

## True Mother's Compassion for Ethiopian Korean War Veterans

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January 2021



*From left: Simon Amare, national leader of FFWPU-Ethiopia; Rev. Adama Doumbia, Col. Melesse Tessema (92), president of the Ethiopian Korean War Veterans Association; Taj Hamad and Happiness Amare, Simon's wife*

It all started with the coming of Dr. Taj Hamad to Ethiopia in order to invite the president of Ethiopia to the third Rally of Hope with her message on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the start of the Korean War. Dr. Hamad and Rev. Adama Doumbia came to Ethiopia for this purpose simply on a basis laid in South Sudan.

Indeed, Dr. Hamad had met the President of Ethiopia in Juba, the capital and largest city of South Sudan, during a peace agreement gathering organized by the South-Sudanese president Salva Kiir, who invited heads of state and other high authorities from the east region, so they could be witnesses to the peace agreement signed by different opposition parties of South Sudan. President Salva Kiir has given a testimony that this peace agreement could come about thanks to UPF's involvement, which attracted the participants' attention and aroused curiosity regarding UPF. Consequently, when Dr. Hamad and Dr. Walsh had a conversation with the Ethiopian President, Mrs. Sahle-Work Zewde, and then announced to her that they would come to Ethiopia to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the Korean War, Mrs. Zewde seemed interested, in that she asked Dr. Hamad when and where he would stay in Ethiopia.

Just on this basis, Dr. Hamad and Rev. Adama Doumbia came to Ethiopia with the expectation of meeting the president. Unfortunately, however, this could not happen due to an increase of COVID-19 cases in Ethiopia.

### **The president planned to speak**

As it happened, the president's office announced to Dr. Hamad that the president would take part in the

third Rally of Hope with a pre-recorded video message. Herein, something I found amazing is Dr. Hamad's faith with which he came to Ethiopia. He only came here based on our president's having asked him when and where he would come, which is barely an invitation, just a simple discussion.

Nevertheless, the perspicacious Dr. Hamad acted on his expectation, convinced that he would get an audience with the president. I found that Dr. Hamad has an absolute faith which is so inspiring for us. With the president's video message in hand, the UPF leaders could return to their respective countries satisfied.

Thereafter, one week later, the same UPF leaders returned to Ethiopia with the intention of showing their gratitude and expressing True Mother's love to the veterans with a special donation. Indeed, UPF and its founders conveyed a large special donation on the veterans. For the veterans, this was something unexpected, to the extent they could not believe it, because it came at the right time when they were looking for a sponsor to publish their book on their historic participation in the Korean War.

The veterans wanted to leave a legacy through this book, knowing that only 124 among six thousand soldiers who fought in the Korean War are still alive. Most of them have been testifying that the Korean War was unique in many ways: its severity -- the Korean weather with its extremely tough winters or their experiences with the Korean people at that time, particularly the children toward whom they felt like their parents or relatives.

A veteran testified, "It was truly hard for us to leave those children and go back to our country once we had made strong bonds of relationship with them. "These children had lost everything -- parents and families -- so we were everything for them. At times, we had to give up our food rations to them. We could not bear seeing those children dying of hunger and suffering.

"Today, we're hearing that Korea is now a developed nation and this means a lot to us. To see a country developed and free, for which some of us died and sacrificed their lives brings more than happiness to us. It gives us hope that all nations can reach freedom and prosperity as Korea did after a period of war and suffering. This is what we want to transmit in our book."

Something specific to the Ethiopian veterans is that they were known for their heroism in all battles during the Korean War. No one, not even one of them surrendered. They proudly affirm that they preferred dying to surrender. "Never give up, die" was their motto. These are only some aspects of their legacy that they want to hand down to those in future generations with their book.

Almost all of them being above ninety years old, they'd like this book to be not only a legacy but to be mostly a book that "talks," that expresses their wishes and desires to those in future generations for a better and a free Ethiopia.

They naturally, expressed their deep gratitude to Mother Moon for her special donation at this time of the seventieth anniversary of the Korean War. This, indeed, shows that they are not forgotten by Dr. Moon; they are not forgotten in Korea.

Their greatest fear is they will be forgotten by their own families and the Ethiopian people, those in future generations. Therefore, they'd like this book to be kind of a "living book." They'd like it to reflect their mindset and their vision for Ethiopia. To conclude, I'd like to say that Col. Melesse assured me their book will have Mother Moon's name on it for She is their publisher sponsor.