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YPFDJ-North America  
Embassy of Eritrea  
1708 New Hampshire NW  
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October 5, 2009

#### Official Statement from YPFDJ-North America

YPFDJ-North America would like to express our condolences to the family of H.E. Minister Saleh Meki and the Eritrean people. About 600 youth from across the world, spent intimate time with Minister Saleh Meki this past month at the 5th annual YPFDJ North America conference, learning the importance of the youth's role in the development of Eritrea. Over 20 YPFDJ chapters from across North America, express deep sorrow for the country's loss of a great man. Youth from California, Canada, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Washington D.C. all celebrate his life and recall the memories they shared with him over the course of the conference.

*"Harbenga"* is what comes to mind when thinking of H.E. Minister Saleh Meki. He was an ordinary individual with extraordinary talents. A man, who found the strength to persevere, endure, and dream big in spite of the overwhelming obstacles Eritrea faced. He gave his life to a cause greater than himself- his country and his people.

For many youth throughout North America, these last few weeks shared with Minister Saleh Meki will be cherished and his words will resonate in our hearts and minds. Having the opportunity to spend three days with Minister Saleh at the YPFDJ-North America conference and countless hours sitting and talking with him, learning from and laughing with him, sharing stories and receiving words of encouragement are invaluable gifts. A true pioneer, Minister Saleh was a leader who knew the way and strived to show us that path. He has left a piece of himself in all of us.

Throughout the week, thousands gathered not to mourn his death, but to celebrate his life. Candles were lit to illuminate all that Minister Saleh represented- truth, wisdom, dedication, determination, vision, and purity of heart. The youth stand here today ready to fulfill his dream and continue his legacy. There is no doubt in our minds that he will be watching over us alongside Eritrea's great martyrs guiding us through our journey. Zelealemawi ZeKri n'swuatna!! Awet N'hafash!

YPFDJ-North America