

## **Concluding Statement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session of the Central Council of Eritrean National Salvation Front**

The Central Council (CC) of the Eritrean National Salvation Front (ENSF) held its 2<sup>nd</sup> regular session from the 7th until the 15th of July 2007 and discussed reports submitted by the Executive Committee (EC). The meeting was convened in the midst of the dangerous internal situations the Eritrean people had ever seen or experienced in their history. In face of the international and regional developments imposing far-reaching consequences to our country, the meeting shouldered heavy responsibility to challenge the situation with the required wisdom. With this in mind, and after having carefully evaluated developments, it was able to point out important policies as its guidelines. In addition, it saw the necessity to strengthen working relationship with all components of the opposition camp who are equally struggling to remove the dictatorial regime in Eritrea.

The CC of the ENSF reviewed the overall activities carried out by the organisation ever since the successful conclusion of its merger congress and evaluated its strengths and weaknesses. It even went to the extent of giving great attention to the performance of the political leadership. After critically assessing its strengths and shortcomings, it passed resolutions aimed at amending those weaknesses it recognized. Based on the resolutions of our merger congress and decisions of the political leadership, it laid out the ground work for the introduction and expansion of institutionalized ways and means of carrying out organisational tasks.

Though our session viewed the developments that occurred during the meeting of the Central Leadership of the Eritrean Democratic Alliance (EDA) as something that could happen any time among organisations having different opinions, yet it found it regrettable that the alternative that was wisely presented by our side as way out, which would have helped both to manage the immediate crisis at hand and preserve the unity of the EDA until final solution was to have been found, was not given its due weight and consideration. Apart from being unwilling to accept our approach for compromise, the choice was instead taken to widen the gap by giving wrong interpretations to events and developments that happened. Even worse, it was sadly exploited on religious and regional lines without giving much thought to the damage it might cause to the unity of our people.

Hence, as our way of addressing the question of unity and its handling, the meeting declared to abide by the following guiding principles:-

1. The ENSF once again affirmed the necessity of bringing all Eritrean opposition forces together under minimum program, both as means of jointly and effectively challenging the dictatorial regime now, and the long-term maintenance of peace and stability necessary because of the multiplicity of composition of our society.
2. It abides by the constitution and political charter of the EDA adopted at its 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress held in February 2007.
3. Its propaganda policies shall avoid anything leading towards creating problems or stirring up of conflicts under all circumstances.
4. With the fervent belief that the era we have embarked upon demands from the opposition camp to put aside its narrow organizational feelings and beliefs and give priorities to broader national interests, and with the aim of carrying out efforts to bring relation among opposition organisations to its normal situation, the CC empowered the EC to establish a committee assigned with the tasks of making contacts and establishing relations with all opposition organisations.

In regard to our relation with the Eritrean Liberation Front – Revolutionary Council (ELF-RC) and the Eritrean Democratic Party, the ENSF believes that it would not only serve to develop our relation, but play significant role in bringing about the unity of the opposition camp as a whole.

In the course of its lengthy discussions, the CC raised the border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia which is still in stalemate and has not as yet found any solution. Should the situation continue in its present course, it saw the impending consequences it will have on our people. No doubt, the CC has found the situation to be increasingly disturbing. In face of the dangerous circumstances, and after having carefully examined and evaluated the issue from all angles, the CC stated the following guiding principles with which we believe the problem should be handled, both for the interest of our country and people as well as safeguarding and maintaining the long-term relation between the two countries:-

1. We re-affirm the border decision reached within the frame-work of the Algiers Agreement and served by the Border Commission on the border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia to be final and binding.
2. To diffuse the explosive situation reigning between the two countries, and guarantee long-term peaceful relation between our peoples, we believe that dialogue and peaceful negotiation is necessary in the course of its application on the ground.
3. We believe that no lasting solution had been achieved in the past, nor will there be any in future by resorting to war.
4. We appeal to those parties in the international community that guaranteed the Algiers Agreement as observers and mediators to redouble their efforts not only to diffuse the deteriorating situation prevailing between the two countries, but also take practical steps to bring an end to the conflict once for all.

While thoroughly appreciating the gloomy realities stated above, the Council does not fail to put the blame on the rogue regime in Asmara for continuously exacerbating the situation by its war-mongering policies. In point of fact, it has become the main stumbling block on the way of avoiding the war that is looming on the horizon.

Despite increasing difficulties facing the Eritrean refugees and its complications, the CC recognised that necessary attention has not been paid by the international community to the problem. With the aim of having due weight to the problem, the CC believes that our organisation should maximise its propaganda and diplomatic efforts to bring about maximum attention to the problem in the eyes of the international community.

In conclusion, the CC elected the EC by democratic means after charting out future plans and programmes of the organisation. It duly assigned the EC to establish a preparatory committee for the upcoming 1<sup>st</sup> democratic congress. The Council also used the opportunity to call upon members of the ENSF to marshal all their abilities and resources by way of bringing success to the objectives of their organisation. Equally, it called on the Eritrean people to provide moral and material support for an organisation which has proved itself to be an example of unity in the opposition.

*In honour and memory to our heroic martyrs!  
Victory to the democratic struggle of our people!*

*15 July 2007*