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**Letter to Mr. Loui Hooijman, regarding the loss of the Esmeralda BV's Farm near Bahr Dar, Ethiopia.**

September 2, 2016

Mr. Loui Hooijman Director of Esmeralda Farms BV  
Address: Noordpolderweg 17, 1432 JH  
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Phone: +31 297 385 444  
Via Email: [loui@esmeraldafarms.nl](mailto:loui@esmeraldafarms.nl)

Dear **Mr. Loui Hooijman**,

We members of Ethiopians community inside and outside Ethiopia are saddened by the loss of your company's farm near Bahr Dar, Gojam. We are *disappointed* that one of your Ethiopian employees was harmed. The horror that all your employees experienced in the last minute of this event is unfortunate. The loss of 10 Million(€) Euro, foreign investment loss for a poor country like ours is massive.

Your company started production just 16 months ago. To see the entire farm going up in smoke in a short time like this, is truly sad. The enthusiasm of being 10 months ahead of schedule is now only a memory. It is also a disconcerting that you are considering leaving Ethiopia permanently.

We grateful for Esmeralda Farm BV, presence in Ethiopia, and appreciate your genuine attempt to lift our people out of abject poverty. Some of the cause of the problem is as follows:

1. You developed a farmland that belonged to someone prior to the 1974 Communist revolution. The revolution nationalized land and made Ethiopians destitute and helpless. The current leaders continued to own the land and refused to return the land to its rightful owners. The current government has audacity to lease the stolen property to you.
2. The local population, while grateful for job opportunity, is still the lowest paid employees, even compared to Esmeralda Employees in Colombia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Peru. The lowest paid employee in Ethiopia makes \$3.45 a day. Even though that is a good income by Ethiopian standard, in 2016 a wage like this is simply an abomination.
3. Most government Employees and officials in Ethiopia are poorly trained public servants. They got their position not for their competence but for their ability to be a puppet for the current leaders, and they do not know how to compromise with anyone. You found yourself in this predicament because they sold you a bill of goods. It is only fare for you to ask for refund from Ethiopian government for your losses.

We in the Solidarity Movement for a New Ethiopia (SMNE) sincerely wish Esmeralda Flowers BV a better luck in Ethiopia. Next time we hope that you will do better job of due diligence. It is a public secret that most people and companies who came to Ethiopia from Saudi Arabia, India, Turkey, USA and Israel were all ripped off.

We are truly sorry for the property damage and the anxiety it might have caused your company and employees.

For your information the SMNE is a non-political and non-violent social justice movement of diverse people that advocates for freedom, justice, good governance and upholding the civil, human and economic rights of the people of Ethiopia, without regard to ethnicity, religion, political affiliation.

The SMNE believes a more open, transparent and competitive market economy, supported by viable institutions and reasonable protections for private investor and property, equal opportunity, will result in greater prosperity to investors and Ethiopians. Ethiopia was and is a peaceful place with a law abiding citizen. It will become peaceful again once we have rights.

We strongly contend that Ethiopia will not emerge as a dependable global economic partner until the corrupt and illegal practices of the one tribe domination stops. We cannot accept Ethnic Apartheid or Black on Black Apartheid.

We believe the global business community should demand reforms and better guarantee for the private sector. Such reforms would include basic transparency, security, and proper compensation for land grab, repatriation of profit and grantee of investment.

Sincerely yours,



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**This letter has been CC to:**

Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia

**This letter has also been cc to major news media outlets such as**

Africa Confidential  
Al Jazeera  
BBC  
The Guardian  
New York Times  
Washington Post,  
Wall Street Journal  
Bloomberg News  
MSNBC  
CNN  
REUTERS AFRICA  
The East Africa  
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