

# Concepts of Social Justice

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***“Narrowing the gap in income, wealth and power, and enhance peace and human security.”***

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# Outline

- **Definition of “Social Justice”**
- **Difference between:**
  - **Equal Opportunity & Social Justice**
- **Concepts of different Ideologies:**
  - **Left-wing (The Left)**
  - **Religious Groups**
  - **Right-wing (The Right)**
- **Developed vs Developing Nations**
- **Eritrean case:**
  - **Problems and Solutions**
- **Summary**
- **Recommendations for future Forum**

# Objectives: What We Should Learn

- Understand the difference between **equal opportunity** and **social justice**.
- Appreciate the diverse concepts of social justice held by different political ideologies.
- Know present day society is highly unjust (Left-wing & Religious Groups).
- **Appreciate Eritrean Society is far from the concept of a 'Just' society; and contribute positively, constructively and proactively to make it fairer.**

# Social Justice

“.... refers to **conceptions** of justice applied to an entire society. It is based on the idea of a just society, which gives individuals and groups **fair treatment** and a just share of the benefits of society.”

Source:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_justice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_justice)

# Equal Opportunity

- concentrates on treating all people equally and providing people with equal rights.
- gives everyone a 'fair go'.
- **Applicable to everyone.**

– Source:

<http://www.tlc.murdoch.edu.au/eosj/>

# Equal Opportunity Cont.

- **Education**
- **Employment**
- **Wealth and Power sharing**
- **Health Policies**
- **Law**
- **Labour Relations**

# Social Justice

- Targets the marginalised groups of people in society.
- Focuses on the disadvantaged.
- Recognises (that there are situations where) application of same rules to **unequal** groups can generate **unequal** results.
- Provides a framework to assess the impact of policies and practices.
- **Social Injustice arises when equals are treated unequally and unequals are treated equally. (Aristotle's principle of injustice)**
  - Source:  
<http://www.tlc.murdoch.edu.au/eosj/>

# Left-Wing Ideology

- More Egalitarian society.
- Extensive use of Income redistribution.
- Extensive use of democracy.

– Source:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_justice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_justice)

# Right-Wing Ideology

- **Meritocracy**
- **Free market**
- **Philanthropy**
- **Charity**

– **Source:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_justice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_justice)

# Similarity between the Left & Right

- Rule of law
- Human rights
- Welfare safety net

– Source:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_justice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_justice)

# Developed vs Undeveloped

- **Developed Nations:**
  - **Contribute more to the causes of natural and man-induced disasters**
- **Developing Nations:**
  - **Bear Consequences**
- **Possible Solutions?**
  - **Social Justice**
  - **UN Millennium Summit (6-8 September 2000)**  
**UN Millennium Development Goals (8 Goals)**

# UN Millennium Development Goals



- Eradicate extreme poverty & hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria & other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

– Source:

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/goals.html#>

# Eritrean Case: Problems

- Eritrean society in Diaspora is polarised along **ethnic** and **religious** lines.
- Situation is relatively better inside Eritrea due:
  - **Tolerant character of the Eritrean people**
  - **Reality of living under the rule of a dictator**
- Polarisation is deep-rooted, reflecting accumulated grievances stemming from a general sense of injustice.
- Legacy of our self-determination struggle horrendously failed to unite the Eritrean people.

# Eritrean Case: Solutions

- **Contentious** issues dividing the Eritrean society need to be dealt with properly.
- Civil societies should play a vital role to bring harmony by:
  - Making stand against injustice
  - Rejecting divisive policies
- Real solution to the Eritrean problem lies in upholding the principles of social justice.  
**How?**
- **Educate people the concept of equal opportunity in its broad context.**
- **Dismantle current favouritism policies.**

# Eritrean Case: Solutions

- Leadership that firmly believes in social justice.
- Injustice to ONE is Injustice to ALL.
- Avoid past negativism.
- Working together we can establish democracy and rule of law only after we successfully achieve **harmony** among the multi-ethnic groups of the Eritrean society. How?

# Summary

- Equal opportunity isn't social justice.
- Different ideologies have different interpretations of social justice.
- Achieving the Millennium Development Goals will be a milestone in creating a **fairer** society in the world than the present one.
- Social justice is crucial to achieve social harmony and to create a viable nation.
- **Solving the Eritrean problem is a huge challenge for all political organisations, civil societies and concerned individuals to reach to a satisfactory solution.**

# Topics for Future Forum

- Community issues: education, youth, etc.
- Social Justice in a Diverse Society.
- Reforming the Eritrean Opposition.
- Devising strategies for constructive engagement with “good” elements of the Eritrean Government.
- “Unity in Diversity”, Decentralisation, Federalism etc.
- Power and wealth sharing.
- Land rights/Reversing PFDJ proclamation of land.
- Legacy of dictatorship and road to democracy.
- Make-up of a future government and its election mechanisms.
- **AND MORE AND MORE!!!**

**Thank You;**

**Questions?**