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### THE CROWN COUNCIL OF ETHIOPIA

HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ERMIAS SAHLE-SELASSIE HAILE-SELASSIE  
PRESIDENT

## **STATEMENT REGARDING THE PROPER USE OF IMPERIAL TITLES**

The Crown Council of Ethiopia, acting in its historic and constitutional capacity as the body appointed to advise the Emperor and, during an interregnum, to safeguard the authority and dignity of the Crown, issues the following statement in response to numerous inquiries concerning Mr. Estifanos Matewos, who has styled himself “Prince” and has asserted descent from *Lij* Eyasu.

We the Crown Council of Ethiopia, affirm that the governance of Imperial dignity and the lawful use of princely titles are not matters of personal declaration, but of constitutional order, sacred tradition, and dynastic law.

The Revised Constitution of the Empire of Ethiopia (1955), together with the Succession to the Throne and Crown Order (1974), clearly establishes the principles governing line of descent and the conferral of Imperial titles.

Article 2 of the Revised Constitution affirms that the Imperial dignity remains perpetually attached to the line of His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I, descending uninterrupted from the Solomonic Dynasty. Article 5 further establishes that succession is strictly lineal, passing through male descendants born in lawful wedlock, with the nearer line preceding the more remote and the elder before the younger.

Article 8 expressly provides that even under Regency, the authority to grant the title of Prince does not exist. The power to confer such dignity belongs solely to a reigning and seated Emperor. Article 16 defines the Imperial Family as the direct lineal ascendants and descendants of the Emperor, subject to constitutional requirements, and Article 17 places matters concerning the status and recognition of Princes within the constitutional framework of the Crown Council’s advisory role to the Emperor.

The Succession to the Throne and Crown Order (1974) further clarifies the defined and lawful line of succession and those entitled to royal style and precedence under the Constitution.

In light of these binding provisions, the Crown Council states the following:

1. Whether Mr. Estifanos Matewos may or may not be a biological descendant of *Lij Eyasu* is a private genealogical matter pertaining to the family concerned. The Crown Council neither investigates nor adjudicates private lineage claims.
2. However, the use of the title “Prince of Ethiopia” is not determined by personal assertion, distant descent, or collateral lineage. Under Ethiopia’s Imperial Constitution and the ancient customs of the Solomonic Monarchy, princely dignity may arise only through:
  - Direct male-line descent within the constitutionally defined Imperial House; or
  - Explicit grant by a reigning and seated Emperor.
3. In the absence of a reigning Emperor, no authority exists to create, recognize, or validate new princely titles. Any such usage outside the constitutional framework of the Empire is without legal or traditional standing.

Accordingly, the Crown Council of Ethiopia does not recognize or accept the use of the title “Prince” by Mr. Estifanos Matewos. Such styling has no constitutional basis under Articles 2, 5, 8, 16, and 17 of the Revised Constitution, nor under the Succession to the Throne and Crown Order of 1974.

Until such time as a reigning Emperor is restored to the Throne of Ethiopia, all royal titles purportedly issued, adopted, or used outside the framework of the Imperial Constitution and the laws governing the Solomonic succession must be regarded as null and void in dignity and effect.

The Crown Council remains steadfast in its duty to preserve the integrity of Ethiopia’s Imperial heritage, to uphold the sanctity of the Solomonic line, and to ensure that the honors of the Empire are neither diminished nor misapplied.