
Fault Lines within the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF): Intraparty Network and Governance system

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Abstract:

Ethiopia People Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) is a political party in charge of government power since 1991. EPRDF is established in 1989 out of Rebel group to party transformation with the view to oust the military government called Derg. It is a coalition of four parties political organization i.e. Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF)- which is an architect of EPRDF, Amhara National Democratic Movements (ANDM) in 1980, Oromo People Liberation Organization (OPDO) and Southern Ethiopian People Democratic Movement (SEPDM) However, in spite of the nominally coalition structure of the EPRDF, from the beginning the TPLF provided the leadership and ideological direction to other members of the coalition. To maintain the dominant position within the coalition the TPLF has transferred its rebel time internal governance network that focuses on traditional Marxist Leninist organizational lines, with an emphasis on “democratic centralism”; and a tradition of hierarchically organizational structure to the newly established political organization i.e. EPRDF. Consequently, the EPRDF intraparty network and governance system is dominated by the use of ML (Marxist-Leninist) authoritarian methods and hegemonic control, rigid hierarchical leadership; Democratic centralism, the dominance of the party apparatus behind the façade of regional and local autonomy, an extensive patron-client mechanisms; the use of force to silence opposition within and outside the party; intertwined State institutions and the party system and excessive reliance on party entity instead of state administration units; and gim gema (self-evaluation) are worth mentioning. These intraparty network and governance system have severely limited genuine democratization within the party as well as hampered the democratization process in the country. The party is facing increasing pressure and challenge from within the party and the public at large demanding equal status and fair political economic representation. In effect, EPRDF is in deep crisis shattered by internal divisions, crises as well as external public pressure forcing the party to entertain democratic principles and culture. Hence, it is recommended that the organizational structure and the values and principles governing the organization should be revisited within the framework of democracy which allows adaptability and flexibility given the various change agents in the socio-cultural, economic, political environment.

1. Introduction:

Different scholars in management and many other disciplines as well have attempted to explain and analyze the question how and why organizations change. The processes or sequences of events that unfold in these changes-such as transitions in individuals' jobs and careers, group formation and development, and organizational innovation, growth, reorganization, and decline-have been very difficult to explain, let alone manage.⁴ According to E. Spencer Wellhofer organizations in general are characterized by three basic problems; first, an organization has the problem of defining itself in its environment; Boundary development and maintenance. Second problem that organizations must deal with is the growth of internal differentiation and the reconciliation of the resulting diversity. Third, organizations must develop continuity.³⁴ "In a changing environment, organizations must constantly adapt themselves to new circumstances and maintain a minimum of clearly defined goals and organizational behavior patterns if they are not to disintegrate under the forces of change."³⁵ In effect, continuity is the incorporation of past and contemporary experiences into coherent rules and patterns of behavior.³⁴ Hence, a holistic understanding of any organizations in general and political organizations in particular requires a sound understanding of how and what kinds of organizational patterns and network of governance system are devised to prevent it from being overwhelmed by its environment, to reconcile the internal diversity of interests, and to promote policy continuity as well as channel their energies for its purposes.³⁴

There are different authors who did much of their study on how organization really work and how does the process of organizational change happen. Gareth Morgan's work on organizational metaphors is exemplary particularly the assumption that organization as a political system is important here to understand how organization really work and how does the process of organizational change happen.²⁴ This political metaphor recognizes the important role that power-play, competing interests

and conflict have in organizational life. The assumptions of about organizational change includes: - the change will not work unless it's supported by a powerful person; the wider the support for this change, the better; it is important to understand the political map, and to understand who will be winners and losers as a result of this change and Positive strategies include creating new coalitions and renegotiating issues.²⁴ Further Some others have pointed out that party organizational change is a product of the interaction of internal organizational characteristics of the party and the competitive environment the party faces. As de Zeeuw notes, a key challenge facing a rebel group's transformation into a political party is the necessary transformation of internal power configurations and the accompanying organizational restructuring.⁹ Gryzmala-Busse and Janda et al. have also argued that the past organizational features of parties impact the ability to adapt to new political circumstances.^{12,14} In other words, what explains the outcome of the internal struggle is not simply the party's adaptation to a new environment, but rather the organizational legacies of the past. Harmel and Janda have further claimed that party change (including organizational change) occurs as the result of parties reacting to changes in the political environment.¹³ From this perspective, parties are assumed to be conservative organizations that are unlikely to change unless they are forced by different factors. In this regard, party change is viewed as a rational and purposeful move by the party in response to specific stimuli. For Janda, one of the most important influences on internal party struggles is when the party performs poorly in elections as well as in good governance.¹⁶ Moreover, studies of parties in post conflict society's show that some rebel groups-turned-political parties have different organizational features. Some have greater internal party democracy and Manning are less centralized, while others have less intra-party democracy and are more centralized.¹⁹ Hence, organizational transformation within political parties is a necessary condition for successful adaptation to new political circumstances

and thereby to guarantee the development of political democracy and political stability.

EPRDF is a political organization, from Rebel group-to-party transformation, has established in 1989.³⁰ However, EPRDF's origin dates back in the protracted civil war that began in 1974 and ended in 1991, when ethnic-based liberation fronts defeated Mengistu Haile Mariam and his brutal military regime.³³ The EPRDF was an insurgent group that controlled Ethiopia's state power and resources after the fall of the military regime called Derg in 1991. The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), headed by Meles Zenawi, led the insurgency and came to power with a high level of solidarity, considerable experience in administering liberated zones in the country's north, and the legitimacy earned from winning the war. In the final years of the war, the TPLF formed the EPRDF as a coalition aimed at bringing armed wings from outside the Tigray homeland in the far north of the country into a new postwar regime.³¹ The exigencies of transforming itself from a rebel movement into a national government compelled the TPLF to find ways to incorporate the many diverse ethnic groups in the country while also retaining its hierarchical structure.³³ To that end, the TPLF facilitated the establishment of the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), and later the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM) so that they could function as constituent parties of the EPRDF in the country's three largest regions (Amhara, Oromia, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, respectively). Ethiopia's other regions are also governed by ethno regional parties. The EPRDF considers these parties to be affiliates, however, rather than constituent members of the coalition. The allied parties have no representation in the EPRDF's Executive Committee; the most important decision-making body in Ethiopia.³³ The TPLF remains today the dominant party within the EPRDF although it formally stated that the four regional parties had equal status.

When we come to the overall organizational network of governance- looking its internal organizational anatomy, the EPRDF is organized along traditional Marxist Leninist organizational lines, with an emphasis on "democratic centralism"; candidate recruitment and selection are entirely under the control of the central party authorities and in effect alien to democratic politics. The EPRDF controls all the regional state governments in the Ethiopian federation, either directly through its member parties or indirectly through affiliate parties.²⁵ In terms of organizational capacity; the EPRDF has long had a tradition of being hierarchically structured. Hence, in spite of the nominally coalition structure of the EPRDF, from the beginning the TPLF provided the leadership, ideological direction and majority of the fighters of the movements.^{29,36} The International Crisis Group has also stated that the military superiority of the TPLF enabled it to dominate the political environment and to take the upper hand with in the coalition, EPRDF.¹⁴ From this one can imply that TPLF was the creator of the coalition (EPRDF) and the architect of the ethnic federal model and its constitution. The party's dominance is particularly evident in the armed forces and the National Intelligence and Security Office.¹⁴ Further, observation shows that the country's political and administration decision making is actually geared towards TPLF. This has presented structural and system risk to the EPRDF party and the peace; security and economic progress of the nation in general.

Consequently, EPRDF is in deep crisis shattered by internal divisions, crises as well as external public pressure. The organizational crisis facing EPRDF off course is not built over night rather the result of cumulated factors that came in to effect since its existence. This is attributable to the organization's internal network of governance which is linked with past legacy of Marxist Leninist organizational lines, hierarchical structure and client- patron type of network of relationship. Therefore, This particular paper critically discuss the EPRDF network of governance which necessitates looking into the

organizational origin from rebel group to party transformation as well as analysis of internal organizational setup, capacity and communication is paramount importance.

2. EPRDF from Rebel group-to-party transformation:

The EPRDF, before it became the government in 1991, was a rebel group battling the military government known as in Amharic the 'Derg', which has been in power from 1974 to 1987. There are two explanations for the origin of the EPRDF from Revolutionary Movements to Political Party. The first claims that two political groupings, the TPLF and the Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Movement (EPDM), which forged an alliance to oust the Derg from power, initially formed the party.³⁰ Since its formation in 1980, EPDM worked closely with the TPLF as a junior partner.³⁶

On the Unity and the formation of the party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) has the following version:-

“Both the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (EPDM) have been fully aware of the importance of unity. They have thoroughly ~valuated the reality of the Ethiopian situation in the course of the struggle, and come to the conclusion that the best way of ensuring the mass interests of the oppressed masses is the unity of the masses in resolute struggle against the Derg. They agreed therefore on the need for a democratic united front and following thorough discussions and studies, this was formed in May 1988. Before the establishment of EPRDF, there was no organization which could play a significant role in coordinating the struggles and balancing the differences. This lack of an organization to provide leadership for the countrywide struggle has been exploited by the Derg”³¹

The second argues that the origin of the EPRDF goes back to the control of Tigray by the TPLF during the war against the Derg in 1989; the leaders of the TPLF, who had realized that an economically viable independent state of Tigray was impossible,

organized the EPRDF to build a coalition and extend the armed movements to the entire country.^{27,37} The latter explanation, which argues that the TPLF established the EPRDF for political expediency, is plausible considering the power relations between the TPLF and the other parties, and the way the parties were formed. Militant Tigrayan students, who fought the Derg through an ethnically based movement, established the TPLF in 1975.³⁷ Based in the peasantry; the TPLF maintained an armed struggle for 14 years, gaining control of the Tigray region in 1989.³⁷ Since then, with a dominant role within the EPRDF, it has ruled the Tigray regional state. The TPLF organized the ANDM or EPDM in 1980 from members of a faction of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), one of the prominent class-based political movements that emerged in 1972 to challenge the imperial regime; the military socialist government had crushed its urban armed struggle in 1977, and the TPLF partially crippled its rural movement in 1978.³⁶ OPDO was organized by the TPLF in 1989.^{27,31,37} The first members were prisoners of war and Oromo members of the EPDM,³⁶ and OPDO has ruled the Oromo regional state since 1991. SEPDM was also organized by the TPLF in 1994, including members from the 23 ethnic political groups in the southern part of the country.^{31,37} The original members of these groups were prisoners of war captured by the TPLF during the armed struggle against the military socialist government.³⁷ These were trained and organized by the TPLF, and were positioned to mobilize and lead their ethnic communities after the fall of the Derg. Since 1994, SEPDM has ruled the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional Governments.

Having formed and organized the member parties and as a victorious rebel group the TPLF took a dominant role in the leadership of the EPRDF, although it formally stated that the four regional parties had equal status.³⁶ The domination of the TPLF within the EPRDF becomes apparent in light of the following: TPLF is a victorious rebel group and in effect has military superiority over other

members of EPRDF (like ANDM OPDO and SEPDM); top political leaders of TPLF have a de facto mandate to select and appoint individuals for regional party leadership positions; TPLF enjoys remarkably greater economic power than the other parties and TPLF promotes patron-client type of networks of relationship within the party and with its affiliated parties. Here it is possible to conclude that the legacy of prolonged military conflict, in which the TPLF lost many human powers, has led the party to justify greater centralization of power and asymmetrical relationship within an organization. Hence, in spite of the nominally coalition structure of the EPRDF, the TPLF provided the leadership, ideological direction and majority of the fighters of the movements'.^{1,7,14,37}

3. EPRDF Fault Line: Intraparty Network and Governance system:

The EPRDF intraparty network and governance system is dominated by the use of ML (Marxist-Leninist) authoritarian methods and hegemonic control, rigid hierarchical leadership; Democratic centralism, the dominance of the party apparatus behind the façade of regional and local autonomy, an extensive patron-client mechanisms; the use of force to silence opposition within and outside the party; intertwined State institutions and the party system and excessive reliance on party entity instead of state administration units; and gim gema (self-evaluation) they all have severely hampered genuine democratization within the party and in effect in the country as a whole.

Marxist–Leninist ideology and Stalin’s theory of nationalities have considerably influenced EPRDF politics and network of governance.^{1,6,14,29} This means the structure of ethnic federalism in the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF)/EPRDF’s structure of ethnic federalism became a close replica of the socialist model. In effect, the key internal mechanism of the EPRDF is ML (Marxist-Leninist) authoritarian methods in which executive and central committee party members are in charge of all major policy decisions.

These are transmitted to party officials and state administrators and must be adhered to; party members bear personal responsibility for their assignments. EPRDF has inherited this from its founder TPLF. Since its foundation in 1975, TPLF’s decision-making, organizational principles and discourse reflect the Marxist-Leninist philosophy.³⁶ These organizational principles suited the exigencies of the armed rebellion and made the TPLF one of Africa’s most disciplined and effective insurgent groups.¹⁴ While debate is possible within the TPLF/EPRDF party, criticism by members once a decision has been made is considered factionalism. When faced with internal dissent in 2001 and popular opposition in 2005, TPLF leaders reverted to an authoritarian populism that echoed the party’s Leninist origins.¹⁴ A case in point is the senior TPLF dissenters removed from their posts after accusing Meles in March 2001 of being too soft on Eritrea and undermining Tigrayan nationalism. Meles accused them of “Bonapartism”, a Marxist term for a counter-revolutionary attitude.²⁶

EPRDF is organized under the principle of democratic centralism and it exercises strict control over the regional and local governments through party structure.^{1,36} The EPRDF inherited the organizational principle of democratic centralism and Maoist conceptions of mass political mobilization from its TPLF founders.^{28,36} Like the Soviet and other communist parties, democratic centralism provides the top leadership of the EPRDF uncontested authority to decide both the ideological and organizational affairs of the organization.²⁸ The lower echelon of EPRDF’s leadership and the rank-and-file members are to implement the decisions made by the higher officials. As a result, there is only one-way channel of accountability within the organization that comes from the higher leadership to the lower. In addition to centralization of power, the leadership style of the EPRDF is characterized by secrecy in which a select few top leaders without the participation of the wider membership make key decisions that affect the goals of the organization. The TPLF conceded

the prevalence of this problem when it evaluated its ten-year experience in 1985 and noted that: Evaluations and debates within the TPLF were concentrated within the narrow circle of the vanguard communist force.⁵ If differences emerge, they will be considered as big secrets and are maintained within the top leadership. Additionally, relationships between the TPLF, which remains the dominant force within the EPRDF and the other members of the ERPDF, are still characterized by asymmetry in which the former continues to enjoy disproportionate power. Many scholars consider this as one of the key factors that thwarted the realization of genuine federalism.^{1,23,29,30} Further, the EPRDF advocates capitalism, yet retains a strong state role in the economy, including government land holding, and limits individual liberties. “Revolutionary democracy” is its attempt to reconcile the TPLF socialist legacy with global capitalism and market liberalism, justifying the dominant position of its party-affiliated firms in the economy by arguing that prosperity requires the leadership of a strong party that can mobilize the people.¹⁷

However, one of the many challenges with centralization of leadership is that it harms the culture of democracy both within the party and in the wider political system. Democratic participation, dialogue and discussions are the functional health of a given organization. Because democracy has various values to offer among other rule of law, accountability, transparency, free and fair election, tolerance of diversity are the dominant ones. These values have the power to shape the way how organization and society must be governed. Duo to the very nature of the EPRDF which lack internal democracy and democratic debates amongst members’ party has led the party to sustain deep division and internal crisis and in effect endangering the peace and political stability of the whole nation.

Linked to the issue of one-party dominance is that of hierarchical leadership, a pervasive problem amongst for revolutionaries who have made the transition to politicians. All the armed

insurrectionary movements followed the classic strategies of the battlefield, strict discipline, rigid hierarchy in the command structure and unbending loyalty from amongst the combatants.¹⁵ However, while this form of leadership may have functioned well on the battle field, it has generated undemocratic behavior in the transition to electoral politics. As Dorman observes, “when confronted with conditions of political crisis and vulnerability, leaders’ concerns with control take precedence over either liberation or democracy, leading to increasing authoritarian or exclusivist politics.”¹⁰ Consequently, relationships between the TPLF, which remains the dominant force within the EPRDF and the other members of the ERPDF, are still characterized by asymmetry in which the former continues to enjoy disproportionate power. Many scholars consider this as one of the key factors that thwarted the realization of genuine federalism.^{1,23} The continued existence of asymmetrical relationships between the TPLF and the other members of the EPRDF was made abundantly clear during the TPLF leadership crisis in 2001.^{3,6,19} The other manifestation of rigid hierarchical structure within the party is that regional EPRDF officials are regularly removed or disciplined by federal politicians. For example, following the TPLF split in March 2001, half of the OPDO central committee was expelled or defected to the OLF because of association with the weaker TPLF faction that Meles ousted. The same happened in SNNRP, where the regional president, Abate Kisho, was replaced by Haile Mariam Desalegn, who the reformed TPLF leadership considered more trustworthy.^{3,14}

The intra-party relationship between the central and regional ruling parties shows both classic and new features of patron-client mechanisms.²⁵ These mechanisms have made regional governments responsive and loyal to the central party (upward accountability); and invalidated the regions' power to attend to the demands and aspirations of their constituents, and match these with available resources. Though the constitution establishes dual form of federalism, i.e. Federal and regional (state)

governments, with their own sphere of powers (Art. 51 and 52, FDRE, 1995), in practice under the TPLF dominated EPRDF principle of democratic centralism regional governments are subordinate to federal government. EPRDF has controlled the whole country either directly by its member party or indirectly by its affiliated parties. When it comes to resources regional governments are completely relied on federal government's budget in administering and implementing their development policies. Hence, the main feature of patron-client relationship in ethnic coalition and member parties is that the relationship is based on strong inequality and power differences. The central party structure controls economic, political and technical resources; it defines the organization of the state structure and is co-extensive with its field of operation. The relation is not necessarily dyadic and unidirectional, but may involve a network of reciprocities. The transactions vary substantially and include material benefits, status, protection and authority, which are exchanged for personal loyalty and obedience.²⁵ The strength of the relationship depends upon the distributive capacity at the central level. Exceedingly lopsided distributions of resources can bring dissatisfaction, revolt or ethnic strife. But as long as this exchange process is seen as mutually satisfying by the central and regional political leaders, the system retains its homeostatic qualities. Further, the World Bank's 2012 report on corruption in Ethiopia notes that perceptions of party-member favoritism are widespread.³² Because the state plays a leading role in directing economic development, and many sectors remain heavily regulated, party members routinely gain preferred access to markets or special treatment in procurement.³²

In Ethiopia, EPRDF exercises hegemonic control across the country in an effort to create one-party states. This dominance has been exercised through a variety of methods: tolerance for only one dominant ideology, exclusion of opponents by force, and even absorption of potential challengers to limit the need for compromises. Ideologically, using the language of developmentalism, the

governing EPRDF has made the argument that the state should have the primary role in advancing economic growth and as such, all other players, be they individuals or organizations must submit to its authority. Not only has this translated into the TPLF dominated EPRDF monopolization of the state and the economy through party dominated enterprises, but it has also meant that all challengers to the EPRDF's position, be they within or outside the party are dealt with harshly. In terms of inclusionary tactics, the EPRDF has also been able to absorb its opponents thus limiting threats to its supremacy. The contradiction between its de facto one-party state and its promises to deliver multi-party elections, human rights and self-determination has been the defining trait of politics since 1991.¹⁴ This has produced tensions between the government and the opposition, communal and inter-ethnic animosities and armed conflict between ethno-national rebels and the government, culminating in the 2005 election crisis.¹⁴ There is a sentiment, particularly among the urban elite, that the EPRDF, like the Derg, betrayed democratic aspirations. But EPRDF authoritarianism is only part of the reason why democratic institutions are as weak today as when the federal republic was founded.³⁷ Indeed, the domination of the federal state by the EPRDF party network severely undermines democratic institutions. Both supporters and opponents of ethnic federalism recognize that centralized party rule and federal interventions in the regions undermine local self-government. State institutions and the party system are systematically intertwined. The EPRDF's local government officials lack popular support precisely because they were selected by the party rather than elected by the people. Across the country and at all administrative levels representatives are designated by top-down nominations and then submitted to popular "confirmation" in the absence of a formal vote or in non-competitive elections.¹⁴

The TPLF used *gim gema* as a management tool, which was adopted by EPRDF and affiliated parties at all administrative levels and in all public sectors, including the military. It is used to evaluate

“collective entities, individuals and programmes through debate in open forums”. Over the years, these evaluation sessions have become politicized, often manipulated and pre-orchestrated and a means for disciplining party officials, who can be intimidated, dismissed or demoted on even unfounded allegations. In these gim gema (self-evaluation) sessions party loyalty and interests weigh stronger than a popular endorsement.³⁸ In this regard, unlike the disciplined TPLF officials who draw on strong popular support in their native Tigray, the EPRDF affiliate parties lack credibility and are unable to build a strong base. This holds true for OPDO, SEPDP and SPDP officials, who are described as uneducated, opportunistic TPLF clients.³⁸ These bureaucrats are regularly deposed after internal party evaluations shows their dependence on the ruling party. Such sessions were first used by the TPLF to improve insurgency tactics and bring the peasantry and TPLF cadres in the liberated areas together.³⁶ However, gim gema/self-evaluation practically hampered freedom of expression and democratic participatory decision making process since in the evaluation process diversity of political opinion is unacceptable and in effect members are expected to adhere to the decision made by the central committee which treated as core values and principles of the party.

In EPRDF governance system, state institutions intertwined with the party system and heavy reliance on party entity instead of state administration units is prevalence. EPRDF relies on total control of the state bureaucracy, not only because it wants to cling to power, but because public resources are the main patronage it can provide to its followers. A well-organized party network extends from the federal to the regional, from the regional to the woreda, and from the woreda to the kebele and sub-kebele levels. In this system, local party officials and “cadres” are assigned to monitor the everyday activities of their immediate neighbors.¹⁴ Hence, the EPRDF has created and in some cases reactivated so-called gott and garee institutions in Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and Southern regions. Officially, these party entities

are outside the state administration, but they mobilize households in government-led development programs and are an informal but highly effective mechanism by which the party hierarchy controls rural dwellers down to household level.¹

The EPRDF’s growing reliance on incumbents and on the then rebel fighters instead of building innovative, energetic and progressive young professional members, with the view to ensure continued loyalty of EPRDF members has deteriorated its ability to be a progressive party. This presented a challenge for the party to be more progressive, innovative and while challenging to allow new way of thinking for old and new problems that the party encounters. The EPRDF’s growing reliance on incumbents was evident in its choices for 2015 parliamentary candidates as well, and reflects a strategy of retrenchment. In a marked departure from previous elections, when more than 75 percent of ruling-party MPs would be rotated out of parliament, in 2015 the ERPDP allowed most of its incumbent parliamentarians to run again. This retrenchment strategy is sending two political messages that are meant to induce the continued loyalty of EPRDF members: 1) The EPRDF leadership intends to carry on with the political and programmatic agenda set by Meles, and 2) defection from the EPRDF is not an option since the ruling party remains the gateway for offices and resources. The need to develop and train competent leaders is useful not only to fill the possible generation deficit at the top of the governing structure but also to provide lead support to the organization’s stated objectives at all levels and ensure its continuity.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation:

Various Studies in post conflict societies have shown that some rebel groups-turned-political parties have different organizational features. Some have greater internal party democracy and are less centralized, while others have less intra-party democracy and are more centralized. In effect, a key challenge facing a rebel group’s transformation into a political party is the necessary transformation of

internal power configurations and the accompanying organizational restructuring.

EPRDF is a political organization, from Rebel group-to-party transformation, has established in 1989. The TPLF (Tigray People Liberation Front), while facilitating the establishment of the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), and later the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM), has created the EPRDF as a coalition political organization. The TPLF remains today the dominant party within the EPRDF although it was thought that the four regional parties had equal status. Thus, the EPRDF was an insurgent group that controlled Ethiopia's state power and resources after the fall of the military regime called Derg in 1991. Like any other political organization, EPRDF has operating on the basis of its own long established web of network of governance. When one look at its internal organizational anatomy, the EPRDF intraparty network and governance system is dominated by the use of ML (Marxist-Leninist) authoritarian methods and hegemonic control, rigid hierarchical leadership; Democratic centralism, the dominance of the party apparatus behind the façade of regional and local autonomy, an extensive patron-client mechanisms; the use of force to silence opposition within and outside the party; intertwined State institutions and the party system and excessive reliance on party entity instead of state administration units; and *gim gema* (self-evaluation) are worth mentioning.

These intraparty network and governance system have severely limited genuine democratization within the party as well as hampered the democratization process in the country. There is increasing pressure and challenge from within the party and the public at large demanding progressive change in the way the party operates and how it governs the nation. Currently, EPRDF is in deep crisis shattered by internal divisions, crises as well as external public pressure. Indeed, the organizational crisis facing EPRDF off course is not built over night rather the result of cumulated

factors that came in to effect since its existence. The aforementioned network of governance may be worked well before the organization transformed from rebel group to political party. However, since EPRDF came to power the world in general and Ethiopia in particular are experiencing changes in socio-economic; cultural political and environmental areas. These all changes inevitably affect the way how the organization is operating. Further, such changes affect the thinking of the people that the organization is governing. In order to survive organization of any type must adapt the changes that are happening around them. For instance since it's the party is governed by Marxist-Leninist methods which is characterized by high degree of centralization and authoritarianism and rigid hierarchical leadership which is literally against the values and principles currently governing an organization or a country. In this regard, the organizational structure and the values and principles governing the organization have to be revisited against the various change agents particularly within the framework of democracy. Therefore, the internal procedures and regulations of political parties participating in any democracy, particularly, in a parliamentary system of government like Ethiopia, must fully reflect democratic principles. In the absence of such principles, parties will not be able to govern competently and may even endanger democratic rule in the country.

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