

Washington Update - January 14, 2021

As an Ethiopian-American who has spent decades working with members of Congress to promote peace and prosperity in the horn of Africa, the defilement of the Capitol building saddened me almost to tears. The symbol of freedom was invaded by thugs, incited by a corrupt and deranged President. The assault was an attack not just on Congress, but also on the values that underpin a free, decent society. I never imagined I would see the media attacked in America. The image of a television camera cord turned into a noose, twisting from a tree on Capitol Hill will haunt me. This and others like it are scenes many Americans who have fled repression would expect to see in their homelands and in their nightmares, not in Washington.

U.S. Congress impeach President Trump for the second time for incitement Insurrection in an [impeachment resolution](#) on Wednesday.

The article charges Trump with "willfully inciting violence against the government of the United States" with his comments at the rally outside the White House that it says "encouraged—and foreseeably resulted in—imminent lawless action at the Capitol."

The Capitol will be cleansed quickly, but it will take more time and dedication to erase the stains President Trump and his supporters have left in the hearts of Americans and people of good will around the world. The path to redemption must include reaffirming America's values, not only by making them real at home, but also by promoting democracy and human rights around the world.

I have been fortunate to work with Democrats and Republicans who have used America's influence to help Ethiopians secure the rights that everyone should take for granted: peace, prosperity, rule of law, freedom of expression, democratic governance. Rep. Chris Smith, a Republican, Senator Ben Cardin, a Democrat, have taken special interest in the fate of Ethiopia.

The forces of decency will prevail in Washington. My faith in America, and gratitude for the opportunities it has provided me and millions of others who have fled repression and poverty remains undiminished.

Mesfin Mekonen, Ethiopian/American Community

