

May 17, establishment of CRDA, marked as Ethiopian Volunteers Day

May 17th, CRDA's establishment, was marked as Ethiopian Volunteers Day, for the first time at national level, in Addis Ababa, on May 17, 2007, in the presence of senior Government Officials, NGO representatives and other development actors. The day was marked under the theme of "Volunteerism for National Development". A corner-stone was laid at a square found along the ring road near Furi-Harbu River. This square was named as Volunteers

Square. The occasion was organized by the Ethiopian Volunteers Day Organizing Committee established by Ethiopian Volunteers Association (EVOs) in collaboration with Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), Addis Ababa Rotary Clubs and Kaleb Instruments P.L.C.

Founding Members of CRDA (May 17, 1973/74)

1. Adventist Development & Relief Agency
2. Baptist General Conference Mission
3. Baptist Mission/Ethiopia
4. Catholic Relief Services
5. Ethiopian Catholic Secretariat
6. Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
7. Kale Heywet Church Development Program
8. Lutheran World Federation
9. Norwegian Church Aid
10. Oxfam/U.K.
11. Society of International Missionaries
12. St. Mathew's Church
13. Swedish Philadelphia Church Mission



May 17th was marked with a view to commemorate humanitarian activities where 13 church-based organizations *voluntarily* agreed to work together. This was in response to the 1973/74 famine that happened in the northern parts of Ethiopia. It was this effort, to exchange information and coordinate relief and rehabilitation activities that first established CRDA.

In his speech on the occasion, Ato Sahile Mariam Mogus, Vice-Chairperson of CRDA Board, remarked that CRDA and its members delivered their services voluntarily to the people of Ethiopia and saved thousands of lives. On behalf of CRDA Members, he expressed his sincere appreciation to the Organizing Committee that May 17, 1973/74 (establishment of CRDA) will be commemorated as Ethiopian Volunteers Day. He also appreciated the Government's support that encourages the efforts and contributions of Volunteers to the development of Ethiopia.

In a similar development, CRDA staff celebrated 34 years of CRDA's establishment on May 17, 2007 at CRDA Head Office, Kality. In its 34 years of service CRDA's membership has grown from 13 to 283 NGOs.

