

Ethiopia: Belligerent Agenda of Regional Destabilization



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Over the past two years, Ethiopia’s Prosperity Party (PP) regime has indulged in a reckless and insidious agenda of belligerence and destabilization against the State of Eritrea and the wider region. The hostile and unprovoked agenda has often been framed and rationalized in “existential” terms; as the “imperative for sovereign access to the sea” in the regime’s hyperbolic parlance.

The elusive and toxic agenda continues to be flaunted by invoking and recycling fallacious and revisionist historical narratives; alluding to demographic factors that revolve around Ethiopia’s relatively big and growing population size; as well as reciting abstract economic parameters and correlations that are at odds, and in contravention with, foundational pillars of international law.

As it happens, high-level officials, academicians, and journalists continue to propagate, in an overtly orchestrated manner, these inflammatory narratives through Ethiopian mainstream media outlets and social media platforms.

Both in substance and intent, the PP’s unhinged expansionist policies can only entail, and are indeed fraught with, precipitating a spiral of conflicts and acts of destabilization in the Horn of Africa.

Furthermore, there is compelling evidence that the agenda is in fact driven by, and encompasses, external tentacles and dimensions that are detrimental to the enduring stability and security to the Horn of Africa region.

The chronology of events summarized below accentuates the scope and frantic intensity of the PP's irredentist agenda.

- On October 13, 2023, the Ethiopian Prime Minister announced, in an appalling address to the House of Peoples Representatives, an expansionist policy of securing “sovereign access to the sea by any means necessary”; dubbing this as an existential imperative to Ethiopia “which cannot remain a prisoner of geography”.
- Likewise, in his provocative speech in 2023 celebration of Irreechaa festival, the President of Oromia Region vowed that in 2024, the Festival would be celebrated in the Red Sea. In the same token, the regime's Generals have, and continue to display various maps of Ethiopia, incorporating the port of Assab and the Southern Coast of Eritrea.
- Through the Ethiopian Institute of Foreign Affairs, the PP regime drafted and adopted an expansionist strategic framework action plan, referred to as “Two Waters” strategy, that essentially espouses deplorable policies of destabilization against the neighbouring countries.
- Depending on timing, audience and international reaction, Ethiopia's Prosperity Party continues to peddle conflicting statements on the “utilization and ownership of access to the sea” through intensive media and diplomatic campaigns. The whole gimmick is prompted by, and revolves around, “legitimizing” toxic ambitions and agendas.
- The Prosperity Party has crossed the red line on various occasions to distort history and desecrate Eritrea's legitimate right of decolonization and the unparalleled sacrifices that the Eritrean people have been forced to pay to ascertain their inviolable national rights and human dignity.
- During a meeting with members of Parliament late last year, the Ethiopian Prime Minister alluded to Israel's annexation of Syrian “Golan Heights” to argue, unabashedly, that Ethiopia can indeed follow suit and invade its neighbour/(s) to achieve its pipedream of “sovereign access to the sea”.

- On February 22, 2026, at a Special Forces Graduation Ceremony in Hawassa, Ethiopia's Prime Minister stated that his phantom navy will ensure the security of the Red Sea from the tip of Somalia to Massawa! Needless to emphasize, articulation and modalities of the governance architecture and security of the Red Sea fall exclusively within the responsibility of the littoral States.
- In this context, we must recall that the Memorandum of Understanding that Ethiopia signed with Somaliland in January 2024 under surreptitious circumstances falls in the same pattern of reckless flouting of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours in the Horn.
- Furthermore, the PP regime's statements in international and domestic forums, such as the 80th session of the UN General Assembly, the 39th African Union Summit, and the Italy-Africa Summit have often willfully conflated commercial and normative access to the sea with claims of sovereignty, reflecting a deliberate blurring of distinctions that are clearly defined under international law.
- To ostensibly reinforce and imbue "factual" crystallization to its ambitions for "sovereign access to the sea," the PP regime continues to seek, despite repeated rejections, formal participation in some regional **maritime drills and events**.

From the foregoing chronology of events and facts, it is palpably clear that the PP regime's misguided and deplorable agendas, which have no basis in law and history, are anathema to regional peace and stability. And while remaining committed to constructive regional engagement and peaceful cooperation, Eritrea, for its part, firmly rejects any claims or actions that infringe upon its sovereignty and territorial integrity in flagrant contravention of international law. As underlined on various occasions in the past two years, the Government of Eritrea has no interest or appetite to engage in an acronymous agenda of conflict and turmoil. It remains resolutely committed to peace, stability, and the responsible management of regional relations.