

Exiled spiritual leader returns to Ethiopia

Bishop Abune Merkorios, the patriarch of Ethiopia's powerful Orthodox Church, has returned to Addis Ababa, after 27 years. This after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed met him in the US last week and persuaded him to reconcile with a rival faction of the church. [BBC News](#) reports that he was welcomed by his followers in the capital. **The church split in the early 1990s after Mengistu Haile Mariam's communist regime was overthrown** and Merkorios was accused of representing the diaspora and opposition in exile. The report notes that breakthrough signals that Abiy is succeeding in his efforts to promote reconciliation.