

## Eritrea's stance on the Security of the Red Sea



The geostrategic importance of the Red Sea is too palpable to merit extended elaboration. Global and regional developments in the past decades and current trends further accentuate the full ramifications of its importance.

In this context, the littoral Red Sea States have a vital and indispensable role in securing and promoting enduring and sustainable stability of this crucial international maritime route.

This vital task will require establishment and consolidation of an appropriate architecture of effective collective security that is predicated on a clear strategy and coherent plans of action. It will also require time, political good will, as well as the marshalling of requisite resources.

Various efforts launched in the past – including the joint military drill launched this weekend in Jeddah by several Red Sea countries – are all aimed towards advancing this lofty objective.

Eritrea's commitment towards this common objective is clear as it was indeed fully expounded in its *Statement at the Meeting of High-Level Officials of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden\** that was convened in Riyadh in April (21- 22) this year.

**The 12-point key parameters on cardinal procedures and substantive issues outlined in Eritrea's Statement are:**

1. Comprehensive and unbiased assessment of the current realities of the Red Sea and associated matters, in all their dimensions and perspectives in a realistic manner;
2. Full clarity on the desired objectives and goals;
3. Detailed mapping of the threats to the peace and security of the Red Sea; and, categorization and specification of these parameters;
4. Formulation of a viable strategy that will ensure achievement of constructive objectives and goals;
5. Formulation of strategies to contain and eliminate the threats in tandem with the positive policies of cooperation;
6. Mapping out detailed schemes and plans that will ensure holistic implementation of the twin strategies;
7. Stipulation of the implementation mechanisms, associated structures and mobilization of the requisite resources;
8. Ensuring that all the organizational configurations and frameworks that are developed are anchored on respect of sovereignty and international law;
9. Ensuring that all littoral States build and possess their own effective defense capabilities and naval forces (without delegation to others);
10. Supplementing, through collective efforts and synergy, those specific tasks that cannot be met through individual domestic capabilities and resources;
11. All relevant States will create appropriate modalities of cooperation with "external forces" for tasks or missions that are beyond their collective capability on the basis of a consensual framework;

12. Creation of competent committees to address all these issues in a comprehensive and professional manner.