

The Japan Times Article of Monday August 1, 2011 titled "Hungry Eritreans suffer in Silence" is a deliberate distorted tutorial prepared on the prevailing situation of the Horn of Africa. Its objective is to confuse and not to convince public opinion. Therefore, it is important to set the record straight.

Renewed War: throughout 1996 and 1997, tensions arose between Eritrea and Ethiopia over seemingly minor economic and political issues. However, they were aggravated by a series of armed incursions into Eritrean territory from Ethiopia's northern Tigray region. The significance of these incidents was made clear by the publication in Tigray in November 1997 of new maps for the first time which claimed significant territorial areas of Eritrea. When all diplomatic bilateral and multiple efforts to diffuse this deepening crisis failed, Ethiopia declared war on May 13, 1998 and mobilized its armed forces for a full-scale assault on Eritrea. Three big rounds of assault produced hundreds of thousands of casualties and displaced 1 million Eritrean in 1998 - 2000. Another 76,000 Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin were expelled from Ethiopia.

Steps towards peace: with the war stalemated, Ethiopia agreed to a cease fire in mid-June 2000. On December 2000, Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Algiers assisted by US, EU and OAU. Based on this final and binding Agreement Eritrea - Ethiopia Border Commission issued its findings in April 2002. Ethiopia has refused to implement the decision of EEBC as of today. Ethiopia still occupies sovereign territories of Eritrea. That is why a situation of no-peace-no-war prevails between the two countries as of today.

Ethiopia & Somalia: Ethiopia invaded Somalia in violation of the UNSC Resolution 1725 in November 2006. Historical animosity, governance, underdevelopment, displacement of population, drought and famine in Somalia were clearly aggravated unless the author wants to brave to the public with the monkey story for children.

That is why the Government of Eritrea and people were left with no option but to implement a comprehensive, in-house, community - based reconstruction and development program in the last decade. This innovative local initiative might not be perfect but it has definitely resulted and curbed famine and drought in Eritrea. Resettlement of the displaced population was successful. The GDP growth is ready for take-off this year. It is obvious continued maintenance of regional peace and security, development of regional cooperation and enhancement of the environment are its future friends.

Ethiopian new purchase of 200 tanks with a new game plan was announced just last month. A make-believe story like this article can never cover up its objectives. Recycling tanks into plough shares is the only choice left to fight famine, ignorance, underdevelopment in the Horn. Pass the word!

Journalism is a good tool to convince people but fails when used to confuse people;

ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador

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