

Eritrean Delegation Statement: EID on the “HR Situation in Eritrea” at 53rd HRC Regular Session 19 June, 2023

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البعثة الدائمة لدولة إريتريا
لدى الأمم المتحدة
جنيف

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE STATE OF ERITREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

GENEVA

Mr. President,

Eritrea celebrated its 32nd independence Anniversary on 24 May last month. The almost two-weeks long, vibrant, celebrations all over the country and the Diaspora were more extensive and spectacular by all standards. The additional vigour perhaps reflected and accentuated another dimension of the annual event. The celebrations this year indeed took place at a particular historical juncture when Eritrea’s independence, sovereignty and national cohesion have become more reinforced and the inexorable march to achieve development and economic growth is proceeding at an accelerated pace. This was despite sanctions; unilateral coercive measures by certain powers; and, ramped-up external hostilities under various pretexts; including the politicization of human rights.

In reality, human rights are mainstreamed in Eritrea’s nation-building process which is squarely anchored on the promotion of human dignity, security, sustainable development, and social justice. It is deplorable that for more than a decade now, some western countries have, and continue to, weaponize human rights to advance their visceral hostility against Eritrea for their own geopolitical considerations and interests.

To this end, the “Special Rapporteur” on Eritrea continues to recycle fallacious reports, innuendos, and accusations from dubious sources without proper validation on their veracity and underlying motives.

Thus, the “Special Rapporteur” again peddles in his current Report, the usual vitriol, spiced by additional and sensational appeals, in order to widen the scope and duration of the deplorable and politicized witch-hunting campaigns against Eritrea under the umbrella of the UNHRC.

These appeals are intended to imbue credibility to the flawed Report – both in procedural and substantive terms, and to ring false alarm bells. In this regard, the constant themes harped revolve around:

- Spurious allegations on, and denigration of, the National Service. In this regard, the National Service is falsely misconstrued as “forced labour” without any serious attempt to examine its Statutory provisions, rationale, dynamics and indispensable contributions for safeguarding the hard-won sovereignty and national security in crucial periods of wars of aggression imposed on the country in the past decades.
- Presumptuous and absolutely false allegation of “discrimination and marginalization of the Afar ethnic group in Eritrea”. This is not only factually preposterous but reeks of some ulterior political agenda of certain external forces to foment ethnic cleavages and fragmentation of the country. Eritrea’s reality is otherwise one of ethnic and religious national cohesion within a healthy climate of diversity. The exemplary harmony is indeed based on history, culture and government policies of social justice and equity.
- False and unacceptable allegations circulated by certain powers and affiliated media outlets on Eritrea’s legitimate, collaborative, and defensive responses to roll back a War of Insurrection in the Tigray Region in northern Ethiopia whose pronounced and avowed objectives included acts of aggression against Eritrea.

Mr. President,

Eritrea has explained, in its previous communications, the unwarranted circumstances and politicized purposes for which the SR was first created in 2012. Throughout these years, the hand-picked experts have displayed disdain for objectivity and professionalism to act as militant mouthpieces for Eritrea’s

detractors and arch-enemies. The data they collect is invariably sourced from certain powers and forces who openly entertain illicit “regime change” in Eritrea.

Only last year, the current SR included in his Report, unfounded accounts accusing the Government of Eritrea of deploying Somali troops who were receiving normative training in the country in accordance with bilateral security cooperation agreement with the Government of Somalia, in the war in the Tigray Region in Ethiopia.

Eritrea vehemently opposed the Report at the time, and the Foreign Minister subsequently wrote to the President of the HRC to rescind the whole Report and take appropriate measures of accountability against the Special Rapporteur.

In a nutshell, the mendacious allegations and approaches of the Special Rapporteur have and continue to be in contravention of the Code of Conduct for HRC Special Procedure Mandate-holders. On a broader level, Eritrea continues to reject politicization of human rights that were deliberately woven to substitute normative mechanisms of consultation and dialogue. Against the backdrop of the repetitive and scandalous failures of the politicized mandate, Eritrea kindly requests the current UNHRC Session to:

- Reject, in its totality, the unacceptable Report submitted by the SR in the present EID;
- Terminate the unwarranted tool of harassment against Eritrea;
- Support and promote dignified engagement and cooperation with Eritrea on the basis of constructive and genuine partnership.

I thank you Mr. President!

June 21, 2023