

UDC NEWSLETTER



UDC Quarterly Magazine

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WELCOME TO THE UDC NEWSLETTER

This is a quarterly publication issued by the UDC Information Bureau every three months. Its purpose is to provide an objective information and analysis to the wider Eritrean public and to all those who are interested in matters related to Eritrea and the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Tamrat Negera's views about Eritrea and his war mongering:



Threat or Delusion?

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Tamrat Negera Feyissa

Threat or
Delusion?



EVER since the Eritrean people's heroic struggle for independence triumphantly came to an end and Eritrea won its independence on 24 May 1991, some nostalgic element who do not understand the Eritrean people's struggle or the secret of their victory have continued to live in denial and delusion. Some of those who have never accepted the Eritrean independence are heard here and there repeating some unfounded arguments about Ethiopia's right to have access to sea. Among these are some who go as far as calling on Ethiopia to "take back" the Eritrean port of Assab through "legal and peaceful". One wonders what these "legal and peaceful" are and whether they mean that a sovereign country may enter into negotiations with another country eventually surrendering parts of its sovereign territories to the other country. We can only assume such rhetoric is for internal political consumption at best and emanates from ignorance at worst.

Eritrea been a country that won its independence not through negotiation but through a triumphant armed struggle during which tens of thousands sacrificed their lives, many more were permanently disabled and hundreds of thousands were displaced, Eritreans who are generally tolerant and consider such occasional outbursts as a mere nostalgia have constantly been calling for peaceful coexistence between the peoples of the two countries who share not only borders and history but also common interest in maintaining regional peace, stability and cooperation.

There are also some who occasionally appear on media while calling on Ethiopia to use military force and occupy the Eritrean ports of Assab and Massawa. Regardless of whether this is practically possible or not, or if they are likely to yield an outcome that is different from previous failed attempts of subjugation, such threats are a show a clear violation and disrespect of the international law as well as the failure of learning from history.

The latest or rather the worst of these is a certain journalist by the name of Tamrat Negera who crossed the red line and went beyond everything we have so far heard from certain delusional elements. This is during an interview with an Ethiopian local media outlet known as the Sheger Media. He was heard saying that Eritrea should neither be allowed to control its own sea nor have diplomatic ties with the rest of the world except through Ethiopia. Basically, Mr. Tamrat's view is that Eritrea should cease to exist as an independent country. During the same interview, he was also heard saying a lot of nonsense that is not worth repeating here.

Mr. Tamrat's utter disrespect to the Eritrean people or his violent and aggressive tone aside, the main problem with him is that he claims to be a journalist or so we were told. If it is the case that he is indeed a journalist, then the least that one would expect is that he would have some basic knowledge of international law and that there is a clear line separating an expression of opinion, whatever that opinion is, even a craziest one and openly calling for aggression against another sovereign country to the extent of turning that country into a de-facto prison run by the invading country. It is worth mentioning here that such vulgar language was never used in recent history, not even during the scramble for Africa. Fortunately, this does not represent the views of the vast majority of peace-loving Ethiopians many of who were quick to condemn Mr. Tamrat's show of hatred towards Eritreans. This is indeed encouraging and must be applauded.

As for us Eritreans, we like to assure Mr. Tamrat and his likes that while we feel extremely offended by such a show of disrespect, we are neither worried by these threats nor would we be derailed from working for the peaceful coexistence of the two peoples and good neighbourliness that is based on mutual respect and common interest. We also believe that nostalgic rhetoric aside, people like Mr. Tamrat know very well that an independent and sovereign Eritrea is here to stay.

Organization of Unity for Democratic Change (UDC)

04 January 2020

Urgent Eritrean Call to the Sudan and the UNHCR

December 13, 2019

To:

UNHCR Khartoum Office, the Sudan

Sudan Commission for Refugees (COR)

Higher Council for Community Development

Excellencies,



It is to be recalled that on 30 October 2019, a symposium was organized in Khartoum attended by representatives of the Sudanese Ministry of Labour as well as one representative from each of the caseloads of refugees in the Sudan from Eritrea, S. Sudan, Ethiopia, the Congo, Yemen and Syria.

At the said symposium, the Sudanese authorities and the local UNHCR Office have reached the agreement that refugees in the Sudan can be allowed training and work opportunities like Sudanese citizens, except in security and military spheres. Sadly, this accord was not formally conveyed to the concerned refugees in a manner that they can understand nor did the concerned authorities initiate the pledged training opportunities. Instead, refugees are this month being rounded up from their homes, workplaces and from the streets and taken to prison. Their incarcerators claim that the refugees, including those who held residence permits as of 2000 from the Immigration Ministry, have no work permits. To add insult to injury, the Sudanese “law enforcers” are asking the detained refugees to buy their freedom by paying between 50,000 and 100,000 Sudanese pounds.

We the undersigned Eritrean political and civic forces demand the most immediate action on the following:

1. The Sudanese authorities to stop the unjust action taken and being taken against Eritrean and other refugees in the host country;
2. To let the refugees taken from workplaces to safely return to their jobs;
3. To release without pre-conditions all detained refugees and respect the right of those refugees already holding residence permits to stay in the Sudan as refugees;
4. To provide training courses to refugees as pledged, and to pay back the money taken from refugees who were asked to pay up to 100,000 pounds for their release from prison.

Likewise, we urge the UNHCR to follow up the implementation of the agreement reached with the Sudanese authorities and the COR at the symposium of 30 October 2019 and protect the rights of victimized Eritrean refugees.

No one can ignore or forget the historic warm welcome and support of the Sudanese people to

Eritrean refugees, and we still call with strong hope the Sudanese Government to pursue fraternal relations that can strengthen existing bonds between our peoples. There is no doubt that Eritreans still take the Sudan as their second home.

Respectfully yours,

1. Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change (ENCDC);
 2. Eritrean People's Democratic Party (EPDP);
 3. United Eritreans for Justice (UEJ)
 4. Unity for Democratic change (UDC)
- Eritrean National Front (ENF)



**Please Remember: Refugees
Are Victims and Not Criminals**

ORGANISATION OF UNITY FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE - UDC



Press Release

14 October 2019

Two important events in the Horn of Africa (HOA) region have drawn international attention and headlines in the past few days. The first of these is when head of states and government leaders from East Africa met in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, to inaugurate the newly completed Unity Park. However, despite the highly lauded peace agreement between the countries, Eritrea was the only East African that was absent. During the gathering, the Ethiopian Prime Minister was heard telling his guests that he was delegated by the Eritrean President to speak for both leaders. While this in itself may not mean more than a diplomatic attempt by Dr. Abiy Ahmed to minimise the possible negative message the absence of the Eritrean President may send and possible casting some doubts on the peace process between the two countries, it however raises some question, fuel unnecessary speculations and add to the concerns many Eritreans have about the repeated and similar announcements by the Ethiopian leader in international forums and whether it is indeed appropriate at this early stage of the peace process between the two countries. It also raises the more serious concerns about the repeated Eritrean absence from several regional gatherings, such as the recent gathering in Khartoum where Eritrea was the only neighbouring country that was absent from a highly important Sudanese national event or the repeated absence from the Res Sea summits and meeting or the IGAD summits. All these, do indeed raise questions and create serious concerns about the consequence the continuous absence of Eritrea from important regional, continental and international forums.

The second event was when the Norwegian Nobel Prize Committee awarded the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize to the Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighbouring Eritrea. The UDC congratulates Dr. Abiy Ahmed both for winning the Nobel Peace prize and for his courage to accept the EEBC ruling without any conditions, to reach out with an open hand to his country's neighbours, and to provide dynamic new leadership for building peace in the region.

We in the UDC strongly believe that peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia not only benefits the peoples of both countries but it also promotes peace, security and regional cooperation across entire the Horn of Africa region. However, we also believe that for any peace agreement to be sustainable, the Eritrean people must be the owners of their own destiny. Eritrea, based on its history and its strategic location, has an important role to play in the future of our region, but without freedom of choice and without respect for Eritrea's people from its own government, our country cannot become a dynamic partner for regional peace or cooperation.

Sadly, Eritrea remains the only country where little has changed despite the peace agreement and the recently lauded positive developments. To this date, political prisoners remain incommunicado, arbitrary arrests of suspected political dissidents has not stopped, the indefinite National Service in place for the last twenty years still drive the youth to flee the country and the economy continues to shrivel. In short, the high hopes of the Eritrean people that came with declaring peace have faded and Freedom has yet to come to Eritrea!

It is in the context of these recent, notable events that the UDC calls on all Eritreans and all pro-democracy forces—inside Eritrea and across the diaspora—to relentlessly continue the struggle for democracy in Eritrea.

We pledge our never-ending effort!

Long Live Eritrea

UDC -Executive Committee

14 October 2019