

**Press Statement:  
UNHRC Special Rapporteur**

**in cahoots with subversive groups**

In mid-October this year, Eritrea's avowed detractors convened a meeting in Brussels under the rubric of "human rights situation in Eritrea". Principal speakers at the event - which was open to limited and selected invited guests during the first day (October 19th) included the Special Rapporteur on Eritrea (SR) Ms. Sheila Keetharuth; Ms. Mirien v. Reisen (European External Policy Advisor) - who has publicly and vocally opposed Eritrea's independence from the outset - as well as a number of notorious "regime• change" activists and their foreign mentors.

The first day public event was followed by a closed meeting that was held on 20th October. The Special Rapporteur participated in the closed meeting too in particular guiding the special discussion on coordination of all the disjointed "regime-change" activists. Documents and audio recordings obtained of the closed meeting reveal the "six-month plan of action" that this murky group have charted out to advance their elusive agenda of subversion and "regime-change". The main points of this plan of action for the period leading to the upcoming June Report of the SR include the following actions:-

- Implement the proposal of the SR, on a coordinated campaign to extend the Human Rights Council (HRC) special mandate on the human rights situation in Eritrea
- Accordingly, establish a networking of Eritrean organizations abroad under an umbrella organization, but excluding those sympathetic to the Eritrean Government
- Campaign against Europe's recent policy shift on the political asylum of Eritreans including programmes to contain Eritrean "refugees" in neighboring countries

The Permanent Mission of the State of Eritrea to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva is not perturbed by the nefarious, if inconsequential, schemes that these notorious groups float from time to time. For some of these sell-outs, this has indeed long become a "convenient" way of life for appropriating funds from certain institutions.

What we find unacceptable is the deplorable presence and complicity of the Special Rapporteur in this illicit gathering. Her conduct contravenes accepted ethical norms and standards of " ... discretion, transparency, impartiality and even-handedness ...

" enshrined in the relevant UN guidelines that must be strictly observed by experts and special rapporteurs.

This is not indeed the first time that Mrs Sheila Keetharuth has been found wanting in terms of objectivity, neutrality and professionalism in discharging her duties. The SR has persistently exploited the UN mandate to mobilize self-described "human rights activists" associated with human traffickers and involved in a declared regime-change agenda.

As we have incessantly clarified, virtually all her annual reports were also culled from the rumblings of these notorious 'regime-change' activists as well as from willfully concocted disinformation provided to her by Ethiopia and Djibouti. Furthermore, she has often doubled as an activist to launch pre-emptive press statements and campaigns of her "unfounded" reports prior to their submission to and discussion by the UNHRC sessions.

This time round, the SR continues to irrevocably cross the red line to go beyond recycling and varnishing the vitriolic reports of these subversive groups in UNHRC garb to officially behave as one of their active members. The outcry is, however, another desperate effort to solicit support for her forthcoming effort to blackmail the HRC and keep Eritrea under the continued agenda of the HRC and thereby renew the mandate.

The UNHRC and the OHCHR have not heeded our repeated appeals in the past that drew attention to her inherent bias stemming from her unorthodox association with Eritrea's detractors and arch-enemies. The OHCHR in fact went out of its way to portray our legitimate concerns as "witch hunting": stating in its press briefing of 21st November this year that "Ms Keetharuth has been faithfully carrying out the mandate given to her by the UNHRC, and she should not be subjected to vitriolic personalized attack by Government officials",

The curtains have been lifted now. Her compromised position is not defensible and cannot be rationalized anymore. As such, the Permanent Mission of Eritrea in Geneva expressly requests the UNHRC to take swift action without further delay and also reject her on-going premeditated campaign to continue the special mandate on Eritrea.

**Permanent Mission of Eritrea  
to the United Nations**

**Geneva**

**24 December 2017**