



**Bi-Weekly Newsletter
Permanent Mission of the State of Eritrea to AU
and UNECA
Press Section**



President Isaias Afwerki Urges for Concerted Global Efforts to Combat the Scourge of Human Trafficking

Drawing attention to the vexing issues and plight of refugees and migrants, President Isaias Afwerki has urged for concerted international efforts to bring about a durable and effective solution to the malaise. President Isaias underlined the imperative for urgent and meaningful action to combat this scourge in a letter that he sent to various Heads of State and Government.



The President noted that migration and influx of refugees has become rampant globally. This was particularly exacerbated in those regions of the world that have been plunged into interminable crises primarily due to misguided policies and interventions by certain powers. In the event, the underlying causes and driving factors need to be addressed fully and comprehensively, President Isaias noted. A sober diagnosis of the underlying causes that is not shrouded by willful propaganda is vital so as to fully identify the intertwined dimensions of the problem and find effective solutions. This will require serious and concerted action, President Isaias emphasized.

The President's letter also elucidates in greater detail the genesis, ramifications, and principal actors behind the international crime of human trafficking as well as the vilification and demonization campaigns that are routinely conducted by the international crime

syndicate on those who raise their moral voice against these despicable acts.

President Isaias further underlined in his letter the moral obligation of all those concerned to exert unreserved efforts for an expedited solution to promote justice by stemming this international crime that may be termed as "the globalized slavery" of the 21st century.

As it may be recalled, the Government of Eritrea has made repeated calls in previous years for robust action to stop human trafficking. President Isaias had indeed written to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in February 2013 to launch a legal, independent and transparent investigation of human trafficking that has victimized Eritrea. This request was also repeated on various occasions subsequently. Unfortunately, these appeals have not, as yet, been heeded.

Vol 3. Issue 58

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Inside this issue:

- Foreign Minister Attended the Climate Change Conference held in Morocco** 2
- Eritrean Delegation Participated in Africa-Arab Ministerial Conference** 2
- "Changing Borders into Bridges"** 3
- The UNSC Once Again Committed Grave Injustice Against the People of Eritrea** 5
- Ghirmay Ghebresellasie Won the New York Marathon** 6
- Team EriTel Dominated Tour du Faso** 6

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**Eritrean Mission to
AU & ECA**



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Foreign Minister Attended the Climate Change Conference held in Morocco

Eritrean delegation headed by Mr. Osman Saleh, Minister of Foreign Affairs, participated at the Climate Change Conference (COP 22) held from 7 to 18 November 2016 in Marrakesh, Morocco.



During his stay in Morocco, Foreign Minister Osman Saleh met and held talks with Mr. Salaheddine Mezouar, Morocco’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, on reinforcing bilateral ties and mutual cooperation between the two countries. Mr. Osman also delivered President Isaias Afwerki’s message to King

On 13 November, Minister Osman delivered a speech on the theme ‘Solutions and Dialogue for Ocean Economy in Africa.’ The Statement elaborated that Eritrea possesses extensive marine resources and fishery along its coastline and islands in the Red Sea. It stressed that Eritrea’s strategic location and proximity of the Red Sea to global markets and international maritime routes are a major asset. Moreover, Eritrea is blessed with a united, committed and hardworking people, it underscored.

Mohammed VI and expressed Eritrea’s readiness to strengthen the existing bilateral ties. The two Ministers held extensive discussion on enhancing mutual cooperation.

The Statement elaborated that Coastal Development Program has become one of the priorities in the nation’s sustainable and integrated development agenda. The Statement underlined that measures are being taken to protect the marine ecosystem and environment, avoid over exploitation and curb illegal fishing. *(The text of the statement is available at: <http://shabait.com/news/local-news/22903-press-statement>)*

Minister Salaheddine Mezouar on his part explained that his country gives due attention to the existing brotherly relations with Eritrea and underlined that the necessary initiatives need to be taken by both countries to take such relationship to a higher level of cooperation.

The two sides agreed to prepare cooperation programs particularly in the domains of trade, investment, education, and agriculture.

Eritrean Delegation Participated in Africa-Arab Ministerial Conference

An Eritrean delegation headed by Mr. Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture, participated in the 3rd Africa-Arab Ministerial Conference on Agricultural Development and Food Security that was held from 31 October to 2 November 2016 in Khartoum, Sudan. The Conference was held under the theme, “Africa-Arab Trade and Investment for Accelerated Agricultural Development and Enhancing Food Security.”



During his stay in Khartoum, Minister Arefaine met with Prof. Ibrahim Adam Al- Dekheiri, Minister of Agriculture of Sudan and discussed on reinforcing the existing bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The two Ministers agreed on speedy implementation of programs of mutual interest.

Likewise, Minister Arefaine held talks with the Sudanese Minister of Livestock Resources, Prof. Musa Tibin, and Dr. Hassan Abdel-Qadir Hilal, the Minister of Environment and Urban Development. The two sides discussed and agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation through the sharing of experiences, providing training and conducting joint agricultural research.



“Changing Borders into Bridges”

Excerpts from a Statement delivered by Ambassador Araya Desta, Permanent Representative of the State of Eritrea to AU and UNECA at the 12th Expert Meeting on Regional Security Policy at the Greater Horn of Africa, Nairobi, 1-2 November 2016, Organized by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

It is my humble suggestion that we go back to the fundamentals and get the basics right.

Equally important is the question: what does the African Union Border Program (AUBP) mean and where does it leave us? In a nutshell, the AUBP, in my opinion, is our most significant milestone, which marks both continuity and change. It builds on Cairo Declaration and it strives to re-caliber it to contemporary needs.

Behind every boundary in the world there are, at least, two stories. But behind the 109-plus African boundaries there is a single story. This universally accepted story is: African boundaries are the product of colonial cartography. And they were drawn arbitrarily. The violent legacies of these boundaries are too obvious to merit explanation.

The boundaries in the Horn of Africa are equally and perfectly colonial. They too were made at the drawing board of the ‘Berlin Conference’. But, with an interesting twist. In the Horn of Africa the ‘scramble’ has an African touch. This African touch, unfortunately, has made the legacies of colonial borders even worse. This oddity, which many have treated glibly, is at the core of this region’s problems. In fact, this single oddity does tell the whole story.

Why in this region development has remained a hollow promise and peace nothing more than extended ceasefires? Perhaps, it also explains why the newest sovereign African nation is from this region. This oddity, last but not the least, perhaps explains why, this region constitutes a separate ‘security complex’ after all.

In Cairo, African leaders adopted ‘colonial borders’ as their own. Notwithstanding, the various theories and motives for the decision, African leaders in a single bold stroke tried to address the fear of ‘territorial revisionism’. The leaders, to their credit, saved the continent from breaking up further into even smaller states, hence, from “anarchy and disorder on a planetary scale”.



Before the ‘Berlin Conference,’ there were no international boundaries in Africa; there were only cultural/tribal areas. If we were to revert to them to create smaller states out of the existing ones: we would have ended up with more than 170 satellite entities in the Horn of Africa alone.

But the Cairo Declaration goes way beyond this. For the sake of time I will only limit myself to one cardinal legacy of the Declaration: the principle of ‘sovereign and territorial integrity.’ This principle, in my opinion, is the most fundamental primary norm that guided Africa’s interstate relations.

Sadly, the Horn region has yet to establish this norm. For this reason and for this reason only has remained a troubled spot. One comparative study concluded: border disputes are more likely to escalate into war in the Horn of Africa than in West Africa. This is the reason why wars are numerous and human suffering has become common in this part of the continent. *(Contd. on page 4)*

“Changing Borders into Bridges” (Contd. from page 3)

Eritrea’s thirty years of war, ‘against all odds’, was not revisionist which run against Cairo Declaration. It was a conformist that zealously guarded it. Therefore, for us in Eritrea the principle of ‘sovereignty and territorial integrity’ is inalienable fruit of our long drawn struggle for independence.



For Eritrea the ideas of sovereignty and statehood are intimately linked, which of course, both get their meaning from boundaries. The 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, for instance, puts “defined territory,” as one prerequisite for a state to be legally recognized. This necessary condition by itself is not sufficient, nonetheless.

Building upon this **primary norm, respect for international laws and agreements** is also paramount. A good track record of respect for international obligations in its own merit creates consistency, predictability and trust, which are the critical recipe for regional cooperation and integration.

There are additional handicaps heaped up on this already fragile security complex. One of the most important is extra-regional and extra-continental interests and their attendant interventions. For this reason among others, IGAD was characterized in 2008 by the admission of one of its own member states as “one of the weakest links in regional economic integration on the continent”. Since then, regional states have made insufficient progress in strengthening this regional organization. And nothing much has changed since then.

Since independence Eritrea’s foreign policy has been based on principles capable of creating conducive atmosphere for solidarity and cooperation among peoples of the Horn of Africa.

With the new challenges and trends in global governance, it has now become even more evident that a state can no longer exist in isolation. The greater demand and advantages for regional integration have made Eritrea pursue that policy with ever greater commitment.

Countries of the region are bound by a common fate, history, culture and traditions. We are also connected through ethnic, tribal, family and linguistic ties not to mention a shared sense of destiny.

For these reasons, peace, progress and prosperity in the region are in the strategic national interest of Eritrea. We have therefore made several efforts over the years to help resolve disputes and revive IGAD.

In our view: genuine cooperation and integration will not be realized in this region unless the principle of ‘sovereignty and territorial integrity’ is established as a norm.

Changing borders into bridges requires soft management of borders. But countries of this region are not there yet. The ‘**final and binding**’ technical blueprint of the bridge has long been in place. But, the Eritrean sovereign territory where the pile-foundation of the bridge should have stood remains under illegal occupation.

If we could only get this cleared out we would be constructing the bridge. A bridge that, I believe, would lead us into new political, economic and security partnerships.

And this would help us achieve our true potential as a region.

I thank you.

The UNSC Once Again Committed Grave Injustice Against the People of Eritrea by Extending the Unjustified Sanction

In a Statement delivered during the UN Security Council discussion on the situation in Somalia, held on 10 November 2016, Mr. Amanuel Giorgio, Chargé d’Affaires of the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations, reiterated that there was no reason to maintain sanction against Eritrea, as the justification for its imposition had long been proven nonexistent. He called on the UN Security Council to lift the unfair, unjust and counterproductive sanction without further delay. The text of the Statement follows:

The UN Security Council has once again committed grave injustice against the people of Eritrea by extending the unjustified sanction.

There is no reason to maintain sanction against Eritrea, as the justification for its imposition has long been proven nonexistent, a fact that has been asserted by the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group. In four of its reports, including during its present mandate the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group, has affirmed that “there is no evidence of Eritrean support to Al-Shabab in Somalia.”

On Djibouti, Eritrea remains committed to the mediation of the State of Qatar, which resulted in the release of all Djiboutian prisoners of war last March. The report of the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group makes it clear that all its interlocutors only mention seven prisoners of war in Eritrea, who are all accounted for. For its part, Eritrea has confirmed that there are no more Djiboutian prisoners in its hand.

In light of the reports of the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group and serious regional developments, it is incumbent on the UN Security Council to lift the unfair, unjust and counterproductive sanction on Eritrea without further delay.

Eritrea is keenly aware that failing to find any substantive argument to continue the sanction, some members of the Council have resorted to procedural

matters, particularly the inability of the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group to visit Eritrea. If truth be told, this is not the real reason for their determination to keep the sanction in place. In fact, some of them have made it clear that even if the Group were to visit Eritrea, they would still not support the lifting of the sanction.



The sanction, which has been in place for the past seven years, has been detrimental not only to Eritrea, but also to the Horn of Africa region. It has encouraged zero-sum approaches and imparted a sense of impunity to some countries and emboldened them to violate international law as well as externalize their problems instead of cooperating with their neighbors to address the serious challenges of regional peace and security. Unfortunately, the UN Security Council has once again missed the opportunity to contribute positively to regional peace, stability and amity by maintaining the sanction on Eritrea. On its part, Eritrea will continue making its positive contribution to regional peace, stability and security in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea.

In conclusion, Eritrea wishes to sincerely thank those delegations who have advocated for the immediate lifting of the sanction and those who have dissociated themselves from this unfair and unwarranted resolution.

Ghirmay Ghebreslassie Won the New York Marathon in a Spectacular Fashion

Eritrean Ghirmay Ghebreslassie won the 2016 New York Marathon held on 6 November 2016. The 20 year-old runner won the race in 2:07:51, ahead of Lucas Rotich of Kenya. Ghirmay is the first Eritrean and the youngest male ever to win the prestigious race.

President Isaias Afwerki met and congratulated the athlete upon his return home. President Isaias said that the people and the country are proud of Ghirmay's victory and wished him more success in future competitions.



The Champion was awarded a warm welcome at the Asmara Stadium in a ceremony attended by senior Government and PFDJ officials, members of the diplomatic corps as well as athletes and students.

Team EriTel Dominated Tour du Faso Cycling Competition

The 2016 Tour du Faso which was held from 28 October- 6 November, with the participation of twelve teams, was dominated by the Eritrean cycling team EriTel.

Eri-Tel won the Team Classification, while Zemenfes Solomon, the 19 year-old rising-star, was the winner of the Points Classification. The winner of the General Classification was Harouna Ilboudoh from the host country of Burkina Faso; Zemenfes Solomon clinched third position in this category.



The EriTel riders won six out of the ten stages of the competition, four of the stage wins were by Zemenfes Solomon.