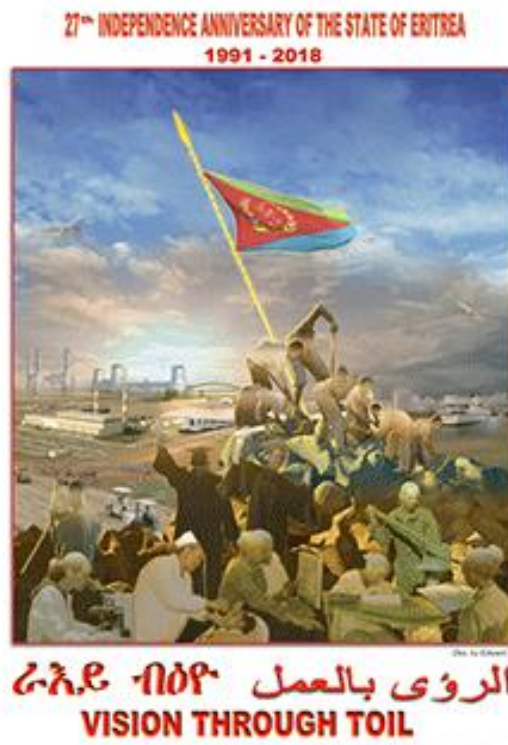


Youths' Voice on Independence



The youth, the future of the nation, and the people who have the power to change the nation have certain responsibilities to defend and develop the country. The youth are often considered the most powerful part of the Eritrean population.

The youth with their mental and technical power are determined to make Eritrea prosperous, developed and powerful country. Eritrea can be a confident player only because of the power of the youth. The many graduates from different institutions of education with their fresh ideas and creativity are working hard in different fields to bring about change. Eritrea needs an assertive and strong generation of youth who are able to endure in the face of challenges, to build a better, and stronger country. The Eritrean youth are venturing to explore new avenues of development, safeguarding Eritrea's independence and sovereignty and bringing about sustainable development.

Participation is a fundamental right. Through active participation, young people are empowered to play a vital role in their own development as well as that of their country. To participate effectively, the youth must be given the proper tools such as information and education. In Eritrea, in addition to the expansion of formal education, a number of approaches have been undertaken to enhance youth participation. Recently, as part of enhancing youth participation 'youth platform of education and discussion'

was launched through out the country and in the diaspora. In Eritrea every young person is entitled to the enjoyments of education, health care, and other rights recognized and provided by the country irrespective of their ethnic group, gender, or religion.

Young people are among the most valuable members of the Eritrean society, and they have made significant contribution to the country. Eritrean youth have been in the forefront of all historically registered national engagements. During the struggle, the youth had a prominent role in the revolution for liberation. After independence they played a key role during the TPLF invasion in safeguarding the independence and sovereignty of the country.

Dear readers as we prepare to celebrate Eritrea's independence, I have had an opportunity to talk to the youth about their experience growing up, learning and working in independent Eritrea. They have common experience of Sawa, college education and work. Let's share their optimistic, enthusiastic and authentic voice.



Amanatulah Abdurahman

"As the young generation, thanks to our martyrs, we grew up in free Eritrea and we have got the fortune of freedom. We are breathing and enjoying the air of freedom. Through the policy of social justice, we have got education and other social services freely. As youth we have to be aware of the cost of freedom and meaning of having a self-reliant nation. Today's pleasant air of freedom is the result of a long struggle and sacrifices of our fathers and mothers. Freedom enabled me to freely move and live in my country without being afraid of any harm. Therefore, we owe the past generation and it is our obligation to make sure that this

freedom lasts for eternity. Independence Day reminds us that we should work hard to maintain our independence and sovereignty.”



Ammanuel Estifanos

“Freedom for me is my life. It is among the basic necessities needed to live a meaningful life. In independent Eritrea I have had the opportunity to learn and to work in peace. If independence did not happen and was not maintained I wouldn’t have the chance to participate in every aspect of my society and I wouldn’t own my destiny. History tells us that Eritrean independence was realized and maintained by equal participation of all Eritreans. Through the policy of social justice we equally share the national resources and services. If we look at history because of colonialism many people, especially the youth, were excluded from education and were subjected to imprisonment, torture and death. Even though I joined the Eritrean population after independence, through history I know and feel the pain of the past suffering. Independence enhanced my identity and dignity.”



Hafz Muhammad Alamin

“We Eritreans are waiting with great enthusiasm to celebrate our Independence Day. For me, 24th May is the happiest day. I feel a glow of pride as I see our beloved flag fluttering everywhere. We shed a sea of blood in order to win our independence and preserve our dignity. And

now, there are many things awaiting us in the world of reality. Therefore, our independence day is the day on which we affirm our determination and commitment to strive for the prosperity of Eritrea. Finally I won't let this occasion pass without congratulating the people of Eritrea and our gallant army. My heartiest good wishes for a future full of progress"



Kesete Yemane

"Independence, freedom, liberation are entities that are natural to in every human being. In Eritrea successive generations passed in the search of those divine entities. Their extreme thirst for freedom made them chase it until the end of their lives. Many gallant heroes fall in their young age to give those entities to their people. For me independence is one of the most important dates of my life for two reasons. The first is, since I was born in the same year of euphoria and jubilation in 1991, it makes me feel lucky and happy to be born side by side with my country. The second reason is that this euphoric date reminds me of the heavy burden of our martyrs that I must shoulder. I relish this day with honor and responsibility."

"Freedom to me is all about having and owning my own choices. Every year when we celebrate our independence, I feel proud of the glorious legacy of tegadelti who fought and scarified for independence. Independence Day is not only a festive day; it makes me contemplate about the continuity and development of my nation. Our fathers and mothers enabled us to live freely on the bases of equality and dignity. It is by the goodness of our martyrs that I am leading precious and honorable life. As an Eritrean girl I am privileged to reap the benefits of social justice that provides us equal opportunity with our brothers. Eritrean independence ended all forms of discrimination and domination. We have a country and government that allow both Amanatulah Abdurahman genders to live in equality, harmony and prosperity."



Amira Alamin

"The decoration of the main Asmara avenues with flags and colorful lights, carnivals featuring unity of our people and on-going development efforts, special TV and radio programs and so on are among the common scenes in the whole week of our independence celebration. What makes our freedom unique and worth dying for is that it wasn't handed over to us but rather it was a hard-earned reward. Representing the generation which came-of-age after the enormous tasks of achieving independence and protecting Eritrean sovereignty were accomplished, Consider myself privileged to reap the fruits of freedom through access to free education and doing my duties in a peaceful and secure environment."



Yordanos Ghirmay

As a final note, let me put some recommendations to remind us all of our responsibility. We need to stick to high ideals. It is the responsibility of the youth to maintain discipline because without discipline we can not make our country great. As youth we shouldn't be in a hurry to get results of

our work. Above all we are citizens of free Eritrea. Countless martyrs sacrificed themselves so that we may hold our heads high. So it is our responsibility to defend this freedom at any cost. Our independence is the legacy of martyrdom and, as usual, we are ready to live and die for it. Independent Eritrea was not built on fear, loan, dependency and uncertainty. It was built on concrete foundation laid by courage, self reliance, confidence, sacrifice and determination. Let our sweat and blood be poured to the tree of independence.

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