



Press Release

Over the last few weeks the PFDJ, the only party allowed in Eritrea, has been busy mobilising Eritreans inside and outside the country against the UNSC Resolution 1907, which imposed on Eritrea sanctions that include: Travel Ban, Arms Embargo and Asset freeze and could potentially include other measures in the future. Instead of using the opportunity to reflect and remedy the problems Eritrea has been plunged into as a result of 18 years of misguided domestic and foreign policies, the ruling party is trying to use these Sanctions to win over its dwindling public support by linking the Resolution passed on 23 December 2009 to the one passed in 1950s to federate Eritrea with Ethiopia.

Realising the challenges facing our country, we in Citizens for Democratic Rights in Eritrea, would like to take this opportunity to call upon all Eritreans at home and abroad, including PFDJ supporters and all those who may be lured to join the demonstrations planned to take place in Geneva, Washington DC, San Francisco and Melbourne on 22 February 2010 to cease being used to polish the image of the ruling PFDJ and instead to loudly demand for:-

- The immediate release of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience or bring them to an open court of law
- To allow family members, legal representatives and international human rights organisations to visit political and non-political prisoners
- Change the current repressive policies and come up with a clear time table for introducing political reform and ultimately hand power to a popularly elected government.
- To immediately end the open ended nature of the ongoing and ill conceived national service, which is the root cause of many of Eritrea's problems, and take concrete steps aimed at improving the lives of those who have been in the service for many years as well as their needy families

We believe that all pressures should be exerted on the PFDJ leadership to realise that Eritrea's problems can only be resolved by having legitimate, democratic and constitutional system of governance that is inclusive and subservient to the Rule of Law. The use of Sanctions or other problems such as Border conflicts with neighbouring countries as pretexts to overlook the real causes of Eritrea's problems should not be tolerated. The way forward to overcome Eritrea's internal and external challenges should start from home, and not Geneva or Washington. It is therefore high time that all voices of reason within the PFDJ rise up to their national responsibilities and challenge the current leadership to pave the way towards the path of National Reconciliation, Constitutional Governance and Rule of Law without further delay.

CDRiE's Executive Committee

10th February 2010