



Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change

Information and Cultural office

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Press Release

Concerning the Statement of the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry Official Spokesperson

The official spokesperson for the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Dina Mufti, in the weekly meeting he held on the 30th of March 2021, concerning the Eritrean-Ethiopian relationship, stated that the Eritreans do not honor and do not celebrate the date of their separation from Ethiopia. He continued to say that the separation was the result of the Cold War, adding that Eritrea and Ethiopia were one country. Furthermore, he expressed wonderment of what the problem is in considering unity, not only with federalism, and not only with Eritrea, but with all the neighboring countries. He also stated that there is a gradual desire and vision for rapprochement and unity of the two countries. Later on, through his Facebook account, Ambassador Dina Mufti tried to retract some of what was stated in his press statement.

In response to what was said by Ambassador Dina Mufti, the Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change (ENCDC) wishes to state the following facts:

- Eritreans honor and celebrate Eritrean Independence Day, and they do not call it "the Day of Separation", because they have paid for it tens of thousands of martyrs, wounded, widows and refugees over more than thirty years. We do not believe that Ambassador Mufti is ignorant of what an Independence Day represents for any free people, especially among the people who fought a liberation war to attain their independence like the Eritrean people.
- The Eritrean liberation war was not the result of the Cold War, but rather because of the Ethiopian ambitions in Eritrea in general and in the Red Sea in particular, which have been going on over centuries, and which today is also embodied in the irresponsible statement of Ambassador Dina Mufti.
- Eritrea and Ethiopia were never one country, except under the federation imposed by the United Nations in 1952, and the forced annexation following the termination of federal system by Haile Selassie in 1962.
- It is our belief that Ethiopia, the neighboring country with which we are keen to build balanced relations, needs to consolidate and solidify voluntary unity among its peoples, before uttering a word about any federal, unitary, or confederate relationship with any of the neighboring countries, let alone Eritrea, with which it fought a long fierce war. Again, we seem to be forgetting the invasions that were going on against our people and the peoples of the other regions, which both suffered from the expansionist mentality of the emperors of

Ethiopia. Thus, it is more appropriate and useful for the Ethiopian people and their leadership to work on preserving the unity of the Ethiopian people, before thinking about unifying the peoples of the region.

- *The Eritrean people, like all the people in the region, aspire for complementary relations and constructive cooperation with all neighboring countries. However, the correct approach to normal and balanced relations that is based on common interests between countries, is rooted on institutions emanating from the will of the people not from dictatorial regimes. This is also based on the recognition of national sovereignty and the inherited colonial borders of each country, according to international and continental laws and charters.*

Based on the above facts, ENCDC strongly rejects the statements of Ambassador Dina Mufti. We would also like to point out that ENCDC is following with great concern the statements issued challenging the Eritrean national sovereignty by one of the high-level officials in the Ethiopian government, considering the suspicious silence of the dictatorial regime in Eritrea. In this context, the leadership of ENCDC calls on the Ethiopian government and its affiliates to completely refrain from acts that would harm the relationship of the two peoples, now and in the future. Especially, since our bitter experiences with Ethiopia and its emperors are still imprinted in the collective consciousness of the Eritrean people.

Furthermore, we would like to stress that the secret agreements with Ethiopia or other countries that has been hatched by the dictator Isaias Afwerki, who has lost legitimacy for decades, are not binding in any manner on the Eritrean people or its armed forces. It has been reviled by recent leaks that a military treaty has been signed between Ethiopia and the dictatorial regime in Eritrea, with the aim of legitimizing the presence of Eritrean forces in the Tigray region and their participation on the war on the side of the Ethiopian government. ENCDC and the Eritrean people completely rejects this action from its foundations.

ENCDC would like to take this opportunity to make an urgent appeal to the Eritrean people at home and abroad, to all political and civic forces, and to all loyal patriot members of the Eritrean military and security forces. We are appealing to you all, now more than ever, to work hard for the sake of saving your country from the evil plots targeting the unity of Eritrea, and its land and people; and to work much harder to mobilize all our forces to confront these attacks.

*Information and Culture Office
The Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change*

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