

Keynote Address
By President Isaias Afwerki
on 32nd Independence Anniversary

May 24, 2023



Dear Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the occasion of the 32nd Anniversary of our Independence, allow me to express my congratulations to the people of Eritrea inside the country and abroad, as well as to the friends of Eritrea and all free peoples in the world. Let me also express my profound gratitude to all those who have contributed in producing expressive, inspiring and impressive cultural themes and spectacles to imbue additional splendor to this auspicious date.

Our Independence Day this year (2023) is being celebrated at a historical juncture when our independence, sovereignty and national cohesion have become more reinforced and our inexorable march to achieve development and economic growth is proceeding at an accelerated pace. The unfolding promising trend is marked by its own special excitement as it provokes questions and challenges on its substance and trajectory. On the other hand, this promising development invariably impels our adversaries – who oppose our independence, sovereignty, cohesion, development and prosperity – to hatch new plots and revamp their toolkits of harassment. The latter will evidently require devising,

on our part, a different and judicious approach of challenge-mitigation or resolution.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I underlined in my message of last year, the ploy that the forces of global domination – principally the Washington clique and its allies – have employed against our liberation and independence for the past eighty years that entangled three generations of our people, is to drive a wedge between Ethiopia and Eritrea and to instigate war incessantly. That this ploy has not succeeded is an indelible truth that does not leave any space for ambiguity. In the last five years, when a “new chapter had ushered in”, Washington instigated, through its presumed “proxies”, three military offensives to roll back the positive trend. The final third offensive was deterred through coordinated defensive operations. And despite some lingering reservations, the phenomenon has been instructive in many respects giving rise to hope and optimism for enduring peace. Plaudits to the Eritrean Defense Forces!



Ladies and Gentlemen,

The peoples and nations of Africa, (and naturally the peoples and nations of the Horn of Africa), need to cultivate and bolster both continental and regional frameworks of integration in order to preserve their independence and sovereignty. This is not an option; but an obligation. This is precisely the reason why the Government of Eritrea has exerted, in the past thirty years, relentless efforts for sustainable and common economic growth; to promote

stability; to combat terrorism and other acts of subversion; and for regional integration.

But as we take stock of various unfolding developments that instill hope and optimism, there are also worrisome instances – such as the conflict that has erupted in the Sudan – that warrant concern and attention. This will not of course diminish in any way the resoluteness of our pledge. As I tried to elucidate during my last interview, for the people of the Sudan, the features of the transition phase towards a Safe Gate is indeed crystal clear and unambiguous. Yet, inappropriate domestic handling coupled with external meddling had derailed the process to precipitate a perilous situation. As it happens, the situation demands serious and prompt regional initiative.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The prevailing promising domestic situation in our country and its progress— notwithstanding some worrisome regional developments and its future trends – must be appraised objectively within the perspectives, correlation, and impact of current international developments that are fraught with spawning a global crisis. From a broad analytical assessment, it can be fairly asserted that the global reality is in a transition phase towards a new international order to supplant the futile attempts of the last thirty years to install and bolster a unipolar world order. The defunct NATO Alliance led by the Washington clique, and the financial alliance of the fractious European Union, seem to be enveloped in futile attempts to resuscitate, through intensive care, their worn-out agendas of domination. This is the current trend that might foment global instability.

There is nothing novel in their philosophy or pronounced goals. Their history and culture spanning for generations revolves around “dividing the world into spheres of influence so as to assert domination and usurp the resources, riches, and opportunities of others”. However, in the past 30 years, after the end of the Cold War and with the disintegration, due to mistakes of the leadership, of the former Soviet Union that they considered as their primary “rival”, they entertained a fallacious and premature notion of possessing unassailable power under the mantra: “the world will henceforth be ours”. With these reckless and

ambitious adventures, they promoted a policy of containment and sought to establish a monopoly in all fields (economic, military and technological... power) that brooks no competition from any other aspiring major power. As such, they have declared an open war to deter the emergence of potential rivals.

In the early 1990s, their main perceived threat was Russia and their policy of “containment” was targeted towards it. During that time, they perceived China as a source of cheap labour with energy advantages. As such they wrongly thought that they could exploit its labour. They were not gripped then by worry or panic as it is the case now. But as China’s colossal advantages and its inexorable rise became evident, and despite the hypocrisy of their propaganda, China became and was seen as posing the principal threat to them. The greatest part of their “containment” tentacles and preoccupations is thus directed, these days, at China.



The dangerous alliances that the US and its allies are trying to forge in different parts of the world will ultimately fail. Nonetheless, it has the potential to multiply and exacerbate prevalent crises to entail grave disasters. In the event and putting aside its detailed actual situation and future trends, the imperative of fostering the friendship and cooperation of the free peoples of the world through a broad global solidarity so as to deter the negative consequences of these reckless adventures and bring about a new international order where justice prevails, is uncontroversial indeed.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we move forward by objectively assessing our domestic, regional and continental realities within the perspective and framework of global developments, and at this particular juncture of promising global changes, Washington has recently released a (policy) document on Eritrea, which does not have new contents, under the title of “Integrated Country Strategy”.

The over-arching gist of the document is the demonization and defamation of Eritrea. To this end, it peddles numerous cheap and pejorative adjectives and labels. The attempts it makes to falsely accuse the Eritrean Defense Forces of committing violations are not few. In this context, the panic it displays regarding the National Service is obvious indeed. It does not conceal its apprehensions on China; the latter’s growing influences and the danger that this may pose to it. The document alleges that China is working to dominate the UN; and that the US will vigorously work to contain China; prevent it from investing in Eritrea and uproot its “influence” in the country. The ultimate objective of the strategy is to isolate Eritrea, and, weaken it through economic sanctions. The strategy also includes undermining and limiting Eritrea’s role in the region. It also proposes devising various means to hoodwink and enlist the allegiance of future generations in the country. That the document is a declaration of war is self-explanatory indeed.

Such reckless interventions which are in contravention of international laws; that violate the independence and sovereignty of a people, and that disrupt regional stability do not only corroborate Washington’s behavior. They also amplify the Administration’s failures and bankruptcy. It is not difficult to read between the lines and second-guess the contents of other classified and unpublished documents. In the event, the panacea and the way forward consists of reviewing and polishing plans of resistance at the domestic, regional and international levels and mobilizing the necessary resources towards that end.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As usual, the major part of our all-rounded defensive strategy is not determined by our subjective choices. It is invariably shaped by the strategy of our

adversaries. In this respect, the contours of the field are very clear. Our independence, sovereignty and cohesive ranks that have been reinforced by our triumphant and cumulative experiences, inspire us further to multiply our efforts in marching towards development and prosperity. Moreover, there is no need of a reminder that the revised plans in infrastructure, energy, water, fisheries, agriculture, mining, social services, and vast investments by the public will require higher initiative and innovation to yield greater output. And, against the backdrop of the hostilities, we will not be complacent or relax our vigilance to bolster our independence, sovereignty and national cohesion to ascertain stability that is conducive for development.

The tasks that we must accomplish at the regional and international levels will also be pursued in tandem with, and with the same vigour as, our domestic priorities.

Glory to Our Martyrs!

Victory to the Masses!