

## Ethiopia 'needs' political peace

**World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz has said political harmony in Ethiopia is the only way to reduce poverty there.**

Speaking in Addis Ababa, Mr Wolfowitz said resumption of aid to Ethiopia had to be followed by government action to provide political stability.

Last year the World Bank cut its direct budget support to Ethiopia after violence following disputed elections left at least 80 dead.

The UK also switched aid away from the government towards specific projects.

Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest and most indebted countries, making it particularly vulnerable to natural disasters such as drought.

"As a development bank, we are more concerned with development and poverty reduction but we do not ignore political harmony," Mr Wolfowitz told reporters after talks with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and opposition politicians.

"The World Bank requires the right atmosphere to work with, such as transparency, independent justice and political harmony in the country."

Mr Wolfowitz travels on to Tanzania before going to Russia to attend the G8 summit this weekend.

### **Clashes**

Last May's polls resulted in the opposition winning more than 100 seats in parliament, but the opposition believed they had been cheated of victory, and took to the streets.

The clashes left many dead, and Prime Minister Meles accused the opposition of attempting to overthrow his government.

Several leaders of the main opposition alliance, the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD), are on trial for treason in connection with the protests.

Until last year's elections, Mr Meles had been praised for opening up political debate and for liberalising the economy.

He was even invited to be a member of UK British Prime Minister Tony Blair's Commission for Africa.

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