
ECDC NEWS

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ECDC President Hails Obama's Election As Reaffirmation of America's Core Values

Reflecting the unique perspective foreign-born residents in the United States are bringing to the election of Barack Obama as the nation's first African American president, ECDC President Tsehaye Teferra applauded the peaceful transfer of power from one administration to another as "one of American democracy's greatest strengths," noting that it has special significance for newly-arriving refugees from the African continent.

"When one looks at the transfer of power in many countries large and small around the world," Teferra said, "all too often it occurs through coups, rebel movements or other violence-backed means. Despite the rhetoric and tactics employed throughout the presidential campaign, no guns were fired and no tanks rolled through the nation's capital. It overwhelmingly reflects this great nation's core value of respect for law and order and its ability to build community through great diversity."

In a note of personal reflection sent to ECDC staff members, Teferra described Obama as "a son of Africa and a hero for millions around the world," applauding post-election remarks by both the President-elect and Senator John McCain.

"In the outcome of this historic election, we have witnessed hope and belief in a better future and strength of character in the face of defeat," he said.

For many Africans who still live under rigid cultural, social and political constraints defined by tribe or ethnicity, Obama's election represents a triumph of the human spirit over discrimination and abuse, Teferra said, signaling a major milestone in the nation's pursuit of the "more perfect union" described in its Constitution.

"As the President-elect so gratefully acknowledged the debt he owes to those who opened his pathway to the highest office in the land through more than a century of struggle for civil and human rights, so do those of us who have come here from distant lands in search of freedom, opportunity and achievement" Teferra said. "His election is a powerful affirmation of the challenge so often made by parents to children: 'Through study, hard work and determination, you can achieve anything you want to achieve'."

ECDC is a non-profit organization whose mission is to resettle refugees, promote cultural, educational, and socioeconomic development in the refugee and immigrant community in the United States, and conduct humanitarian and development programs in the Horn of Africa.