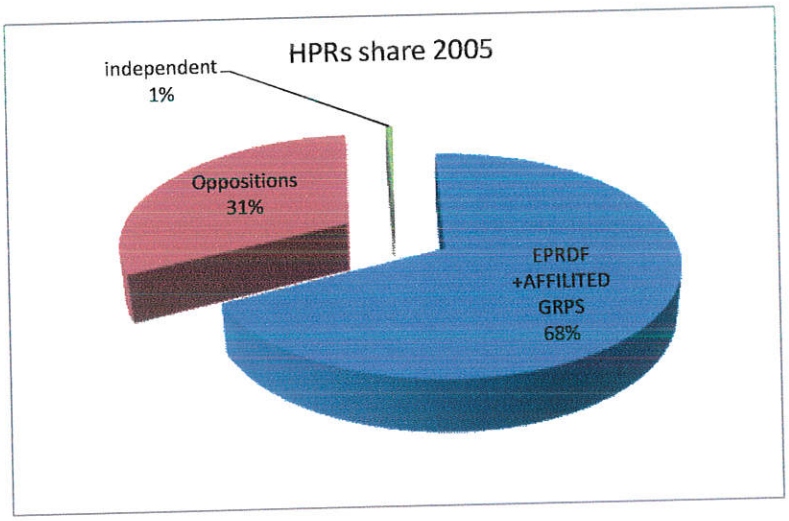
The political tempo of the 2005 election and its election results coupled with the post election crises affected the ruling party's commitment towards democratic order. In the after math of the election, EPRDF has taken several legal and political measures in order to maintain its power. Because of the post election violence, it was witnessed that the regime had 'legitimacy crises'. Hence, the party's high leaders were busy in reaching each and every part of the society in efforts to legitimize its power .But, in the mean time; over three million new members were recruited. Hence, as mentioned earlier in this section, the party managed to win the 3.6 million local seats in the 2008 local and by-elections that was. That served as a major springboard and practical experiment for the ruling party as how to run to overwhelmingly win in the upcoming general election. Series of the Party's organ, *Addis Raey*, publications showed that the party had designed political strategies ranging from administrative to legal measures that guided his party members, supporters and cadres on how to influence people. The researcher's secondary and primary sources findings demonstrates that the campaign and support mobilization of the ruling was based on "carrot and stick" strategy.

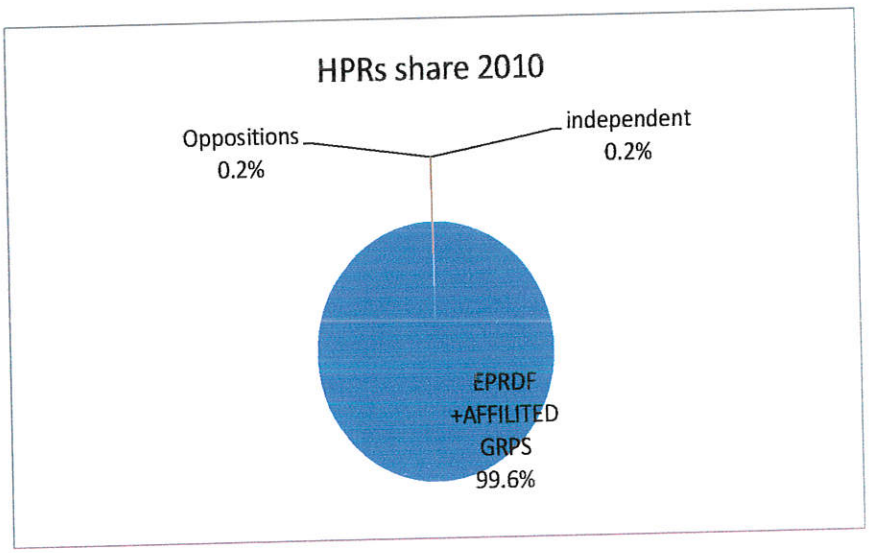
Abiye T Mariam, former Editor -in-Chief of Addis-Neger , in his recent feature article entitled "EPRDF's 'baptizing' [recruiting] strategy" which is very recently (re)published in Aura-amba Times (June 19,2010) critically analyzed how the ruling party could manage to win the election by a landslide through this 'mixed' strategy. As per to his view successfully recruited selective 'talented' people, who were particularly targeted, were awarded with multi-faceted benefits once they joined the ruling 'atmosphere'. He argued the strategy is not new for those who're aware of the Leninist popular strategy.

The Electoral Board of Ethiopia in its preliminary (May 24, 2010) and final result report on June 21st, 2010, announced that EPRDF has won nearly all (99 %) seats of the parliament. Out of the 547-legislative seats, the ruling party(499) and its affiliated parties (46) took all but two, one in

the capital city - Wereda six ,taken by *Medrek*, and the other in SNNPR, Kefa - Bonga won by an independent candidate , Dr. Ashebir W Giorgis. Accordingly, 63 political parties, 188 (HPRs) and 4,746 (Regional councils) party candidates and 45 independent candidates were participated in the 2010 election. Total number of reregistered voters is 31,926,520 and the voters who casted their vote are 29,832,190.Hence voters turn out is high i.e. 93.4 percent.

Table 5. Share of House of Peoples Representatives (HPRs) seats in 2005 & 2010.





Data source: NEBE, June 21, 2010. Table compiled by researcher.

Including the voters turn out, the election 2010 figures given by the NEBE are strong. However, this need to be viewed in light of the general political field and the freedom of the voters during and before the Election Day. The researcher observed many ways that people are pressurized to cast their vote for EPRDF. During a fieldwork on the Election Day (May 23, 2010) to Central Tigray Regional government, Kola Tembien.. At a small village called Werka-amba, at about 130 km far from Mekele, I witnessed the 'apprehension, repression and insecurity' that dominated the electoral field. I saw an old farmer, 60 years old, giving thanks to his GOD soon after the election was held. When I tried to know why he was giving thanks so, he told me that he is now relieved for the election is already over. "We had been out of our personal business for the last two weeks; the *ternefti* [plural for *Ternafi* -local word meaning the cadres] made us busy in training and door-to-door campaigning", he said sadly. He further elaborate that let alone being a supporter or a member , establishing any kind of ritual or personal relationships with a member or supporter of opposition , he mean *Arena/ Medrek*, is considered as a 'criminal' and ends with severe punitive measures including refusal of pay- for -work aid and prohibiting safety net programs and micro-finance credits. The farmer also pointed out that that residents alleged to have any such connections are forced to admit that they committed mistakes and make self -critic during public meetings. The researcher was also informed that the local residents particularly in that remote areas were highly terrorized and were threatened if the oppositions won the election there would be war and violence. Most of the oppositions operating there, Medrek and its member Arena Tigray , were associated by the ruling with the *Dergue* and its bad memories within the society.

With regard to the content of the training, every local residents who is registered to caste its vote, each names picked up from the branches of electoral board offices lists, was included with in a group of five or six. One among them is a *ternafi* who is in charge of 'educating' the rest members of the group. The old man and other residents told me that the training is all about how to able to mark on the bee picture, symbol for the TPLF/EPRDF. And they are educated superficially that the symbol of the *Arena /Medrek*, which is five fingers(symbolizing peace), demonized and reduced into one socially hated local thorn called Q*uakhito* , drawn with lighter color contrary to that of the bee's.

Tigray region, the social base of TPLF, witnessed an opposition, Arena Tigray(Medrek) formed by former TPLF élites ,for the first time in this election. *Capital* on its article published on the Election Day (May 23, 2010) noted that "this year's vote will be nowhere near as controversial and violent" as the last five years Election Day. However, the paper also added that there would be some major electoral battles being fought out by between heavy weight parties, notably in Tigray and Addis Ababa, where the results were 'far from a foregone'. With regard to Addis, Managing Editor of *Fortune* news paper, Tamrat G Giorgis ,(May 23, 2010) pointed out that unlike in 2005 most electoral challengers of the ruling have now been divided , where prominent figures in the opposition camp are heading against each other .For instance , Eng Hailu Shawl and Negaso Gidada (PhD) are running against Hailu Araya (PhD) and Mushe Semmu in Wereda 23 and Wereda 18 respectively.

Generally ,the researcher learned that in most areas like in Tigray , where the ruling is afraid it might lost the vote, it waged a very aggressive campaigning that even severely violated the Electoral Code of Conduct . The assaulting of an opposition parliamentary candidate and the brutal beating of another in Tigrai, came only few days after the Prime Minister made a code loaded speech at the 35th Anniversary Day of TPLF , *Yekatit 11(*Feb 18 ,2010), in Mekele, where he referred to his opponents as the 'mud', the 'riffraff' , and 'the enemy'….,which fell absolutely in line with the tactic and strategy set out for "winning" the May 2010 election (ETV Live Transmission , Feb 18, 2010 ; Reporter [Amharic] , Feb 24 , 2010 ; Fekade , March 11 , 2010).

Like its adversaries, The EPRDF continues to be part of the past. TPLF/EPRDF frequently reminded the Tigray people (voters) of who freed them from the military rule of the Derg and that there was an apparent electoral obligation to the EPRDF –the other option was for coalition of Derg remnants (i.e. Medrek) to lead Ethiopia. Here is a relevant comment on media contributed by Samuel M. Gebrue in the after math of the 2010 election;

> *The inflammatory claim that the voters of Tigray have an electoral obligation to the EPRDF is nothing shorts an undermining of their intelligence. Tigrians need not be reminded who defeated the Derg [but] who continues to abuse state power for political gain.*(Capital, June 6, 2010).

As a result, the number of seats secured by the opposition in this election is even worse than in the first stage of transitional government. The result showed that the ruling party had 'won' the election with absolute majority. The EU-observation mission (May 25, 2010) reported that despite a generally 'calm and peaceful' political atmosphere on the election day , it observed a 'climate of apprehension and insecurity' and that the EPRDF had used state resources for campaigning purpose leading to an un leveled playing field. "The playing field for the 2010 election was not sufficiently balanced, leaning in favor of the ruling party", Preliminary statement of the Mission stated. HRW (May 24, 2010) has also rejected the election results and urge for rerun in its statement it released. The United States and the European Union criticize the elections but they said they will work the government. Mike Hammer, National Security spokes man in Washington said that "an environment conducive to free and fair elections was not in place even before election day. The Ethiopian government has taken steps to restrict political space for the opposition through intermediation and harassment". The EU's foreign affairs chief, Catherine Ashton, also issued a statement noting "the challenging environment in which these elections took place". However, the AU and the coalition of 10 local civic societies who observed the election have commended the election as 'free and fair' (http://www.allafrica.com/stories/201005260433.html)

Almost all major oppositions, including Medrek, AEUP, and EDP, have rejected the results and the former two have called for a second election. But other less known opposition groups including Ato Ayallew Chamiso's CUD have welcomed the results and foreword congratulation messages to the winner. EDP (May 31st, 2010) led by Ato Lidetu Ayallew has criticized the election process and express its critical concern that "democracy and multiparty system are at risk" in Ethiopia. Particularly the party accused the ruling in its statement for constricting the political space and obstructing a free competition. However, unlike Medrek and AEUP; EDP congratulated the ruling party as a winner and refrain from calling for a rerun.

AEUP and Medrek have taken their claim to the NEBE and then to the Supreme Court for a rerun of the election .After their claim was rejected subsequently by both institutions, the opposition leaders have opted to go to Cassation Bench (The Sub -Saharan Informer , June 18-24 ,2010; Capital , June 20, 2010; Addis Admass ,June 19,2010).There are also media reporting that Medrek has planned to take protests to the streets(Capital , June 13, 2010). The Cassation

Benches has not yet given decision over the election rerun case. This is not going to be part of the paper's analysis on the election, which of course primarily focuses on the pre-election politics.

'What hope' for Tomorrow?

Finally, before I rush in to my concluding remarks, I want to say few words. Ethiopia has already gone through its 4th parliamentary election in which EPRDF has won a landslide victory, taking in 99.6 percent of the seats in the HPRs. Now the question isn't whether formally the ruling wins or not but whether it is a real winning. That is as the research question of the study entails, it requires answering the Quantity, Quality and the Meaning of the elections in the Ethiopian context. Although elections are regularly held every five years in Ethiopia as the constitution and the electoral law stipulate and with high votes turn out, the researcher learned that they are conducted under full of irregularities followed by rejection of election results and boycotts by the major opposition groups. This coupled by the least share of the parliament seats by the opposition, leads one to imply that the 2010 national elections were lacking the proper Electoral Quality and Electoral Meaning

After reading and understanding the substance of feature articles that have commented on 'Ethiopia's electoral problems' by Samuel M Gebrue and 'Ethiopia's political future' by Kebour Ghenna, head of Initiative Africa, both published in *Capital* (June 6, and June 20, 2010) respectively, one could note that although it is important to 'avoid confusing parliament with democracy', the presence and strength of opposition is an essential element for measuring the quality of democracy. "Every country has government, only democracies have an opposition",

Kebour Ghenna noted. "I don't know what and how the politics of the country will change in the coming years, but I know it will not bring freedom or democracy to the country," he predicted. Samuel on his part recognized the couples of electoral problems that exist in the Ethiopian political system and the divisions, hostilities, polarization and the immaturity that best identify the opposition camp. "The opposition movement to the EPRDF is, much like the country's democracy, struggling to exist", he argued. Samuel whilst commenting on some of the strong oppositions in the 2005 and 2010, he criticized CUD as "poorly formed .., with the assumption

that it would just win…and its quick dismemberment following the election exhibits the lack of planning and calculation that certain opposition leaders took."

On the on the other hand, he commended the establishment of Medrek that was under way in 2008 by senior politicians as a 'planned and calculated endeavor' which has more of an organized structure. However, Samuel also argued that despite the maturity and the viability of being an electoral contender, Medrek's existence doesn't indicate absolute unity within the opposition. With 93 political parties operating legally, it was to take only eight in to its coalition to gain a majority. People like him recommended that Medrek must continue to develop peacefully and in accordance with the Ethiopian Constitution; 'it is ironic to think that the same Authors of the constitution have a hard time observing it.'

Most people also agree that the tendency for the opposition, booth at and abroad, is always to criticize the EPRDF and alternatives are only just presented. It is also good to note that potential coalitions like Medrek need to move away from the 'bad self-imposed qualities of finger pointing out and venting' that has held back the evolution of a viable opposition movement in Ethiopia. Lastly, such oppositions must recognize to learn the positive development of EPRDF.

It is also important to recognize that the young generation has distance itself from politics. A Fortune(May 2, 2010) article entitled, " The EPRDF generation" contributed by Bruh Yihunbelay argues that , according to the latest national census, at least 10 million additional eligible voters should have joined the electorates ranks for the first time in the 2010 election. According to his simple survey, the generation born and raised under the reign of the EPRDF and taught the subject of civics in the manner the revolutionary democrats designed, seemed to have little interest in politics.

The level of understanding about the Ethiopian politics and history among the young generation remained low. Most of them are interested in music, sports, or fashion and ignores politics claiming that it is boring. "The deficiency in political interest is apparently a feature that detaches members of the post *Derg* EPRDF generation from the preceding generation," Bruh pointed out. But it is also a critical concern that Political parties on both sides have not reached to out to this new group; or it is becoming an instrument of extending politics by the older generation. Hence, Coalitions like Medrek need to learn how to engage this group in the coming five years.

Chapter Five

Concluding Remarks

Ethiopia as an infant country for democratic political culture, has little or no experiences of peaceful transfer of power. As Professor Donald Liven (2007, 2010) has noted, the Ethiopian history is predominantly the history of war and domestic conflict due to lack of tolerance and culture of dialogue. Hence Electoral democracy is strange to Ethiopia. During the era of Emperor Haileselasie and Derg regimes, elections were taking place. Nevertheless, they had lacked pluralism as well as competition; serving as an instrument of legitimacy to their autocratic and tyrant rules respectively. In the year 1991, when EPRDF came to power, a new political culture heralded in terms of multi party system and freedom of expression. However, with the exception of the year 2005, none of the elections held were up to the international standards.

The consequence of 2005 election

The 2005 election has dawned a new era for Ethiopian democratic and competitive election. That particular moment is a reminder of unprecedented opening of a political space, which resulted in aggressive participation of the electorates and opposition parties. The opposition enjoyed relatively fair access to the state media. They were allowed to organize and hold public rallies. The independent media got actively involved in reporting the activities of all political parties and their contesting ideologies. Civic organizations, the likes of Action Aid- Ethiopia carried out an initiative to advocate the voters' mass education. Inter Africa Group organized live televised public debates that had a major impact in motivating the public to vote.

Most of the above-mentioned electoral features have been withered away in 2010.Being an exclusive functioning of the National Electoral Board; there were either no voter mass education or live debates. Prior to the year 2005, there was no political rally that has had such a large turn up ever called by the opposition. The oppositions were legitimately complaining for lack of fair access to media and the absence of formidable public debate.

However, the verdict of the public at large was not respected in 2005. Virtually all the actors, decided to isolate themselves from the democratic culture. The 2005 competitive election was distorted and manipulated in the post election by hard- liner opposition leaders and the ruling party. On the opposition side, it was possible to infer that there was tri-sided alliance of the pillars of democracy; Media, CSOs, and the opposition. The alliance seemingly toppled the incumbent through all possible means guided by strategies, which were outlined by "unpopular" books the likes of Negede Gobeze's (2005). The book is subversive in the sense that it preaches 'changes through election or otherwise' arguing, to 'think that we can change the system through only a gradual process of election results to be held every five years, would be a dangerous illusion'.

Through such 'double standard' means, the hardliner oppositions had targeted irresponsibly government institutions including the NEBE threatening to dismantle them. Since the campaigning period, the oppositions were totally demonizing and delegitimizing government institutions. Hence, it was legitimate for the government to say and maintain "law and order" at all costs.

On the other hand, neither the ruling nor the NEBE had shown any sign of commitment to a genuine political reconciliation. The ruling party took extreme and uncompromising stand against the oppositions. The electoral and other institutions on their parts still failed to show any sort of political impartiality. Particularly, NEBE failed to enjoy any confidence not only from the opposition but from the electorates too.

Taking the lion share of the problem, the major opposition, particularly CUD, leaders protested against the official election result and irresponsibly boycotted from joining the parliament. Some of the top leaders paradoxically requested the people whether to join the parliament while others decided to take their seats. This was further aggravated by the pressure posed by the partisan 'free' media and civic activists and the extreme stand taken by the Diaspora as well as the Addis Ababa dwellers. This had to be marred by the election crisis; the chaos and bloodshed that totally gloom the good image of the 'formative' pre-election process.

This had exerted irreversible repercussions on the country's political environment and on the continuity of the unity of major oppositions. The internal conflict that mounted within the CUD

and the absence of any democratic means to narrow their differences further raise critical question, what would have happened, had this group been successful in controlling the state power. It leads to where the parties would have taken the fate of the unity and internal integrity of the country? In historical possibilities, the nation might have been broken down into failed state.

Now, I think most people do have little or no hope in the opposition camp partly because of the splits and hatreds witnessed among them. Later on, this was manifested in the 2008 local and 2010 national election results. Contrary to that of 2005, the Addis Ababa dwellers have voted for EPRDF. And very currently, the day after the election was over, demonstrators were protesting against the Human Rights Watch (HRW), which criticized the election saying it fell short of being free and fair, at the capital city. The demonstration was contrary to the CUD support rally that was held on Miazia *30 (May 7, 2005)*. Upon the result of 2010 election, not only the opposition parties but also the ruling party was surprised too. Hence, it can be concluded that the current vote is partly a "protesting" vote against the opposition and not a vote for EPRDF; the same as the vote offered for CUD in 2005 was a protesting vote against the ruling party.

The 2005 election was observed and commended by both the Carter Center and the European Union (EU) mission. However, Unlike the Carter Center that insisted with its firm stand that the election generally was 'free and fair', the EU EOM led by Anna Gomez had taken extreme position of the opposition that was understood by the government as 'misconduct' and 'ill disciplined' by itself and it was against the sovereignty of the country. PM Meles Zenawi in his popular story published in *Ethiopian herald*, on 29–31 August 2005, disclosed the committed personal affairs by Anna Gomez and some opposition leaders.

The biggest donors, the likes of US America and Europe, tried to cut the aid and put pressure on the government. Nevertheless, it was a double stand act by them due to the 'war on terror' and strategic alliance in the region towards mutual interests.

The EU observation mission noted that the 2010 election was conducted under "unleveled" playing field. While the US and EU also criticized the election, they promised that they will work with the government "to address these challenges". That is a very soft stance. It seemed

that they are tired of bringing change in Ethiopia or they have fallen short keeping their interest in the region at the same time. I think now stability and not democracy is a priority for them

Despite the NEBE's increased performance, there is still lack of confidence from the oppositions. In the mean time, the board has not shown any major indication on its neutrality. With regard to the electoral code of conduct, there is a misleading signal sent by the parties as well as the public towards its effectiveness on implementation. In the mid of the election, the oppositions and the ruling party were still exchanging hate speeches, accusations and counter accusations and warnings. Different interview set by the PM shows vulgarity. Despite 19 years of his stay in power and his international reputations, he failed to be exemplary to comply with the code of conduct.

Now there is no way to allow things to go back as they were before the 2005 election. The country's entire political development is embarrassed due to the contested 2005 election. In the after math of 2005, the ruling party recruited over millions of youngsters through 'carrot and stick' strategy. Moreover, it managed to control all the local administrations in the 2008 local election. It also came up with repressive legislations that curtailed the political space. This had left little or no ground for the opposition to make any effective competition. This event resembled to the early years of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia.

Taking the political sphere of 2005 as benchmark; the 2008 local elections and the 2010 national elections, in which the ruling party took 99 percent of the seats, pointed out towards a U-turn of the country in to authoritarian regime. This argument is particularly supported by the current 2010 election which had resulted in the ruling party's a landslide victory; which means, in terms of political pluralism in the upcoming parliament, the country has dragged in to an absolute majority or a single party system.

In sum, "Between the election events", it can be concluded that Ethiopia has successfully joined the "Competitive Authoritarian" or the "Hybrid regimes" camp developed by Seteven Levitsky and Lucan Way in which there exits legal rules for competition but "opposition forces are handicapped by a highly uneven—and even dangerous—playing field. Competition is real but *unfair*."

I also agree with Aalen and Tronvol (2008) who predicted that Ethiopia was on the way to get back in to 'electoral authoritarianism' saying that "…the country has turned the clock back more than 15 years; the polarized and oppressive political context witnessed today resembles the situation after the break-up of the transitional government in 1992".

Whereas I disagree with Dr. Berhanu Nega's (2010) conclusion in his recent *Painful lessons of 2005* statement said that 'Zenawi's Government has killed Democracy' in Ethiopia. But if we believe that 'democracy is killed' in Ethiopia, including Dr Berhanu all must be called culprit. However, I strongly agree with the oppositions at home concern that "multi party system is at risk" in Ethiopia.

The country needs no historian to remind it about the consequence of a one party system more than its own near past. Hence, whether as result of an extra ordinary quality of EPRDF, or because of the "winner takes all" system or otherwise the least performance of the opposition; either democratic or undemocratic, one thing is for sure true: All but one political party has been dropped out of the parliament. Forget genuine 'Western' democracy; there can't be an 'African' democracy in this context. There can only be somewhat of a pseudo-democracy. All should worry, but EPRDF needs to worry much more in the long run.

'No opposition, No Democracy!' No Democracy…

Remarks and Recommendations

- The research found that the main cause for narrowing the democratic space is total control of the local and administrative structure by the ruling party, and such a kind of act takes the country into anti multiparty system. This is mainly because the government and the ruling party structure are blurred. Therefore, the researcher recommends that to attain a truly multi party system, there must be a system that ensures the existence of clear line between the civil servants and political deeds.

- Another finding of the research shows that, the question of impartiality of the NEBE and the drawbacks of the new electoral code of conduct highly affects the fairness and credibility of electoral process. Thus, the electoral board, electoral laws and electoral code of conduct and

other laws and directives that are recently active in the country, have to be revised inclusively working with all stakeholders, contenders and the public at large.

- One of the electoral problems in Ethiopia is the absence of non-partisan political, electoral and judicial institutions. This has negatively affected the confidence and the attitude of the opposition and public at large in electoral process. Hence, it is very important to recommend the government and the oppositions to discuss and consult on how to make these institutions non-partisan.

- The non-state actors particularly the free media and the CSOs have irreplaceable role in the democratization process. However, in Ethiopia the tendency is that most of these sectors have been partisan and lacking transparency and professionalism. They are partly responsible for negative development within the ruling camp. It seemed, the government considers them as an instrument of foreign intervention or enemies. The research recommends for the government to change its 'controlling' strategy on them and they have to show maximum effort to evaluate themselves and guided by some sort of self-regulatory mechanisms. Reform the respective laws on Press, Anti terrorism and CSO should be based on broad and inclusive discussion between all stakeholders in a professional manner.

- The government, opposition, and NEBE authorities need to develop and authorize improved election related conflict management system.

- Contending Political parties, the opposition and the ruling, need to avoid hate speech, anti peace and development behavior and instigating conflict. All have to show maximum respect for the process and the public at large. They have also to stop viewing to each other as enemies in which one is trying to remove the other. One has rather to recognize the positive development of the other with certain reservations.

- International communities have to play their role with responsible manner. They can upgrade the country's capacity towards having an optimal standard of election. In addition, they have to play non-alien engagement in any forms to any one party but the public at large. The observers have to be competent and free of any political gain.

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Interviewees

Dr Addisu Gebre-egziabher, Deputy Chairperson of NEBE; May 12, 2010

Ato Amare Aregawi, Former Editor -in-Chief of Reporter (Amharic) and The Reporter (English) News Papers, Currently Owner of these Papers; May 15, 2010.

Ato Gebru Asrat , Former President Of Tigray Regional Government, Currently President of *Arena* Tigray and First Vice president of *Medrek.;* May 12 , 2010.

Eng. Hailu Shawl, President of All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP), Former President of Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD); May 14, 2010.

Dr Negaso Gidada, Former Ethiopian President, Currently Head of External Relations For *Medrek(* Forum) or Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum (EFDUF).March 16, 2010?

Ato Seeye Abraha , Former Defense Minister , Currently head of External Relations for *Andinet* (CDJ) and member of the *Medrek*'s Executive Committee; April 16, 2010.

Annex I

Questionnaire

Addis Ababa University

Faculty of Business and Economics

(Translated from Amharic)

I am a second year student in the department of PADM (MPA) in the University. I am conducting a study for my theses entitled "*Ethiopia between 'Election events': The impact of the 2005 and the 2010 pre-elections politics on competitive elections*". The study deals with comparing the 2005 and the 2010 per election politics and their impact on competitive elections.

This questionnaire is prepared to assess the public attitude toward Ethiopian elections and the electoral institutions. Each of your views has a great value and great impact on the study. Hence, I kindly request you to respond the questions full heartedly. Consider that you can give more than one choices for some of the questions. You can encircle or use thick (/) sign to indicate your choice

I thank you for your kind cooperation. . If you have any question, please call me at _____.

Age .....Sex.....Educational Level.....Ethnicity.....

Note: **IDK** stands for I Don't know

Q1. Are you content with the pre-election process of the 2010?

A. I yes

B. No

C. It is not my concern

Your reason.....

Q2.which one is true in the 2010 pre-election process?

A. There is leveled electoral field

B. There is no strong competition

C. The government has constrained the political environment

D. It is more peaceful and stable

E. If you have any other .....

Q3. Do you think 2010 election is participative and inclusive?

A. Yes

B. No

C. IDK

Q4. Is the 2010 Election Day very much looked for?

A. Yes

B. No

Q5. Will You taking part in the election process ?

A. Yes

B. No

Q6.If you say no for Q5, why?

A. I don't believe there would be change through election

B. my participation will make no difference

C. I lost hope in the 2005 elections

D. I have my personal business than political issue

q7. Do you have a party you support?

A. Yes

B. No

Q8. Do you openly support/ campaign for your party?

A. Yes

B. No

D. It is more peaceful and stable

E. If you have any other .....

Q3. Do you think 2010 election is participative and inclusive?

A. Yes

B. No

C. IDK

Q4. Is the 2010 Election Day very much looked for?

A. Yes

B. No

Q5. Will You taking part in the election process ?

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B. No

Q6.If you say no for Q5, why?

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C. I lost hope in the 2005 elections

D. I have my personal business than political issue

q7. Do you have a party you support?

A. Yes

B. No

Q8. Do you openly support/ campaign for your party?

A. Yes

B. No

Q9. How do you compare the positions of political parties in 2005 and 2010 elections?

Election Year	2005			2010		
	Yes	No	IDK	Yes	no	IDK
Strong oppositions						
reasonable members of oppositions						
high political pressure from the ruling party against opp.						
oppositions want to bring down the incumbent through violent means						
oppositions were/ are not capable to rule						
Even if the ruling party doesn't win the election , it will not transfer power peacefully						

Q10. Do you think the political space is now narrowed compared to that of 2005?

A. Yes

B. No

Q11, if your answer for q.10 is A, why is that ?

A. restrictive laws are put in place

B. Intimidating oppositions

C. CSO and press role is deteriorated

D. All

Q12. Do you think the political tempo of current election is less interesting?

A. Yes

B. No

C. IDK

Q13. if you say yes(A) for Q12 , why is that ?

A. the people lost hope in elections

B. There is now 'feared Society'

C. No strong opposition

D. Lesser role of free press

E. Any other.....

Q14. If you are a spectator of foot ball, had there been a clash of time on foot ball game

A. The game

B. The Debate

C. IDK

Q.15 did you watch political debates?

A. Yes

B. No

Q16. If your answer for Q15 is yes, how do you compare the nature of debates in 2005 and 2010?

Election Year	2005			2010		
	Yes	No	IDK	Yes	no	IDK
Based on hatred						
It was matured						
It instigates conflict						
Based on the personalities of the debaters						
It was informative						
It was not interesting						
It was all in favor of the ruling party						

Q17. Whom do you prefer to observe the election?

A. Elders

B. CSOs

C. Religious fathers

D. International observers

E. all

Q18. Are you registered to vote?

A. Yes

B. No

Q19. If your answer for Q18 is yes, are you going to vote?

A. Yes

B. No

Q20. Do you believe that your vote is really counted?

A. Yes

B. No

C. IDK

Q21. If you say Yes for Q20, why?

A. NEBE is not neutral/impartial

B. The ruling party steals vote

C. All

Q22. Do you think EPRDF may transfer power to a winning party?

A. Yes

B. No

C. IDK

Q23. Have you ever faced any form of "nationalism' due to election campaign or Debate?

A. Yes

B. No

Q24 If you say yes for Q23, what kind of nationalism did you experienced?

A. Ethno phobia C. Ethno centric

B. Cessations D. Hate own country, Ethiopia

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university, and all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Declared by

Name: Yemane Nagish

Signature: _____

Date: July 12, 2010

Confirmed by Advisor:

Name: BT Costantinos (PhD)

Signature: _____

Date: July 12 2010