

Programme for the Steering Committee of Ethiopian Orphan Children Visit in Mekele from Denmark.

Third Progress Report.

This programme is prepared on the occasion of the Steering Committee members visit on 21 and 22 July 2008 in Mekele where the Orphanage Center is located.

The names of the Steering Committee members are as listed here under.

1. Jens Benke	Chairman
2. Lissi Bredgaard Hejberg Petersen	Cashier
3. John Engel	Committee Member
4. Henning Hansen	Secretary
5. Gunvor Vestergaard	Committee Member
6. Lisbeth Borker	Member at large

The aim of their coming here is to see for themselves the facts on the ground, on behalf of the Private Danish Citizens Volunteer Donor and Members (PDCVDMA), how the Orphanage Center is being run and observe problems encountered (if any) since its establishment in 2006, and report back to the donors and members in Denmark, who are contributing financial support to the children for their food, clothing, education materials, accommodation needs in their shelters, health and sanitation, and transportation.

Since the programme contract agreement in 2006 signed by the steering Committee Members, Fikre, leader of the Orphanage Center (HAB), Ato keyfalew Kinfemichael, leader of the Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSA), and Abraham Alemayehu, the Coordinator of the activities between Denmark and Mekele.

So far financially the following amounts have been remitted in sequence every 6 months from “Ethiopiensboern” acc.nr. 3001

3001655582 in Denmark to the following HAB's acc.nr in Mekele, based on the currency exchange rates at the times of remittances.

1. 04/10/06 : from Danske Bank acc.Nr.3001 3001655582
to Wegagen bank, (HAB) Mekele Branch
Acc.Nr 854

65000 DKK = 95882.25 Birr

2. 07/05/07: From Danske Bank a/c Nr. 3001 3001655582
to Commercial Bank, HAB Mekele Romanat
Branch Acc.Nr. P37

65000 DKK = 105131.01 Birr

3. 04/10/07: From Danske Bank ac.Nr.3001 3001655582
to Commercial Bank, HAB Mekele,
Romanat Branch Acc.N r .p37

65000 DKK = 106777.88 Birr

4. 15/04/08: From Danske Bank acc.nr. 3001 3001655582
to Commercial Bank HAB Mekele romanat Branch
Acc.Nr. p37

65000 DKK = 130,300.44 Birr

Summary of Statements of Account so far:

04/10/06	65000 DKK = 95882.25 Birr
07/05/07	65000 DKK = 105131.01 Birr
04/10/07	65000 DKK = 106777.88 Birr
15/04/08	65000 DKK = 130300.44 Birr

Total amount remitted 260000 DKK = 438091.58 Birr

5. However, due to the unprecedented and dramatic inflation and price increase facts in all commodities, Fikre, have in his last 6 months Financial Report, requested for approval through the Steering Committee to forward his request to the Private Danish Citizens Volunteer Donors and Members Association (PDCVDMA) to kindly increase (if possible) the present amount of 65000 DKK regularly remitted every 6 months by 15000 DKK to 80000 DKK. Fikre has proposed for revising, amending and renewing the basic requirements for the children's welfare, and for salary increase to the staff workers in the Orphanage Center; thereby indicating the need of having a second contract agreement to be signed by the Steering Committee Members of PDCVDMA, Ato Kefyalew Kinfemichael, head of Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSA), Fikre, leader of Human Beings Association and Brother Hood (HAB), and myself as coordinator, Abraham Alemayehu.

6. On the 21 and 22 July 08, the members of the Steering Committee and their wives (who are also donors/members and contributors) to the Private Danish Citizens Volunteers Donors and Members Association (PDCVDMA), have been scheduled to visit Mekele after having been in Addis Ababa, Bahrdar, Gondor, Lalibela and Axum, historical places in Northern Ethiopia. Obviously they are also contributing to the source of income of the tourist organization, hotels, and souvenir shops etc in Ethiopia; in addition to their big and main support for the orphan children in Mekele. Their experience here and their recommendation will be able to encourage increasing the number of new donors/members enrolment for the orphanage center and other Danes to come and visit Ethiopia as tourists.

21 July 08: The Steering Committee Members of PDCVDMA and their wives arrived in Mekele and stayed in Axum Hotel. After resting a while they went to Human Beings Association and Brother Hood's (HAB's) office and hold discussion with Fikre and his top staff members on the situation and welfare of the children and their future requirements. Then they went to visit Emperor Yohannes IV Castle (but it was not possible due to temporary closure of the Castle). In the afternoon they went to make courtesy call to the former Ethiopian Ambassador to the Scandinavian countries, Ambassador Tewolde Gebru, who is now the Executive Director of Tigray Development Association (TDA), in his Mekele Headquarters office. He gave the visitors general information briefing on social, economic and political situation of Tigray Region and the country as a whole. They also were scheduled today to make courtesy call to the Regional Governor and his top advisors in his office (but he was not available due to pressing meetings elsewhere). But later in the evening they met him (the Governor) briefly instead at his office in Axum Hotel where he was hosting other high officials from Addis), and lastly they visited the Orphanage Center and met the children for the first time. The children were standing in line right and left applauding to meet them. The Steering Committee and their wives sang special song for the children at the entrance of the gate and later gave all the children and all staff members T-shirts as special gift, according to their sizes with the Association's Logo on the shirts.

22 July 08: In the morning the members of the Steering Committee and their wives made courtesy call to Sister Belaynesh, the Deputy Head of Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSA), then they proceeded to visit HAWOLTI and the museum (again today it was not possible due to temporary closure of the compound), the liberation monument erected after the over throw of the previous regime. In the afternoon, the Steering Committee and their wives, together with other invited officials including Ato Zemichael Gebremedhin and W/Z Nigisti Wolderufael (top advisors of the

Governor) attended special reception prepared by the Orphanage Center with the children performing various activities and Fikre giving briefing on the progress and achievements so far made in their respective schools.

The steering Committee and their wives today gave the children different gifts, ranging from footballs to play on the field, a big box with colored pencils and papers for painting and drawing pictures, sweets, indoor standing football board mechanical thing bought in Mekele by the money sent from Azeb and Yohannes (who are donors of our Association) from Denmark and delivered by the Steering Committee to the children on behalf of Azeb and Yohannes. The children were very excited and happy by these gifts and immediately started playing informal football together with the Steering Committee male members. The women who make food for the children also got Head Scarf each as gift. The guards got special battery (lygter) each. All The children and staff members were excited and happy with the gifts and were grateful to the Steering Committee members.

23 July 08: The Steering Committee Members and their wives left Mekele for Addis Ababa from where they continued to visit the last of their tour in Southern Ethiopia Langan (where they had lunch), Sheshemanie (where they visited the Ras Tefferian), Wondogenet (where they stayed overnight). In the morning they continued to Awasa (where they toured the city and saw the lake) and drove back to Addis after one night and two days in the south.

Again as I said earlier it is hoped and recommended that other donors and members of our Association and others in Denmark to have the opportunity to make similar trips to Ethiopia as tourists and visit Ethiopia and the Orphanage Center in Mekele in particular if they can, some time in the future.

At last but not least, as coordinator it has been a great pleasure for me to witness the excellent work of the Steering Committee since the establishment of the “Ethiopiens Boern” Association in 2006, and in particular I have now closely observed their trip to Ethiopia in action, at their own expense, and especially their visit of the Orphanage Center in Mekele, with the aim to make sure that the Center is functioning as it should, and report back the results of what they saw, to the Donors and Members of our Association in Denmark.

Again I would like to repeat my sincere appreciation of their work. I am sure they will also give their own views impressions to the donors/Members about the country as a whole and the Orphanage Center in particular after returning back to Denmark.

The orphan children are now very happy that they have got new parents in Denmark. They are now competing and scoring high marks to excel in their respective schools. Thanks to PDCVDMA They are full of hope because they now think their future is bright to help themselves, and when they grow up and have good educational background, and when they got jobs and are on their own in the future, they are thinking and looking forward with optimism to help others who may will experience the same fate like themselves.

Thanks to our Association; my job as coordinator has made me more knowledgeable and to be more considerate for others in difficult situations.

Sincerely

Abraham Alemayehu