



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



*Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Press Release*

## **EU Parliament Resolution on Eritrea: Misinformation or Political Bias?**

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The European Parliament's resolution on Eritrea (2016/25999(RSP)) is appalling for its gratuitous, and grossly distorted, depiction of facts and events in the country. It is indeed a



sad sign of our times that an august body with that stature can so casually ignore minimum standards and norms of objectivity and civility to freely insult a small foreign people and country.

The operating paragraphs in the preamble to the EU Parliament resolution represent a catalogue of all the invective peddled against Eritrea by "regime-change" elements and other detractors who have long harboured malice against the independence and sovereignty of the country.

This is amply illustrated by the following few examples:

◆ The EU Parliament resolution asserts that "there has been even greater repression and even more violations of human rights" in Independent Eritrea than during the colonial times. (This astounding statement is derived from notorious activists, with links to certain sponsors of the resolution, who have historically opposed and still crave to reverse Eritrea's independence).

◆ The resolution alludes to a "demonstration of hundreds of Eritrean refugees in front of the African Union Headquarters... accusing long-time Eritrean President Isaias

Afwerki ... and urging the African Union to take action"; (The EU Parliament prefers to talk about a single demonstration, in Addis Ababa of all places, that was vividly orchestrated by the Ethiopian regime to further its pronounced and subversive agenda of "regime-change" while ignoring the myriad demonstrations by tens of thousands of Eritreans in its own capitals against the COI and related policies of harassment and demonization of the government and people of Eritrea).

◆ The EU Parliament refers to torture practices of human traffickers in Sinai and blames the government of Eritrea; (but it conveniently glosses over Eritrea's request to the UN, through the letter of President Isaias, to launch a comprehensive investigation of this abominable act which implicates certain foreign powers).

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### **EU Parliament Resolution on Eritrea: Misinformation or Political Bias?**

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- ◆ The resolution refers to dubious figures “on the monthly rate of Eritrean migrants”; (but it ignores misplaced UNHCR and EU politically-motivated policies of unwarranted granting of “automatic asylum” to Eritrean economic migrants).
- ◆ The EU Parliament resolution blabbers about widespread “discrimination and violence against women that is pervasive in all areas of Eritrean society”. (This is too ludicrous to merit elaboration but it does underscore the level of ignorance or malice towards Eritrea by the sponsors of the resolution).
- ◆ The resolution even misquotes President Isaias’s interview with the local press in January this year to accuse the government of “downplaying” the El-Nino induced drought. (President Isaias had described the drought situation and the consequent harvest shortfall in comprehensive and unequivocal terms. But he also elaborated in detail government preparations, prepositioning of food supplies and other mitigating measures and coping mechanisms).

already in the public domain. The EU Parliament could have also referred to reports of government delegations from several EU Member States who have visited the country in recent months.

As indicated above, Eritrea is aware that there are interest groups within the European Parliament who have never accepted Eritrea’s independence in the first place and who harbor agendas that are alien to human rights, the well-being of the Eritrean people as well as to the interests of peace and stability. The EU Parliament resolution indeed fails to mention the threat to regional peace and stability caused by Ethiopia’s violation of international law and continued occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories.

Be that as it may, partisan politics does not give the EU Parliament a carte blanche to sully Eritrea and its people. Eritrea remains engaged in constructive dialogue with the European Union. This is a two-way street where both parties discuss, with the requisite seriousness and responsibility, matters of mutual concern. The European Parliament can be a partner in this constructive dialogue if it can indeed muster the political goodwill and appropriate mindset. Serving as a gullible mouthpiece for subversive agendas against Eritrea can only corrode its credibility and relevance.

A comprehensive response to the litany of distorted facts and accusations included in the EU Parliament resolution will be pointless and too long for this statement. And in any case, Eritrea’s comprehensive rebuttal of these preposterous, recycled, accusations is

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### **Permanent Mission Organized Documentary Screening and Photo Exhibition**

As part of the Celebrations of Eritrea’s Silver Jubilee of Independence, the Permanent Mission of the State of Eritrea to the AU and UNECA organized a screening of a documentary film ‘Eritrea: the Other Narrative;’ and a Photo Exhibition depicting Eritrea’s natural wonders, cultural treasures and architectural beauty.

The function which was held at the Chancery of the Permanent Mission on 14 April 2016, was attended by Ambassadors and diplomats from 25 Embassies and representatives of the AUC and UNECA.

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## International Workers Conference Convened in Asmara

A conference organized by the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW) in collaboration with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) was held in Asmara on 24-25 March 2016.

The opening session was attended by senior Eritrean government and PFDJ officials, heads of national unions, representatives of international organizations in Eritrea and invited guests.



Addressing the opening session, Eritrea's Foreign Minister, Mr. Osman Saleh, underlined the vital role of worker's unions in economic development and in the promotion of peace.

The Foreign Minister further explained Eritrea's persistent effort to promote equitable distribution of resources in the interest of the people and overcoming poverty. In this connection, he noted the decisive contribution of close cooperation among labor unions to attain the set goal.



Likewise, in a speech delivered at the conference, Mr. Tekeste Baire, Secretary General of the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW) noted the significance of the present conference in coping with the common challenges that workers' organizations are facing. In the same vein, Mr. Wellington Chibebe, ITUC Deputy General Secretary, emphasized the significance of joint efforts *vis-a-vis* tackling external interference and exploitation.

Also addressing the meeting, Mr. Kwasi Amankwah, General Secretary of the ITUC-Africa, pointed out that he had been closely observing the activities of Eritrean workers organization and that Eritrea is on the right path. He also noted the adverse effects of terrorist activities being perpetrated around the globe and the need for workers organizations everywhere to mount concerted opposition to such acts.

The ITUC which groups about 200 million members, has its headquarters in Brussels, while the African Confederation of Labor Unions is based in Lome, Republic of Togo.

## Permanent Mission Organized Documentary Screening... (Contd. from page 2)



*Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations—Press Release*

**UN SECURITY COUNCIL MUST DEMAND ETHIOPIA TO WITHDRAW FROM SOVEREIGN ERITREAN TERRITORY IT OCCUPIES**

Today 13<sup>th</sup> April is the day when 14 years ago in 2002 the Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) composed of five (2 British, 2 American and 1 Nigerian) internationally renowned arbitration judges unanimously decided that the disputed town of Badme is a sovereign Eritrean territory.

It is to be recalled that the Algiers Peace Agreement of 12 December 2000 signed by the leaders of Eritrea and Ethiopia, and guaranteed by the UN and OAU/AU as well as witnessed by the United States of America and the European Union established the Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC), in order to determine the location of the boundary between the two neighboring countries in a **Final and Binding Award**. Article 4.2 of the Algiers Agreement states:

*“The parties agree that a neutral Boundary Commission composed of five members shall be established with a mandate to delimit and demarcate the colonial treaty border based on pertinent colonial treaties (1900, 1902, and 1908) and applicable international law. The Commission shall not have the power to make decisions *ex aequo et bono*.”*

In accordance to its mandate and after hearing the legal arguments of the parties for more than two years, the EEBC completed and delivered its Final and Binding Delimitation Award on 13 April 2002 and immediately commenced the process of demarcation. The **Final and Binding Demarcation** phase was as clearly applicable to the **Delimitation** phase. However, in violation of its treaty obligations Ethiopia started to obstruct the Commission’s demarcation activities and placement of pillars on the ground on the basis of the historic delimitation line that the Commission had clearly identified in its 13 April 2002 Award. The Commission consistently ascertained Ethiopia's obstruction as nothing more than an expression of dissatisfaction with the Commission’s substantive findings. Articulating this fact, the President of the EEBC, Sir Elihu Lauterpacht, in his letter dated 27 November 2006, that was sent to the then Foreign

Minister of Ethiopia, Mr. Seyoum Mesfin, stated *“the truth of the matter appears to be that Ethiopia is dissatisfied with the substance of the Commission’s Delimitation Decision and has been seeking ever since 2002 to find ways of changing it.”*

Rejecting Ethiopia’s intransigence and obstruction, fulfilling its treaty responsibility and mandate, the **EEBC Demarcated the Ethiopia-Eritrea border with highly accurate and technically precise coordinates in 2007**. In this regard, the Commission sent a letter to the parties and the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, informing them that it has fulfilled its mandated responsibilities and unequivocally concluded its arbitration process. The letter states: *“the Commission hereby determines that the Boundary will automatically stand as demarcated by the boundary pillars points listed in the Annex hereto and that the mandate of the Commission can then be regarded as fulfilled.”*

On 30 November 2007, the Commission also sent to the parties **signed copies of 45 maps on a scale of 1:25,000** containing the demarcation of the Boundary by coordinates and deposited a copy in the Office of the UN Cartography for public reference. Thus, Ethiopia’s diplomatic maneuver under the pretext of “dialogue” aside, the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia is unequivocally Demarcated by the EEBC. **Final and Binding means final and binding.**

Ethiopia has constantly attempted to disguise its non-acceptance of the EEBC Final and Binding Delimitation and Demarcation Decisions by a variety of transparent stratagems, none of which has any legal basis. **First**, it claimed to be seeking an “interpretation” of the Delimitation Award in a lengthy request to the Commission that (as the Commission explicitly noted in its rejection of the Ethiopian request) was nothing more than a substantive complaint against the Commission's decision about the location of the Eritrea-Ethiopia legal boundary. **Then** it began to resettle Ethiopians who had never lived in the border region

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### UN SECURITY COUNCIL MUST DEMAND ETHIOPIA TO WITHDRAW FROM SOVEREIGN ERITREAN TERRITORY IT OCCUPIES (Contd from page 4)

into the territory that the Commission had just recognized and awarded as Eritrean sovereign territory, ignoring the Commission’s order that this illegal settlement program be immediately terminated. **Its current** stratagem, such as "dialogue", is to demand that Eritrea negotiate over the location of the boundary, claiming that "the Commission had made errors" in its Delimitation and Demarcation Award that the two countries had to rectify. There is nothing to rectify. Once again it must be underlined that both countries have signed that the Delimitation and Demarcation decision of the EEBC to be Final and Binding.

Neither Eritrea nor Ethiopia has the veto power over the Boundary Commission’s Final and Binding Delimitation and Demarcation Decisions. Nothing in the Algiers Agreement gives Ethiopia the right to reject, question and amend the Final and Binding Delimitation and Demarcation Decisions of the EEBC as well as to impose conditions on Eritrea. Ethiopia is not entitled to demand concessions of any kind as a “quid pro quo” for vacating sovereign Eritrean territory, including the town of Badme. Ethiopia is clearly asking and demanding that Eritrea cede its sovereign territory to Ethiopia in a process that it calls “dialogue”. Such “dialogue” is nothing more than holding Eritrean territory hostage in order to extract concessions.

If Ethiopia wants to improve relations with Eritrea, it must respect its treaty obligations and the UN Charter **by immediately and unconditionally withdrawing from sovereign Eritrean territory it occupies including the town of Badme.** If Ethiopia is allowed to shirk its treaty obligation by challenging the authority of the EEBC, a body which was fully mandated by the UN Security Council to make a Final and Binding Decisions, then Eritrea will face an infinite series of additional demands, with Ethiopia requesting and imposing new conditions under the pretext of “dialogue”.

The precedence that condoning such belligerent and illegal behavior by Ethiopia would entail is immensely dangerous to the resolution of boundary conflicts and stability of international borders, undermining the respect that states must give to the peace -

treaties they sign under Chapter VII of the UNSC. No matter how much Ethiopia wishes to exert some unlawful veto power over EEBC’s Award under the guise of demanding “dialogue”, such veto power is totally inconsistent with the terms of the **Algiers Agreement** that is signed by the leaders of the two countries in 2000 and the EEBC’s **Final and Binding** decisions that were endorsed by the UNSC.

The Security Council should make clear that Ethiopia's belligerent and illegal behavior is unacceptable. Ethiopia must respect the UN Charter, its treaty obligation and the Final and Binding 2002 Delimitation and 2007 Demarcation Decision of the EEBC. Ethiopia must comply with Article 4.15 of the 12 December 2000 Algiers Agreement which states:

*“The parties agree that the delimitation and demarcation determinations of the Commission shall be final and binding. Each party shall respect the border so determined, as well as the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the other party”.*

Therefore, on the bases of Article 14 of the Algiers Agreement which clearly calls for **“appropriate measures to be taken under Chapter VII”**, the UNSC must demand Ethiopia to unconditionally and immediately withdraw from sovereign Eritrean territory it occupies, including the town of Badme. The UN and AU guaranteed as well as US and EU witnessed Algiers Agreement must be respected. Last but not least, justice must be upheld. No nation big or small should be allowed to occupy a sovereign territory of another country.

As to the issue of “dialogue”, once respecting the EEBC’s final and binding delimitation and demarcation decisions, Ethiopia ends its occupation of sovereign Eritrea territory, including the town of Badme, Eritrea is ready and willing to normalize its relations with Ethiopia and to engage in constructive dialogue on issues that are relevant and beneficial to the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea as well as to the stability of the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region.

*13 April 2016, New York*

## Eritrea Shared its Experience in Combating Gender Based Violence

The National Union of Eritrean Women and the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations in partnership with the United Nations Country Team in Eritrea organized a side-event under the theme: **“From Grassroots to National Action in Combating Gender Based Violence in Eritrea”** on 22 March 2016 in New York. The side-event was held in the margins of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women aimed at sharing Eritrea’s experience, challenges and achievements in combating all forms of violence against women and girls.

**Ambassador Girma Asmerom, Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations**, in his opening remarks, stated that the exemplary contribution of Eritrean women in the struggle for independence and nation-building is a matter of historical fact that is documented by different researchers and partners. He also noted that some quarters with sinister motives against Eritrea deliberately fabricate baseless allegations such as “systematic rape is taking place in Eritrea”. Ambassador Girma asserted that “because rape is considered culturally immoral and intolerable by the people of Eritrea as well legally a criminal act, in Eritrea systematic rape has never taken place in the past and will never take place in the future”.

**Ms. Tekea Tesfamichael, the President of the National Union of Eritrean Women**, in her keynote address asserted that “equality and empowerment of women has constituted a decisive part of the nation building process and their role and contribution has been appreciated and recognized by all government institutions and society”. She also underlined that “the National Union of Eritrean Women, a grassroots organization with almost three-hundred thousand (300,000) membership and offices all over the country and outside is steadfastly serving as machinery for organizing, empowering and combating any form of violence against the Eritrean women.” She stated “as a result, today Eritrean women get equal pay for equal work and have the legal right to own land and property”.



**Ms. Senait Mehari, Director-General of Socioeconomic Services in the National Union of Eritrean Women**, presented in detail Eritrea’s experience in combating all forms of gender based violence, in particular FGM/C, rape and underage marriage. She also stated that the new Eritrean penal code that was published in 2015 includes definite terms of imprisonment for rape. Ms. Senait further elaborated on how the bottom up grassroots approach has contributed in the sharp reduction of violence against women in Eritrea.

**Ms. Christine Umutoni** who served in Eritrea for the last three years as **UN Resident Coordinator/UN Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative**, presented concrete and detailed evidence based information on how the NUEW in cooperation with the UN Agencies and other partners is implementing the agenda of women empowerment and equality in Eritrea. She testified that “in Eritrea every penny is properly accounted. For example, a fund allocated to build one dam ends up being utilized for the construction of three dams.”

During the question and answer and interactive session delegates from Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya and Liberia took the floor and expressed their support and appreciation to the NUEW for its remarkable activities in the empowerment and equality of the Eritrean women.