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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement
In the exercise of the right of reply**

By

Mr. Fesseha Tesfu

**Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of
Ethiopia to the Third Committee**

at the

The 60th Session of the UN General Assembly

On

**Agenda item 71C
Human Rights Situations**

**United Nations
New York
7 November 2005**

Mme. Chairman,

My delegation is taking the floor in exercise of the right of reply to a statement made by Ambassador Gilbert Laurin, Charge d' Affairs a.i of Canada under agenda item 71C Human Rights Situations.

The statement made this morning alleges that "the use of force against opposition demonstrators and their detention following recent elections marks a decline in respect to political rights and freedoms in Ethiopia"

Mme. Chairman,

Ethiopia held its third national election in May 2005, an election marked as "free and fair" by international observers like the Carter Center and African Union. Election irregularities were addressed through an election appeals process and elections were rerun in some areas. This process again involved international observers. It was after the appeals process was fully exhausted that the winner party formed a new government in October 2005. Further problems related to the election can still be addressed through the court of law.

Despite the long process of the election, appeals and rerun of election, some opposition parties have chosen the path of street violence to remove the constitutionally elected government. They are trying to gain what they lost in the ballot box through street violence. This has led to lose of innocent lives and destruction of property.

According to the statement issued on November 2, 2005 by the Federal Police Commission, related to the street violence in Addis Ababa:

- Five grenades were thrown at the security forces and four exploded killing a policeman while one failed to explode.
- Three policemen were seriously injured in an effort to control the violence, while 51 sustained light injuries.
- Three city buses, two vehicles that belong to the Ethiopian Telecommunications and the police were set ablaze, while 80 city buses, seven government owned vehicles, nine police vehicles and two private cars were broken by rioters.
- Three offices of Kebele administrations, one recreation center, two private shops, one private residence and a bus terminal were also set ablaze, it said.

The government has a constitutional obligation to prevent such groups from wreaking havoc in the city. Those involved in street violence have been detained and will be persecuted in the court of law. No one, a political leader or an ordinary citizen, is above the law.

I am sure that the government of Canada would not entertain such kind of lawlessness under the guise of political opposition in its own country.

Mme. Chairman,

It is regrettable that the government of Canada has chosen to overlook the positive development in political rights and freedoms in Ethiopia. We are cognizant and grateful for Canada's assistance in our effort to strengthen the capacities of our Parliaments and law enforcement agencies. We expect such tangible encouragements not undue criticisms from our development partners in our endeavor to bring about democracy in Ethiopia.

I thank you