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دولة إرتريا
وزارة الشؤون الخارجية

The State of Eritrea
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea presents its compliments to the African Union Commission, Bureau of the Chairperson, and has the honor to raise a matter of serious concern pertaining to the denial of Eritrea's membership rights, including representation and participation, in the African Union.

On 1st of October 2026, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia declared *persona non grata* ten (10) Eritrean diplomats based at the Embassy of the State of Eritrea in Addis Ababa and its Permanent Mission to the African Union (AU) and UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). This list included the Chargé d'affaires en pied of the Embassy and Permanent Mission, who is formally accredited to the AU and UNECA as Permanent Representative, as well as all three diplomatic staff assigned to cover both organizations. By expelling the Permanent Representative and the entire diplomatic staff assigned to participate in AU and ECA, the Ethiopian Government has effectively deprived the State of Eritrea of its fundamental rights as a Member State to be represented at the AU and UNECA and to participate in their activities.

It is to be recalled that, on 2nd of October 2026, the Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy and Permanent Mission verbally notified the above to the Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, as the Chairperson was not accessible.

The action by the Ethiopian Government was preceded by the Ethiopian Government's hitherto an unannounced closure of its Embassy in Asmara in August 2026. While establishment of diplomatic relations and opening of Embassies in each other's capitals is undertaken through bilateral agreements and governed by the **Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961)** and applicable international law, the hosting of regional and international organizations and the corresponding membership rights of the member states, is not subject to the unilateral discretion of the host country.

The African Union is an intergovernmental organization founded on the principle of sovereign equality of all Member States pursuant to **Article 4(a)** of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Consequently, Eritrea's statutory rights of membership in the African Union cannot be curtailed or compromised at the whim of another Member State.

The decision of the Ethiopian Government constitutes a grave violation of the **Constitutive Act (2000), Headquarter Agreement between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the African Union (2008)**, as well as the **General Convention on the Immunities and Privileges of the Organization of African Unity (1965)**. Specifically:

- **Violation of Article 4(a) of the AU Constitutive Act:** Infringes upon the principle of sovereign equality and interdependence among Member States by unilaterally obstructing a Member State from exercising its statutory rights of representation and participation.
- **Violation of Article 15 of the AU Headquarters Agreement:** Violates the specific provisions guaranteeing that representatives of Member States accredited to the African Union enjoy diplomatic privileges, immunities, and necessary facilities to ensure the independent exercise of their official functions at the Headquarters of the Union without host state interference.
- **Violation of Article V, Section 1 of the OAU General Convention on Privileges and Immunities:** Breaches the obligation of the host state to accord representatives of Member States immunity from personal arrest or detention, inviolability of papers and documents, and freedom from host country restrictions that impede their official mandate.

In light of the foregoing, the Government of the State of Eritrea calls upon the African Union Commission to urgently bring this matter to the attention of the Executive Council and the Assembly of the Union. Eritrea urges the policy organs to take immediate corrective measures to restore Eritrea's rightful representation at the Headquarters of the Union and ensure its full participation in the activities of the Union as a sovereign and equal member, in strict adherence to the **Constitutive Act, Headquarters Agreement and the General Convention**.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the African Union Commission, Bureau of the Chairperson, the assurances of its highest consideration.



Bureau of the Chairperson
African Union Commission
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

CC: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Development Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi, As Current Chairperson of the African Union
Bujumbura, Burundi

CC: Permanent Missions of Member States to the African Union
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia