

**English translation:**

Another thing is the psychological mindset of the people, it doesn't seem as though it's ready to host tourists. Most people would rather look after their own interest than sacrifice for the sustainable development of an industry like tourism, with the way things are now, it seems as though this shouldn't even be expected of people. This is reflected in prices. I personally lead people from this country on tours to places in the Far East like China, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, other countries like that- Korea. When you compare the quality and prices with hotels in those countries, ours are lower in quality but higher in price. When you add up the costs of all the services we offer, it makes Ethiopia an expensive tourist destination, not inexpensive and attractive.

When you add all these things together, it makes the situation difficult, so we need to pay attention to what is done in the future. The government has the responsibility to direct the direction that the industry goes in. This has to be done with planning, in areas of capacity-building, things that the government has to do with creating more infrastructure, ensuring that hotels with good standards are built where they are needed by providing incentives to the investors and allowing them to act on their own.

In another way, the general public must be aware. The people living in the area need to know what's expected of them, and when they fulfill these expectations, then the incomes from tourism in their area should go back into their communities. If all these things happened, then everybody becomes a stakeholder because everybody has an interest. And this is not only in issuing orders or enforcement but also if some sort of law and order were to develop that would promote everyone's interest then it can be followed. Things that are done in other countries can also be done here, there's no reason not. The only thing is the need for leadership and guidance from above. This requires attention, any movement requires attention.

In the case of Ethiopia, however, based on my observations of many countries, there is definitely potential. There are very many tourism sites that Ethiopia has to offer like historical and religious sites. There are very many ancient places and their stories are interesting, fascinating, and impressive. Ethiopia herself has a very long history of self-rule. The history of most African countries is predominantly under colonial rule, and then they got independence and then began to rule themselves. But for many thousands of years, Ethiopia has had a government that administrated the country, collected taxes and tributes, and maintained an army – even if there was internal fighting – and so the country has a lot of history. And that history needs to be collected in a museum and displayed – this has been done but it could be strengthened.

Now I'm comparing to other countries. In the cultural and natural fields, moreover, there are very many diverse ethnic cultures. When we go to the south, there are many different,

fascinating traditions from clothing to hair styles to fashion. And when you look at the decorations that they put on their bodies, you become fascinated. Some of the documentaries about Ethiopia that have been created overseas are really appealing to tourists, but the problem with going to those places in the south is that the roads are not developed. In order to go and visit just one place, you need at least four days, five days, six, seven days. You go by car, the car doesn't drive on a road, it's just track. There's no such thing as asphalt or all-weather road near these places and this is discouraging, but the potential is there. The area has a lot of potential and I'm sure, given the proper guidance and handling, in future circumstances, along with peace, there will be positive growth for tourism in this country.

**About CultureTalk:** CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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