



*Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change*

*Executive Office*

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## Press Release on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the Eritrean National Council for democratic Change (ENCDC)

The Eritrean National Congress for Democratic Change (ENCDC) concluded its long overdue second national Congress in Stockholm-Sweden from April 17-21, 2019 under the theme: **“To preserve the independence and sovereignty of our country, the unity our people, and the right to determine our destiny.”** ENCDC has surmounted paralyzing internal organizational hurdles and shortcomings and managed to conduct a successful congress depending solely on Eritrean financial and human resources. The Second National Congress was attended by incumbent members of the Council, representatives of civil societies and elected delegates from all Eritrean communities around the globe. Honorary guests of the Congress included delegations from both Eritrean People’s Democratic Parties, the Eritrean Unity for Justice, Forum for National Dialogue (Medrek), who attended in the opening and closing sessions of the Congress, and the “*niqlo adetat n’diHnet hizbin hagerin* – Mothers’ Initiative for the Salvation of the People and the Country” in Europe who attended throughout the convention to deliver solidarity messages, vowing to fully participate in future dialogue and engagement processes.

During the 5 days’ convention of our assembly, the Joint Committee established to evaluate and assess the activities of the ENCDC presented its report to the Congress and was critically reviewed by all participants. Congress conducted intensive deliberations on both draft Political Charter and Constitution of 2011 and subsequently made a new practical political declaration.

The Congress, led by an elected Secretariat, addressed all immediate and future concerns of our people with strategic plans on the unity, independence, and sovereignty of our nation, and weighing on the need of political leadership to act on the call of “**enough is enough**” movement of our people. ENCDC Congress:

- Commended the ending of the 20 years of agonizing ‘no war no peace’ between Ethiopia and Eritrea. However, lasting peace between the peoples of both countries is unlikely to be achieved while the totalitarian regime remains in power in Eritrea.

- Reviewed the agreements signed between the governments of Eritrea and Ethiopia facilitated by regional and global interests has entailed an undesirable foreign military involvements and presence with considerable risk threatening the sovereignty and independence of our country and the livelihood of its people.
- Identified the legitimate concern of the Eritrean people regarding the secretive agreement between the government of Ethiopia and the totalitarian regime in Eritrea. The issues regarding the ownership of the Eritrean seaports and its regional waters is sacrosanct – a red line that should not be crossed.
- Calls on the Ethiopian government to critically assess its stand and pledges to reconsider its position. Agreements made without the consent of the Eritrean people and their legitimate representatives is illegitimate as it will vanish once the totalitarian regime is ousted.

In line with our peoples' heightened awareness and uprisings, the Council sees a great opportunity for an immediate, and ambitious task of reaching out to all political organizations, and civic movements to engage in dialogue and reconciliation processes in the 3-4 months to come. ENCDC has designated a new office specifically mandated to undertake the important task of national unity. The results of the few months dialogue is anticipated to be followed by another 3-4 months period of planning and working together to convene a broader assembly involving most if not all the stake holders.

In conclusion the Congress ended by electing 61 Council members, with three Central Leadership members, and 7 Executive Office members, among which Mr. Teklai Abraha, and Mr. Negash Osman unanimously elected to head the Council, and the Executive offices. ENCDC calls on our people to actively participate, stay informed and monitor the performance of the leadership and the process of the dialogue to guarantee an outcome of genuine unity and democratic change.

**Victory to the People of Eritrea!**

**Long live the sovereign and independent Eritrea!**

**2<sup>nd</sup> National Congress**

**April 22, 2019**

**Stockholm - Sweden**