



Global Alliance for Justice: The Ethiopian Cause,  
4002 Blacksmith Drive, Garland, TX 75044, U.S.A.

February 7, 2013

Al Presidente della Repubblica Italiana  
On.le Dott. Giorgio Napolitano  
Palazzo del Quirinale  
00187 Roma  
Italy

H.E. Mr. Mario Monti  
President of the Council of Ministers  
Piazza Colonna, 370  
00187 Rome  
Italy

Your Excellencies:

The Global Alliance for Justice – The Ethiopian Cause presents its compliments to the Honorable President Giorgio Napolitano, and the Honorable Prime Minister Mario Monti of Italy.

Our Alliance recalls, with deep appreciation, the long and historic relations between our two nations, Ethiopia and Italy, and wishes to draw Your Excellencies' kind attention to the recent action by the Italian Government of establishing a memorial and an adjoining "park" for the notorious Fascist war criminal and genocidist, Rodolfo Graziani.

As we have previously written to you in September of 2012, Your Excellencies are aware that on August 11, 2012, a ceremony was held in the presence of a Vatican representative during which a memorial was opened draped in the Italian flag to "honor" Rodolfo Graziani, one of the most heinous figures of the Second World War

Italy has long been a supporter of the victims of Nazism and Fascism thus this incredible insult to the memory of over 1 million Ehtiopian victims of genocide is incomprehensible. Even more appalling is the lack of official action and condemnation of the Graziani memorial. We, therefore, demand, in the name of justice and respect for human rights and humanity, that the Italian government dismantle this outrageous memorial and adjoining "park" immediately.



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In 1937, Rodolfo Graziani directed a three day massacre of over 30,000 unarmed civilians in the capital of Ethiopia upon the orders of Benito Mussolini. Over 440 Christian monks were singled out and murdered. People were dismembered and soldiers took photos of the hangings, beheadings and torture proudly alongside their dead victims. The “Graziani Massacre” is well known to every Ethiopian and virtually and disgracefully unknown to the rest of the world. Graziani, prior to arriving in Ethiopia, was named “The Butcher of Libya.” In Libya, Graziani presided over concentration camps, used chemical weapons and murdered thousands of innocents for Fascism. In Ethiopia, one million Ethiopians perished as a result of the genocidal Fascist occupation. 2,000 churches as well as 525,000 homes were destroyed. The poison gas sprayed by numerous Fascists air planes also destroyed 14 million animals and the environment. Gaziani later came to be forever known as the “Butcher of Ethiopia”.

Humanity will never forget the victims of genocide under Fascism including those tortured and lynched in the Graziani Massacre.

Italy has achieved a great deal since the defeat of Fascism, including making enduring peace efforts with former enemies like Ethiopia. Former Italian President Oscar Scalfaro’s 1997 visit to Ethiopia is an example. That year, President Scalfaro formally apologized to the Ethiopian people for the invasion and promised meaningful cooperation including the return of looted artifacts (some of irreplaceable national significance) to Ethiopia. While better trade relations and foreign assistance has healed some of the wounds of war, the death and destruction at the hands of Mussolini's forces in Ethiopia during 1936-41 remain largely unaddressed.

Today, Italy must immediately act to halt a handful of right-wing extremists from ruining Italy’s international reputation and credibility. No park or memorial should be named in honor of Rodolfo Graziani and those who perpetuate it should be stopped from doing so. If someone were to paint a portrait of Mussolini on the side of the Coliseum, wouldn’t it be a national imperative to reverse that? We expect such action now to reverse the opening of the “Rodolfo Graziani Park and Memorial” which occurred on August 11, 2012 in the little town of Affile, 50 miles east of Rome.

Since its opening on August 11 of this year, thousands of Italians have voiced their opposition to the Graziani monument. Although the Italian central government must and can do more to close the Graziani monument, here are some of the significant ways Italians have been opposing the Graziani monument:



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1. A formal Parliamentary inquiry was initiated in the Italian Parliament inquiring as to who gave the authority to use public money to build the monument.
2. A lawsuit has been filed by a citizen of Italy calling for the dismantlement of the Graziani monument and the conviction under the law of the mayor of the small town of Affile who approved the opening of the Graziani monument in his town only 1,562 people. This lawsuit also names as defendants regional government officials who approved the money to build and open the monument. The lawsuit states that under the Italian constitution as well as its criminal laws, it is unlawful to build a monument in honor of a Fascist.
3. The President of the province of Rome, Nicola Zingaretti, has denounced the building and opening of the Graziani monument. He has promised to dismantle it and is now running for Governor of Lazio, the region where the monument was erected. Presently, Mr. Zingaretti is delegate to the European Union from Italy as well.
4. Two public demonstrations in the town of Affile and one in the capital of Rome have taken place to denounce the Graziani monument. The group includes Ethiopians in Italy as well as veterans who fought against Mussolini and Graziani in Italy.
5. The Graziani monument has been forced to close on several occasions due to opponents writing on the walls denouncing its construction and urging all to remember the victims of Fascism and not to honor a war criminal. One recent artist posted hanging cardboard figures around the Graziani monument with each figure detailing the crimes against Ethiopians, Libyans and fellow Italians committed by Graziani.
6. In Bologna, a town in northern Italy, a public toilet was satirically “converted” into the Graziani monument meaning that the only worthwhile dedication to this war criminal is for using it as a toilet.
7. Many major Italian publications online and in print have denounced the building of the Graziani monument.
8. The largest Jewish organization in Italy has denounced the building of the Graziani monument and has called on the government to dismantle it.



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9. Here in America, a gathering of Italians during late January and early February of 2013 in New York City will remember all victims of Italian Fascism with a special panel

discussion on January 31 specifically focused on the Graziani monument. Leading Italian journalists will join an Ethiopian scholar on that panel.

10. Also in America, activists of Italian heritage have teamed up with Ethiopians, Jews and all people who seek justice to denounce the Graziani monument and have it dismantled. One of those Italian-Americans is Nicola Antonio DeMarco, J.D of New York who works with the Global Alliance for Justice, the Ethiopian Cause. He previously served with Dr. Richard Pankhurst on the Axum Obelisk Return Committee. On February 19, 2013, the 76th anniversary of the Graziani massacre, Italians will join Ethiopians and people of good will in front of the Italian mission to the United Nations in New York City to denounce the opening of the Graziani monument. Thirty other cities worldwide will hold similar demonstrations.

11. The Ethiopian Community in Italy, headed by Ms. Muluwork Ayele has been active in denouncing the Graziani monument. She has also met with Jewish descendents of victims of Fascism in Italy to discuss their common goal to dismantle the Graziani monument. Ms. Ayele communicates daily with Italian-American activists as well updating all on the latest.

12. After the Graziani monument was opened, the entire regional government of Lazio where the small town of Affile lies, was forced to resign due to a massive corruption scandal. The former governor, Polvernini, who was also part of that mass resignation later claimed she was against the authorization of public money to build the Graziani monument and that if she could have done anything to stop its opening, she would have. Very few people believe her story but even in her lying we can see that there is no public official in Italy, except the mayor of Affile, willing to defend using over 130,000 Euros to build a monument to a convicted war criminal and Fascist.

13. Associations including ANED (Italian Association of Deportees), ANPI (Association of Resistance Partisans) and UCEI (Union of the Italian Jewish Communities) have made formal requests to remove the monument.

That town of Affile has a population of only 1,562 people while the nation of Italy has over 60,000,000! A small mountain village does not represent the sentiments of the entire



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nation. So, when will the President of Italy and its Prime Minister act to close this disgraceful and anti-Italian monument to an enemy of the nation and an enemy of humanity?

Italy must also fulfill its obligations to restore all looted Ethiopian properties and pay adequate reparations to Ethiopia.

Ethiopians and Italians around the world join the international community in proclaiming: "Never Again!" to genocide and we expect immediate action by the Italian government to reverse this disgraceful attempt to celebrate hatred and racism which violates Italy's own Law N° 205/1993 prohibiting the dissemination of ideas based on superiority or racial and ethnic discrimination.

Sincerely,

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Kidane Alemayehu  
Global Alliance for Justice: The Ethiopian Cause

cc:

Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General  
Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission  
Martin Schultz, President of the European Parliament  
Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe