



## **EMBASSY OF THE STATE OF ERITREA TOKYO**

**Mr. Hiroshi Hayakawa  
President  
TV Asahi Corporation  
6-9-1, Roppongi, Minato-ku,  
Tokyo 106-8001 Japan**

October 24, 2011

### **Open Letter to TV Asahi Corporation**

Dear Mr. Hayakawa

I have the honor to inform you that the program TV ASAHI channel 10 for Tokyo area program broadcast at 19:00 - 21:48 on October 12, 2011 (“Ikegami Akira no Tsutaeru Sekaino Ima”) has unduly targeted and demonized Eritrea's history, people, constitution , defense forces and leadership.

#### **1) On our history of struggle for independence:**

In the above mentioned program, the moderator, Mr. Akira Ikegami has introduced the cause of our long historical struggle for independence as discrimination felt by Eritreans in Ethiopia.

We, the people of Eritrea, united by our rights and common destiny, standing on the solid ground of unity and justice bequeathed by our heroic martyrs and freedom fighters who struggled during the last two centuries against modern colonialism in the Horn of Africa believe that your perspective of our history is ill intentioned and must be corrected by your esteemed organization.

To put the record straight, and in brief, the fact is, Eritrean people have participated in the long struggle for their legitimate right of self determination and independence, against modern colonialism for two centuries, including and not excluding Italian colonization from 1881 to 1941, British Administration from 1941 to 1952 and Ethiopian Annexation from 1952 to 1991.

#### **2) On Eritrea's comparison to North Korea:**

Mr. Akira Ikegami, has compared our country to North Korea in the same program.

The Eritrean people, filled with the desire for bringing justice, regional peace and the rule of law and democracy, have stood steadfast and in-arms hand in hand with Ethiopian revolutionaries in their contemporary history against North Korea and other communist governments and groups, who supported morally, politically, economically, diplomatically and militarily the barbaric and genocidal

rule of the military regime of Ethiopia from 1975 to 1991, alone-and-against-all-odds.

We, the people of Eritrea, are aware and deeply appreciative of the history and heritages left by our past political and military leaders including but not excluding the military leadership of people like the legendary General Aman Andom and other unknown soldiers who have contributed heroically for the fundamental rule of law and regional peace of the Korean Peninsula in the 1950th.

We, the people of Eritrea, also know and are aware of the objective, aim and existence of the North Korea arms factory currently located in Ambo (Ethiopia). It is a manufacturing plant ranging from small arms, surface-to-surface missiles and other weapons of mass distraction. If you doubt our knowledge and insight we kindly direct you to check the Wiki-leaks and visit their site in order to find out the truth. We challenge you also to go and investigate with your TV producers this site if you have any moral responsibility on the people of the region before you utter a word on democracy and freedom.

Therefore, it is immoral by all measures - to compare the oppressor with the oppressed . Mr. Ikegami comparison is indeed historically wrong and is a deliberate media deceit crafted to exploit short term public and private sympathy in Japan by using North Korea.

### **3) On Eritrea's defense forces and the national military service compared to prison:**

Mr. Ikegami has compared further, in the same program, Eritrea's defense forces and the national military service as prisons and Eritrea's defense forces participation in the undergoing economic national program of rehabilitation and reconstruction as forced labor.

We, the people of Eritrea, believe that it is a sacred duty of all Eritreans to build a strong and developed Eritrea on the basis of freedom, unity, peace and stability.

We, the people of Eritrea, also believe that Mr. Ikegami has no right to abuse, look dawn or undermine in the media our inalienable human right to protect and defend the sovereignty and integrity of our nation.

### **4) On foreign journalist jailed and his disappearance in Eritrea:**

Mr. Ikegami also talks about a foreign journalist disappearance in Eritrea in the same program. There is no foreign journalist in jail in Eritrea. This is a complete fabrication and not true.

### **5) On football players and youth exodus from Eritrea:**

Mr. Ikegami also talks about 13 young football players who are seeking asylum in Tanzania.

The truth is 13 young football players bid for asylum on July 2011 was rejected by the Tanzanian Home Ministry because according to the findings and public statement made to the media by the same Ministry, these young people bid for asylum were because they wanted "a greener pasture" not because of any lack of security in Eritrea.

We, the people of Eritrea, believe that Mr. Ikegami has all the right to say whatever he wants, but as a

responsible journalist these kind of generalization, projection and sweeping statements made on the same program based on innuendos is not objective reporting.

#### **6) On constitution of Eritrea being a “pie in the sky”:**

Mr. Ikegami has compared our Constitution as a “ pie in the sky”in the same program.

The truth is, on May 23, 1997, a Constituent Assembly comprised of 527 members from the National Assembly, all six Regional Assembly and representatives from the diaspora solemnly ratified the document, which became the legal framework for governing the country once election could be organized under it's terms and provisions. The Ethiopian ruling group published a new map of Tigray Federal State on November 1997 claiming significant area of Eritrea and the Province of Begemider (Ethiopia) for the first time. It subsequently also declared all out war on May 13, 1998 to legitimize this new map. No peace and no war is still the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia until today. Our nation building was seriously challenged.

Hence, targeting our Constitution with your powerful media capacity in Japan especially at this particular time is one-sided and can only be political motivated.

#### **7) On dictatorship in Eritrea and demonizing our President:**

At this juncture, I feel responsible as a revolutionary who have struggled on side of the Eritrean and Ethiopian people and who has a deep rooted historical obligation to my brothers and sisters who have fell in the region, for the last fifty years, to blow out my take to Asahi TV on the situation prevailing in the Horn of Africa and not excluding Eritrea.

The internationally spoiled ruling group in Ethiopia has from 1991 to 2011:

1. mounted ethnic and clan tensions,
2. increased economic inequalities and marginalization of the majority,
3. made social injustice rampant,
4. used political legitimacy openly on ethnic and clan lines,
5. used ethnic and clan lines to attack legitimate nationals and nations,
6. opened the region to a diverse range of actors, from afar and near, with apparently irreconcilable, differences over the protection and attainment of their foreign political and economic interest,
7. published and made public a new map of Tigray State in November 1997 claiming a very significant area of Eritrea and the Province of Begemider (Ethiopia) for the first time,
8. declared a “total war” on Eritrea to legitimize this political map on 13 May 1998 which was intentionally downplayed in Mr. Ikegami broadcast,
9. the opposition of Ethiopia which won the national election was brutally crushed under the limelight of the international community and election observers on 25 May 2005,
10. the ruling group in Ethiopia invaded Somalia in 2006, and
11. has refused to accept the internationally recognized decision of the Eritrea - Ethiopia Border Commission until now.

If Mr. Ikegami is not aware of these events, then he has no business to talk about our freedom, unity, peace, stability and security. I mean about the people of Eritrea and Ethiopia. 99% of the population of

these two brotherly countries know very well what is gripping the region. It is the 1%.

ASAHI TV can go ahead and give political, diplomatic and media support to the ruling group in Ethiopia to isolate Eritrea, it is your right and choice. But it is not asking too much if we kindly request your esteemed organization to refrain from doing this at the expense of history and destiny of the Eritrean people and other peace seeking people and political forces in the Horn of Africa --- especially our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia. And most of all, it is not beneficial at a period when Eritrea has heightened its diplomatic and constructive engagement in the region.

TV ASAHI channel 10 for Tokyo area program broadcast at 19:00 - 21:48 on October 12, 2011 needs a serious reevaluation and revisit as it is not objective and balanced reporting at all.

Respectfully yours,

  
ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador

ERITREA/Tokyo

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Cc; Mr. Akira Ikegami