



Press Statement

In the past few days, various media outlets have been alluding to statements made by certain Yemeni authorities and other fabricated accounts to falsely assert that “Houthi insurgents have received weapons from Iran via Eritrea”.

Eritrea has naturally been monitoring the allegations peddled on the “existence of Israeli bases” in Eritrea in past years. These baseless stories were spiced up recently with new claims of juxtaposed “Iranian bases” in the country. Eritrea knows full well the sources, identities and purveyors of these worn-out invectives. Sadly, these allegations have been ratcheted up this week - unwittingly or for other ulterior political motives - by so-called experts and government officials.

In the event, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea re-iterates the following to clarify its stance on the events unfolding in Yemen.

1. Eritrea remains profoundly concerned by the aggravation and complication of the situation in Yemen. In this regard, Eritrea hopes that underlying causes of the prevailing situation would be allayed to restore prevalent peace and stability in the country.
2. The maintenance of peace and security in Yemen is of paramount importance to Eritrea; more so than any other country. This is predicated on the historical

and good neighborly ties that exist between Eritrea and Yemen and between their brotherly peoples.

3. Eritrea unequivocally supports the territorial integrity of Yemen and the unity of its people. In this vein, Eritrea only recognizes and accepts a constitutional and legal leadership of Yemen.
4. Eritrea rejects, for the umpteenth time, all false allegations on the military presence of Iranian, Houthi, Israeli or any other external power in its sovereign territories; land and/or maritime. Eritrea is aware that these allegations are deliberately and solely peddled for purposes of defamation.
5. Eritrea maintains that the “statements made by Yemeni officials in the past few days” are part and parcel of ongoing smear campaigns, essentially concocted by certain intelligence agencies, and that are routinely conducted to sully the image of Eritrea especially in the Arab world.
6. Eritrea is keenly aware that insidious regurgitation of these baseless allegations as “established facts” by various news agencies, newspapers and journals is primarily designed to negatively influence public opinion in the Arab world.
7. As it may be recalled, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea had summoned early this week, Yemen’s Charge d’affaires to request an explanation of the statements made by Yemeni authorities. The Yemeni diplomat flatly refuted these statements as untrue further disclosing that the Yemeni Embassy in Asmara did not receive calls and queries from any media outlet or other interested party to ascertain Yemen’s position.
8. Eritrea does not allow its islands, ports and territory for lease or sale. Eritrea reiterates that it is indeed the only country in the region which has not opened its doors for external intervention or military bases since its independence.

9. Eritrea does not subscribe to polarizing policies of military alliances and blocs. As such it neither endorses nor joins such groupings. Consequently, it has no membership in associations of this nature.
10. Eritrea affirms that its doors are open for any news media in the Arab world that wishes to ascertain the veracity of these allegations repeated *ad nauseam*. These can be easily secured by requesting an entry visa to the country at the nearest Eritrean embassy.
11. As a country that has the longest coastline relative to other littoral States, Eritrea's stance on the security of the Red Sea is firm and robust. The regional and international importance of the Red Sea is indeed too palpable to merit emphasis. As such, Eritrea affirms that it has been and shall remain engaged in continuous consultation with all littoral States in order to cultivate a clear and common understanding on the security of the Red Sea.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
31st March 2015
Asmara

