

A SWIFT, EFFECTIVE AND LASTING SOLUTION TO THE ERITREAN NIGHTMARE!!

A Short Thesis on Strategy

**By
Our Voice**

(Dear readers, we invite you to read this document with full attention, patience and utmost seriousness. We believe that it is significant and may hopefully be a game changer in our tragic situation. We have thought long and hard on this, and we have finally decided to share it with you. We are prepared to provide all the references and footnotes for all the facts presented although they don't appear here. Our Voice)

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Introduction

It is very rare indeed in human history, if ever, for a people to struggle for liberation for so long and so hard with so much heroism and fortitude as the Eritreans only to find their dream turned into a nightmare at the point of victory betrayed by their own deceitful “leader” whom they trusted and worshipped almost like a god.

The much adulated “leader”, Isayas Afworki, has now completely reversed the Eritrean revolution and has caused it to bite the dust. As a result, Eritrea now really exists only as a geographical entity. Clearly, the Eritrean society as we knew it, the Eritrean state and government have all been largely dismantled by the delusional narcissistic and sadistic dictator. The vortex emanating from

the warped mind of this man still continues to devour and destroy the precious and sacred lives of Eritreans young and old. He has also done away with family values, sense of morality, religious faith and even love of country.

It is unfortunate and we have no pleasure in saying it, but Isayas Afworki assuming the office of president in Eritrea is like the devil himself becoming the imam of a mosque or the head priest of a church. The consequence of that is predictable. ONE of the explanations for the misdeeds of this man seems to be that he has turned a petty grudge against the Eritrean people he has harboured all his life into a national catastrophe out of all proportions. The source of his grudge (as his close friends and associates have consistently witnessed) is something silly and childish. Ominously, however, it has turned out to be a subliminal driving force in his psyche - "Kerien'ye!!!" How else are we to explain the visceral hatred and so much ill will he has against the Eritrean people who have given him everything he asked for? Please do not be duped by his pretensions: cut that out, and you will see the kind of person he really is. If he had the maturity of an adult, he would have placed whatever grudge he has in its proper context and forgiven and forgotten long ago. How about all the respect and devotion he has received from the Eritrean people for so long? Does that not mean something? But, sadistic narcissists are like that! If we don't stop him short, we shall continue to suffer more tragedies and our circumstances will get even much worse and unbearable than they already are.

According to our scientific analysis, there are signs which suggest that the man has serious psychiatric flows which we shall discuss later in some detail. Our fear is that he may take our beloved country down with him as if the damage he has done so far is not bad enough. Sadly, many of us do not still seem to be aware of that danger.

The prevailing lack of understanding of the real situation in Eritrea and the terror, intimidation, misinformation, confusion and obfuscation enforced by the dictator and his opportunist allies at home and abroad have acted as the main obstacles to finding out the truth. This lack of awareness has blocked the way to progress not only of the Eritrean people but to a large extent also of the wider populations of the region. In truth, Isayas Afworki is a spoiler of the worst type (*gudam tseiki*) and the sole architect and pillar of the corrupt privatised state edifice he has engineered to suit none other but himself!! The solution is, therefore, to swiftly focus on this man like a laser beam and bring his feet to fire. The question is - HOW??!!

We believe that the first crucial and inescapable step in finding a solution to the Eritrean tragic saga is to know and understand what has happened so far and why. The strategy of how to bring about swift and effective change in the country can come only out of a scientific analysis of the situation. It is the absence of this that has made all the efforts of the opposition largely futile so far.

The authors of this summary article are a group of professional Eritreans who have been quietly pursuing their private lives and professions without overt political participation. We are not politicians and we do not aspire for political office either. The reason why we have decided to speak in public now is because we are really fed up and greatly pained like most of you by the countless deaths, atrocities, victimisation, exploitation, displacement and hardship beyond imagination bordering on genocide inflicted on our people everywhere and especially within Eritrea itself. Yet, nothing significant has been done in response to stop it.

Our political leaders, if there are any, be it in the opposition or otherwise, have let us down very badly because of ignorance, bad thinking, wrong belief systems, baggage from the past, incompetence and perhaps, most importantly, misguided personal ambition. **Our aim here is, therefore, to clear the way for positive change in Eritrea by saying the truth without fear or favour.** We believe that all the relentless shocking tragedies of Eritreans we have witnessed are the consequences of our disunity and mutual suspicion. The first step of our salvation should, therefore, start with the purification of the mind and the “rectification of names”, as the ancient Chinese philosopher **Lao Tzu** proposed. If that is done, removing Isayas Afworki from his false pedestal would be much easier, simpler and quicker - we believe. In fact, it is surprising that this man managed to stay in power for so long despite the fact that he committed many repeated blunders over so many years. That was possible not because he is strong, but because we are weak in thinking and action.

1. Historical Background

It is important to understand the making of Eritrea and especially the experience of Eritreans in recent history to pave the way for the various issues we shall raise later and on which we seek your support.

Eritrea, as it is called now, or **Midri Bahri** or **Mereb Milash**, has existed as a triangular territory which constitutes an interface between three massive blocks: Ethiopia in the South, Sudan in the West and the Red Sea and Arabia in the East. In terms of ethnicity, culture, language, religion, identity and political orientation, Eritreans are the products of these proximities. In truth, larger

parts of mainland Eritrea were part and parcel of Abyssinia or Ethiopia before Italian colonialism. It is even possible to argue that Eritrea at least in part, was the cradle of Ethiopian civilization. The establishment of Eritrea as a separate entity in the late 19th century was the result of Italian colonialism with the connivance of **Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia**. The Eritrean people had no hand in it. They were, in fact, sold out by Menelik. Although he had the power to kick out the Italians from Eritrea later after the Battle of Adwa, he did not want to do it. He even denied the existence of *Habeshas* north of the Mareb River and claimed that the territory did not concern him. After Adwa, he signed a treaty recognising Italian ownership of Eritrea. His strategy in the matter was informed by his desire to divide and weaken the hegemonic powers in the north and move the centre of political authority to Shoa. In short, **Menelik committed treason by giving away Eritrea to suit himself**. Mainly as the consequence of that, Eritreans continue to suffer untold miseries to this day.

There are also grounds to bring Menelik to court for crimes against humanity. When many black soldiers recruited by the Italians (mostly native Eritreans but also some Ethiopians and Sudanese) were captured in the Battle of Adwa, Menelik and his wife, Taitu, and the Egyptian bishop at the time ruled that the black captives (more than **1000**) be **amputated** for “betraying” their country. The savage amputations took place in a church near Adwa. Only about **400** of the poor amputees who lost one hand and one leg each reached Eritrea. Many died on the torture bench. None of the captured invading Italians was amputated and were, in fact, treated well. **As has happened many times in Eritrean history, the victims became the villains and suffered so much from gross miscarriage of justice.** Those who should have been put in the dock for selling away an important part of the country became the judges and jury.

Despite all the betrayal, atrocities and sell out, many Eritreans continued to see the Ethiopian flag as their own flag and the Ethiopian king as their king. That is why many Eritreans fought on the side of the Ethiopian army during the Battle of Adwa. In fact, one well armed Italian force made of Eritreans joined the Ethiopian side. Indeed, Eritreans also played a crucial role in the defeat of the Italians by providing them with misleading information which disoriented and confused them. In this regard, we have all heard about the role of the Eritrean “double spy” called **Aw’alom Berhe**, who in truth was on the Ethiopian side. If he had not mislead and confused the Italians the way he did, would the Ethiopians have won the battle? At least, some say, “No!”: the Italians would have changed their strategy otherwise and might have possibly even won. However, all this contribution did not spare the Eritrean victims of the savage amputation.

One of the noted Eritreans who fought against the Italians on the Ethiopian side was **Raisi Wolde Michael Solomon of Hazega**, who was previously imprisoned by **Ras Alula** clearly on trumped up charges using false witnesses. He did in Axum in 1906. The story of **Bahta Hagos of Segeneiti** is also well known. He fought against Italian rule in Eritrea hoping that he would get help from **Ras Mengesha**. That promised help never came because Mengesha had other plans. As a result, Bahta Hagos was killed by the Italians fighting on his own. Another Eritrean was the Italian educated ex-prisoner in **Nakura**, **Blata Gebreigziabher**, who later compiled and edited the first Ethiopian newspaper in Amharic ie., **Aemiro**, at the court of Menelik. He opposed the **Treaty of Wuchallie** giving away Eritrea. In 1899, he wrote a vitriolic letter to Menelik (that amazed many) urging him to renege on the treaty he signed and push the Italians out of Eritrea and into the sea. When he later moved to Harar, he was accused by the authorities of teaching that the earth is not the centre of the universe and that it went around the sun. He was labelled as **Tsere Mariam** and vilified. In frustration, he became an alcoholic and died as a result of it.

Yet, another story is that of **Abraha Deboch** and **Moges Asgedom** and their daring attack on **General Graziani** in Addis Ababa at huge personal cost. Despite their act of singular courage and heroism in support of the Ethiopian cause, they were suspected of being Italian spies and their request to join the **arbegnoch** denied. The Ethiopian forces refused them shelter, and they were killed by the Italians while trying to flee to the Sudan. The huge contribution of another Eritrean, **Dr Lorenzo Taezas**, to the Ethiopian war effort and his service as a minister is also well known. He also fell victim to palace intrigue and was sidelined and exiled as an ambassador of Ethiopia to Moscow during World War II and later to Sweden, where he died of a sudden illness, apparently a heart attack as a result of stress. The case of **General Tedla Ukbit** and **General Aman Andom**, both staunch supporters of Ethiopian unity, and the circumstances of their tragic death is also well known. There are many other stories as well. Anyway, the clear picture that emerges from all these stories is that of many Eritrean victims who really belied in their Ethiopian identity, but whose hopes and aspirations were finally dashed resulting in much lamentation as a result of ignorance, incompetence, irresponsibility and chicanery of those who were supposed to be running the country.

We shall now quote a text from **Selam Nerayo** entitled “Colonialism and the Ethiopian State”, Part IV, Feb. 17, 2000:

“Ethiopian intellectuals time and again accused Eritreans as collaborators with Italians. This...is completely false. And if truth is to be told, as some of them have openly admitted although grudgingly, Eritreans have disproportionately paid a heavy price in the fight against

colonialism. In his book *Red Terror*, the former Derg official, **Dawit Wolde Giorgis** says, 'Eritreans were the coast guards of the mainland. The major battles that are recorded in Ethiopian history except Adwa were in Eritrea and were fought by Eritreans most of the time. The battle-fields of Debarua, Gundet, Gura, Kufit, Saati, Dogali, and Koatit against Sudan, Turkey, Egyptians, and the Italians are typical examples.' (*Red Tears*, p.74)

Except the one in Debarua, all the others were fought within less than fifty years, 1870 to 1889. And add to these numbers those [Eritreans] who perished in the Battle of Metema. It clearly shows how much a heavy price that was to pay for a population with no more than 1.5 million souls. And by the time the Italians occupied Asmara, Eritrean highlands as well as lowlands were completely devoid of able bodies to do any meaningful defence against the coming Italians."

Despite all the sacrifices and the betrayal they suffered, many Eritreans (some say the majority of highlanders) continued to maintain a positive attitude towards Ethiopia and they perceived their identity to be *Habesha* and Ethiopian during the late 1940s and early 1950. However, the Ethiopians state also had an active hand in inducing many people to become members of the unionist party and wave the Ethiopian flag through intimidation, assassination, intermarriage and massive corruption. The role of **Colonel Nega Haile Selassie** in all this is well known. In truth, other parties like the British, Italians, Egyptians and others were also involved in similar activities although not with so much intensity. The Ethiopians finally won, and the federation was ratified under UN supervision.

One week after the **federation** was instituted, **Emperor Haile Selassie** started to sabotage and weaken the federal arrangement. The Ethiopian officials who were appointed by the Emperor also soon displayed obvious abuses of power, incompetence and embezzlement. Despite all this, the Ethiopian authorities seem to have managed to largely silence the opposition in Eritrea against their rule through appointments and "gifts". It must be said also that the Ethiopian Government was getting \$50 million (a big sum at the time) from the Americans for renting Eritrean land to establish and run the big and important **US Kagnew Station** communication base in Asmara. But, Eritreans saw very little of that money.

When Haile Selassie finally dissolved the federal arrangement and closed the **Eritrean parliament**, he installed in full his feudal despotic rule on the Eritrean people - which sparked the Eritrean liberation war. We know what happened

during the time of the **Derg**. Therefore, we shall leave it at that. But, as they say, “Give the devil his due!” despite the Derg’s despotic and murderous nature and its desire to crush the Eritrean revolution by force, at least **Mengistu Haile Mariam** seems to have had much more respect for the Eritrean people than Isayas Afworki and perhaps even Haile Selassie.

Considering all these details, it is not difficult to understand the depth of the grievance Eritreans have. But still, most Ethiopians do not fully appreciate what Eritreans have gone through and the grounds of their bitterness because the truth has hitherto been concealed from them. There are some estimates that claim that the fighting between Eritreans and the Ethiopian state since the demise of the federation in 1962 alone has cost Eritreans about 150,000 dead both civilians and combatants. As **Desmond Tutu of South Africa** would say, we believe that recognising how much Eritreans have suffered as a result of the mistakes and treachery of Ethiopian rulers (and not the Ethiopian people) could form an important step towards **reconciliation**. This is the purpose why we are detailing the misdeeds of the past.

Thus, there is no doubt that the Eritrean people had legitimate reasons to seek liberation from the Ethiopian state through armed resistance because all avenues for peaceful resistance were blocked. But, it is very important at this point to distinguish between the struggle for **liberation** and the struggle for **independence**. There may be **liberation without independence** and **independence without liberation**. Actually, the confusion between the two lies at the centre of the unresolved Eritrean problem. The struggle was fought under the prospectus of liberation, not mere independence. But, what we have now is only independence and not liberation. In other words, the main thing is missing. The two are not, of course, mutually exclusive. There could have been liberation along with independence in Eritrea under genuine leadership. In fact, liberation could be achieved without independence as well. **In the case of Eritrea, empty independence was achieved - which has turned out to be a curse and a nightmare!**

“Liberation” is now a long forgotten word in Eritrea. Only the word “independence” has gained currency which the dictator uses to claim that he is the liberator of the Eritrean people and thus should remain in power for life completely untouched. By propagating his false claim using the entire media under his control, he has managed to confuse and subdue the Eritrean people into submission - and uses and abuses them at will - with contempt. The only thing the Eritreans now have is the meaningless flag of independence. How did this come about?

2. Isayas Afworki's Mind – the Epicentre of the Eritrean Destructive Vortex

As we have seen above, the Eritrean war of liberation was a genuine and legitimate struggle for freedom from oppression, injustice and unfairness. We remember and cherish all Eritreans who sacrificed their lives to see a free, peaceful, prosperous, democratic and strong Eritrea. They lived and died in hope for the collective good. That hope has greatly deemed especially as of late. But, it will never be extinguished. What went wrong then, especially after independence? The issues will no doubt be extensively studied in a multi disciplinary way by many specialists in the future. **When the full truth eventually comes out, it will no doubt surprise everyone.** Unfortunately, the urgency of the situation we are in now does not give us the luxury of time to wait much longer. Therefore, to help us in our purpose here, we shall share with you our findings so far based on what we already know in our various professions and our knowledge and reflection on the prevailing situation in Eritrea.

2.1. Was the Eritrean Debacle Deliberately Engineered!!

In fact, Eritrea had an excellent chance to do very well soon after independence. There was the euphoria of independence and the **sky high “can do” attitude** among Eritreans everywhere. Many expatriate Eritreans returned home with big capital and big ideas to invest in the country. Highly educated Eritreans were also willing to return and serve the people. The international community was ready to help in a massive way. The Ethiopians were also helpful in a number of ways and ready to forge closer relations with Eritrea. Besides, Eritrea had vast land and sea resources – and skilled, disciplined and hard working population. Things had started to move in the right direction for the country. Many independent newspapers and magazines were being published. A constitution was also drafted and was ready for ratification. However, all of a sudden, the **Badme War** started - and everything stopped. The “border war”, as it is called, had very little to do with border issues with Ethiopia at all. It was deliberately concocted by the warped mind of Isayas Afwerki with a deliberate intention to suit his own purpose. There was no way that he could have won the war against Ethiopia - and he knew it. But, it enabled him to get what he wanted otherwise.

The constitution, which he did not want anyway and even dreaded, was put on hold. Thousands of young and able **Warsay Yikealo** also lost their lives in the Badme war in vain. To this must be added all those who died in the fighting

with all the other neighbourly countries as well: **Sudan, Yemen, Djibouti**, besides **Ethiopia**. Now, there are unconfirmed reports that he might send Eritrean troops to **Yemen** to fight the **Houthis** in support of the Saudis - no doubt for money!

On the pretext of the inevitable defeat of the **Eritrean army** in the Badme war (which he would have predicted beforehand) and the complaints raised by many about the issue of governance and democracy, the dictator imprisoned his key ministers and many independent journalists who advocated democracy and democratic procedures. He then brought the country under military rule by appointing *his* generals to control the various regions of the country. Bizarrely, Eritrea now has no prime minister, no parliament, no independent judiciary, no budget, no auditor - nothing. The state and government of Eritrea, the state budget and the army have all been privatised – and the sole owner of all these is just one man. In fact, in one of his visits to London, Isayas declared to the gathered audience (in which we personally participated) that he is “*the state*” (“*Mengisti indye a'ne...*” It was astonishing. It reminds as of the absolute French monarch, Louis XIV, who in 1655 arrogantly declared: “*L'etat, c'est moi*” (“I am the State”) in reply to the president of the French parliament at the time who had started to talk about the interest of the French state.

To help him in his diabolical destruction of the country, the dictator has surrounded himself with people who are fairly like chickens. Those favoured by the dictator for appointment into his Mafia cabinet are those who are vulnerable in some way, have identity crisis, are of lesser intelligence and usually of low education, who are easily scared and malleable - but above everything else who are afraid of him to the bones and are highly opportunistic. Clearly, these people have no competence to run a country. In any case, they are brought to positions of authority precisely because of that. All those who really had the ability to run the country effectively are now either in the dictator's hellish prison or are dead. The present “Yes Sir!!” “ministers” and “generals” of Isayas Afwerki are no threat to him - and he knows it. Their role is not to think and do what is right, but to immediately accept whatever the monstrous dictator says and then do as they are told.

Anyway, the dictator has already rendered useless the Eritrean state and army or whatever remains of them. He has a separate well fed and well resourced army loyal to him that he can deploy at will ie., the **DEM HIT**. He uses this new army of foreigners to humiliate and threaten the commanders and men of the **Eritrean Army** and to silence the “ministers” - because they know what will follow if they say anything he does not like. This force was deployed during the **Forto incident of Wedi Ali**. Isayas thinks that he is clever for doing this. As a

poor strategist, however, he does not know how much resentment he has created in the Eritrean Army and the general public. One day, the bottled down pressure will explode on his face at a time he does not expect - with unpredictable consequences. In our younger days, there was a favourite expression when someone rode roughshod: **“Yibezhaka alo!”**

In other words, the dictator’s chicken cabinet and his peacock generals do not matter after he is gone. They will disappear in thin air once Isayas Afworki is forced out of the rickety chair from which he exercises his acts of murder and sadism on the population. We have to, therefore, focus on this single and weak individual, isolate him from the chickens surrounding him and strike him hard like a laser beam and knock him out of the game - politically that is. Once they see the writing on the wall, those around him now will either turn against him or run away and try to justify themselves - as **Ali Abdu**, the notorious ex-“Information Minister” did! Just this week, a dignified Eritrean diplomat, **Mohammed Idris**, left the Isayas regime while in Addis Ababa, where he was posted. We take that as a sign of much bigger things to come soon.

We now say to those few individuals who still support the dictator: look carefully at the funeral ceremonies of regime officials, including “ministers” and “generals” in Asmara; look at Isayas himself, too. Can't you see that they are shadows of their old selves? They are almost gone!! But for us, even a single day is too long: we want to see the end at the earliest! What hope is there for them and for you? It is better if you abandon the sinking ship now. At least, please keep your once loud but now failing and quivering mouths shut!

2.2.The Mind of Isayas Afworki

We have closely studied the mind of Isayas Afworki on the basis of his own oral pronouncements, interviews, writings, his personal and political acts, his public and private persona, what his long standing friends and colleagues have said about him, etc. We actually have a clear psychological profile of this criminal. According to a standard and widely used personality test (**Myers-Briggs Test**) based on the 16 personality types identified by the famous and leading psychiatrist **Dr Carl Gustav Jung** (once a colleague of **Sigmund Freud**), we think that Isayas has a **ISTJ personality type**. The bad news is that Isayas Afworki is not stupid and is not mad as some people make him out to be. **He knows what he is doing, and his purpose in life is to do everything possible to benefit himself at the cost of everybody else by any means necessary.** From our study, he certainly does not really care about Eritrea or the Eritrean people. For him, they are only means to an end. (By the way, the use

psychology to explain the behaviour of political agents is not *tseweta zaigol* (something like fortune telling) , as **Saleh AA Younus of www.awate.com** said sometime ago. It is a legitimate science which is becoming increasingly important ie, *political psychology*)

Therefore, let us now have a closer look at the dictator's personality and how it affects his political decisions. The **ISTJ personality type** suggests that the person is **Introverted (I)** - rather inward looking and does not find it easy to relate to people. You can see from the way Isayas speaks that it does not come to him naturally. One can even say that he is not really interested in people. He sees others mainly as enablers in the execution of his plans. Isayas is also not an intellectual in the sense that he does not like theory or theory derived ideas and plans for action. Rather, he relies mainly on **sense perception (S)** and is practical. His focus is on what he can perceive and do in the immediate present. He is not restrained by theoretical or ethical considerations. **Amb. Andebrahan Welde Giorgis** has made a good observation about Isayas (See his book, *Eritrea at a Crossroads: A Narrative of Triumph, Betrayal and Hope*, 2014, pp.660) The dictator is **a good tactician, but not a good strategist. He either does not get what he wants in the end, or the very little he gets at the end will require sacrifices that are much more important and serious than what is achieved.** The Eritrean people are the ones who bear the consequences of the dictator's failed strategies, not himself.

He does not see and plan things from the point of view of the long run. In other words, Isayas can make a good field commander but a very poor and even disastrous overall strategist . In our opinion, he does not deserve to command more than a tactical brigade or become no higher than the mayor of a small town. Herein lies the tragedy of Eritrea and Eritreans. **The man at the top in Eritrea is in the wrong place.** The worst in him is, however, that he does not have the moral compass nor the interest to help and even see others prosper. The Eritrean people have paid dearly for this. You can see how he handled the Badme War. How on earth could he have thought that he would win the war however much he was prepared to sacrifice so much of sacred Eritrean blood? That is, if indeed his purpose was to win the war - which is now doubtful.

Look also at the way he conducts his interviews. He always performs poorly. Why? It is because he lacks social empathy, and he reacts impulsively without understanding the long term consequences of what he says. Sometimes, he gets angry and threatening to his interviewers when they ask him difficult questions which are beyond him instead of giving a proper rational answer. What he says usually starkly betrays what he is trying to hide but he is not aware of it. Such is the so called "President of Eritrea". It is actually shameful!

Despite such inadequacies which are bad in themselves, what makes Isayas Afworki particularly dangerous is that he is governed mainly by thinking **(T)** when he faces serious situations that may threaten his survival. He can become cold and consider his options with composure despite the pressure and decide to act with the view to a certain immediate outcomes in his favour. But, he is not far sighted. If he has to kill to have his way, he will do so without thinking twice about it. What matters to him is the immediate outcome he wants. How many people he has to sacrifice to obtain that, (maybe 10, 50, 100, 1000, 1 million, 6 million, anything really) does not bother him. He is also well organised and can judge and decide with considerable ruthlessness **(J)**. (These dangerous traits of Isayas Afworki are reflected in **Mesfin Hagos's** interview on **EPDP's Dimsi Hizbi Radio**. Mesfin, who was a loyal and close colleague of Isayas, gave a detailed characterisation of the dictator. See also **Andebrahan Welde Giorgis's** book.

There are finally two aspects to Isayas's personality. He is **narcissistic** and **sadistic**. A narcissistic person has an extreme form of self love, and the person takes it for granted that others were born to serve him/her even without any reward. It is as if serving the narcissist himself/herself is a reward in itself. If you are not willing to serve, then you get severely punished for it. This can happen even in a family. For instance, a narcissistic husband may wear down and reduce his wife to the status of servitude and expose her to severe physical abuse with no regard to her feelings and well-being. There are actually some women also who do the same to their husbands and beat them up and/or starve them. Anyway, it is not surprising that Isayas has subjected Eritrean youth to extended servitude for decades in the guise of national service to defend the country. Actually, the primary defence Eritrea and Eritreans need at the moment is against the dictator himself.

What most people might find it hard to comprehend is the sadistic nature of the dictator. A normal human being suffers in the face of suffering inflicted on any innocent human being. Sadists actually enjoy seeing other people suffer, even the innocent. For sadists, it is even better when they inflict the suffering themselves. Sadism is one of the attributes of dictators. Numerous examples could be given to illustrate this from Isayas Afworki. A case in point is that of his ministerial colleagues whom he is still keeping in prison incommunicado under extreme psychological pressure as traitors, most of them probably dead by now. This is what **Andebrahan** says about the sadistic nature of the dictator,

“The absence of countervailing constraints to the exercise of arbitrary power has given Isaias's dark side , which thrives in the pain of those he condemns to freezing, torture or death, free rein to trample on the basic

rights and civil liberties of the people and condemn many Eritrean patriots to extinction.” (p.314)

This man should actually be brought to justice for treason, murder, embezzlement of public funds and genocide. We suggest that you view a DVD lecture by an American neuroscientist, **Dr James Fallon** entitled “**The Mind of a Dictator**” You will find that all the characteristics outlined by the professor (including sadism and narcissism) are perfect photo fit match with the characteristics of the Eritrean dictator. According to Dr Fallon, dictators have the same mental structure just as criminals whose brains he has dissected in hundreds.

2.3. How the Mind of Isayas Afworki Invented the Eritrean Vortex

When narcissism and sadism are combined, they form a personality trait that is particularly nasty. Such is the mind of the Eritrean dictator.

Out of the great desperation and oppression they suffered in their history, the Eritrean people put Isayas Afworki on a pedestal as their redeemer – because they needed one. This criminal never understood that behind the popular adulation he received at the point of independence was a cry for help by the people. He and the EPLF had long promised that with liberation, everything would change in Eritrea for the better. People believed the promise and gave their all to the struggle. Isayas, the narcissist, however, had other plans. He dissolved EPLF itself, and nobody said a word about it. He excluded most of the old fighters and formed his own inner circle of yes men to help him rule the country – and nobody said a word about it. At the beginning, he brought to the Eritrean assembly of his creation hand picked people most of whom had no clue about politics and didn't care anyway. They did as they were told. He then brought the judiciary and everything in the country under his thumb, and nobody said a word about it. Or if anyone complained, he/she got summary justice. Then, the national service. When people complained or tried to leave the country, he put them in prison or killed them or sent them to **Wi'a** for severe punishment. Compare this with how **Hitler** gradually and secretly stripped the German people of their civil and democratic rights - which is well documented. When they realised what was going on, it was too late. They couldn't do anything about it. He uses secret, effective and ruthless methods to have his way – and morality and sense of fairness don't come into it.

Some of you might have also followed the statements of the dictator's ex-security agents, prison guards and torturers. It was shocking to discover that he has been using scientific methods drawn from psychology and sociology perfected by the **Nazis** and the **Stasi of East Germany** and the **Soviet KGB** to

completely break the personality and psyche of his opponents. One of such victims is the prisoner **General Bitwoded Abraha**, who is said to have lost his mind and has turned out to be Isayas Afworki's admirer, his actual torturer. When it comes to wickedness, this Isayas is unsurpassed. Has he been using similar techniques of mind control on the Eritrean people? We think so. There is now a huge prison population in Eritrea, some kept underground incommunicado and in darkness, their name deleted and are only known by the numbers given to them by the prison guards. They are completely de-humanised and under complete control of their guards, the Eritrean *capos*.

The dictator has also closed the only university in the country and distributed the library books to the outlying quasi colleges. The man hates and fears knowledge and thinking. He has now turned the country of heroes into a nation of singers and dancers.

Out of desperation, thousands of young people have tried to escape the country. The consequence of that is well known to all of us. Yet, the Isayas regime tries to benefit from those who escape. It is, in fact, said that his generals and security men are themselves major human traffickers. Young people are kept in the various military camps throughout the country to use them as slave labour and to prevent them from causing trouble to the regime in towns and cities. The logic has now been extended to people who are up to the age of 60. It might still go higher. The vortex emanating from the sick mind of Isayas Afworki has now engulfed every person in the country, and there is little escape. The vortex has been spinning with increased force devouring everything in its wake. We need to diffuse and stop it as a matter of urgency.

3. Do We Eritreans Realise What Has Hit Us?

Surprisingly enough, the Isayas regime still has some supporters in the diaspora, mainly in America and Europe. We believe that this is out of ignorance, fear and deliberate misinformation. Eritrea at one time had one of the most educated, skilled and hard working population in the region. Now, Eritreans are one of the least educated and, may we say, have become perhaps the least informed. The desperate poverty back home has made Eritreans abroad focus on making money rather than education to better themselves and their families. Many of them do not have access to various view points regarding Eritrean politics. In some cases the only source of information they have is EriTV, among others because of the language barrier. It is, therefore, not surprising that they really don't know what to think, or they just stick to old beliefs about the regime. Some of them may also have vested interests in supporting the regime. Anyway, most Eritreans are now on survival mode, and their focus is away from politics - as the regime has always wanted. In other

words, Isayas Afworki has deliberately and effectively used poverty and ignorance as vital instruments of political control!! This is what Andebrahan says,

“The state of Eritrea's economy and the conditions of its people show the wasteful, inefficient and demeaning features of the coupon economy designed to serve an obnoxious control function; the blight of indignity it inflicts on the people is a daily curse that is deliberate.” (p. 233) (Emphasis added)

Those of us who have some experience with Eritrean opposition politics also know that the lack of awareness is not confined to the general population of Eritrea. Even some of those who do politics on full-time basis do not seem to have full grasp and do not know what they are doing. Many Eritrean intellectuals also seem to have chosen to keep their silence with **“The devil you know is better than the angel you don't know.”** Besides this, many Eritreans still seem to harbour some feudal outlook and outmoded thinking and look to the past rather than the future. Regionalism and religious aspiration are other factors that muddy the situation. Fear and consideration of self interest are other factors.

4. So, where do we start?

4.1. Rectification of Names

When the great Chinese philosopher, **Lao Tzu**, was asked where he would start to reform society, he quickly answered **“with rectification of names”**. We also believe that to avoid confusion and cut out waste of time, it is vital that we start with the rectification of names in Eritrean politics. Lao Tzu's argument was that there is a lot of cheating going on in society. Many people in positions of authority are actually imposters - claiming what they are not and abusing public trust - thus taking what they don't deserve and failing to do what their claimed status requires. This creates inefficiency, confusion and chaos in society, according to Lao Tzu. Thus, his injunction is: “a teacher must be a teacher; a father a father and a chief a chief.” In other words, one has to be a genuine teacher, father or chief or not claim any of the said roles. In other words, if a teacher does not play the role of a proper teacher, then he is not a teacher. That applies to the father, the chief and the president of any country as well.

Therefore, , **do Eritreans really have a “president”?** Yes, Isayas Afworki has a big moustache on which he spends a large part of the day grooming and dramatizing. But, that does not make him a real man as he is trying to prove to

us. More importantly, all his misdeeds and treachery disqualify him from being called a real man and a real president by any measure. **Therefore, we wish to advise that henceforth, no one should identify Isayas Afworki, the mass murderer and thief, as “the president of Eritrea”.** As recent foreign media reports indicated, he has swindled more than \$500 million from the Eritrean people and secretly stashed it in Swiss bank accounts under different names.

Just today, we read about the mineral potential of Eritrea and how a number of mining companies are lining up to invest in the Eritrean mining sector and start work. It is possible that those companies and Isayas himself might make huge profits out of this. But, the people of Eritrea will see none of that money. We are sure of that. The dictator, we believe, will use the money to buy weapons and to arm and feed the Ethiopian opposition forces based in Eritrea. Other beneficiaries will be his agents within Eritrea and across the world and rebel groups across the region. If he still has surplus, he might even try to start a nuclear reactor to ultimately produce an atomic bomb with which to threaten his neighbours and get what he wants. Of course, that won't happen, but still, the dream will govern his deeds. He is delusional. We believe that even the thought of the Eritrean people benefiting from the said proceeds will be enough to make him ill and get hospitalised. It is that bad! Anyone who studies Isayas closely will inevitably reach this conclusion.

The damage this man has done is all encompassing. He has largely ignored and tried to delete Eritrean history and heroism (as did Ethiopian rulers of the past). He wants only his name to be remembered as the liberator and high protector of Eritrea – whereas he is actually its destroyer. Almost 25 years after independence, he has not built a single significant monument in remembrance of the Eritrean heroes who fought with so much courage, skill and dedication until the end to insure the emancipation of the Eritrean people from oppression and servitude. Isayas does not want any individual or group (except himself) to be graced with deserved honour and gratitude for service rendered for the collective good. True, there are some small monuments for the fallen heroes built by the people here and there hidden in far away villages and small towns which have now terribly decayed and the writing on them completely faded or disappeared. Sadly, not much is being said about this as many other important issue including Eritrean history because the dictator doesn't want it.

We should now extend the work of our broom further. In spite of the glaring misdeeds of the dictator, there are some Eritreans who have undeservedly tried to use their academic credentials, false status and roles as “journalists” and political titles bestowed on them by the dictator for their de-service to the

people to bamboozle for the purpose of deflecting blame from the dictator. Actually, these people (and some of them with Ph.D.s, professorships and other professorial titles) are **brain farts**, as Socrates would say. If they don't think straight and do the decent thing as their titles suggest, then we should take them for imposters and deny them the honour of their credentials and expose them for what they are. As they say in Amharic when they meet someone falsely claiming to be a high priest or "**liq**", with a big turban and blundering in his pronouncements, "**Weym inde tintimwo yinageru; weym inde anegagerwo yatemtimu!!!**" We should give our ears, trust and respect only to those who are deserving. (Please have a look at Dawit H. Gebriel's informative article entitled "Eritrean Think Tank – and the need for purification of the intellect", www.awate.com, July 12, 2012.)

4.2. Creating a Consensus among the Opposition Groups

There is a useful cliché that has been widely used recently i.e. "**It is better to swim together than sink together!!!**" We believe that a fresh attempt should be made to seek consensus among the various factions in the Eritrean opposition. This should be done with full understanding of the Eritrean psyche and what holds us back from working together. We believe that there are certain tendencies among Eritreans which must be studied, understood and brought to the open so that we may be aware of them to protect ourselves from the damage they may cause in our efforts to work together. One of this is the art of compromise and give and take. Maybe we have to also start from the grass-roots level, not the leaders who usually have ossified mentality grounded in the past. Personal ambitions at the expense of the greater good is another factor. **Ultimately, it will not be the size of numbers that will matter but the force of our ideas.** Therefore, work must focus on developing well researched, well argued and thoroughly thought through solutions for the Eritrean problem.

4.3. Fear and Despair Should Give Way to Anger, Hope and Decisive Action!!

Anger and hope cannot replace fear by wishful thinking. We must show the people the truth about present day Eritrea and the effective steps that can be taken to weaken and remove the dictator. We need to win the battle in the minds of the people first. Once that is done, it will be easy and quick to see results on the ground.

5. Outline of the plan

5.1. Reforming and Strengthening the United Opposition Front

- 5.1.1.** The present coalition of opposition forces must approach other groups that are not still members in a new spirit of cooperation. Where there are difficulties with the leadership of the non-members, quiet appeal should be made to their grass-roots.
- 5.1.2.** The coalition must quickly start to play the virtual role of a Provisional Eritrean Government in exile without officially declaring it at least initially.
- 5.1.3.** The coalition must establish a very strong and well financed public relations/media arm to speak on behalf of the Eritrean public everywhere. When Eritreans were dying at sea, the Sinai and being beheaded by ISIS, there was no Eritrean body to vociferously speak on behalf of the people. We consider that a lost opportunity on the part of the Eritrean opposition.
- 5.1.4.** The coalition should have recognised representatives in every country and the host governments made aware of it.

5.2. Bringing Isayas Afworki's case to the ICC

The case of the **Kunamas** is enough to indict him. **Kernelios Osman** and other Kunamas are ready and willing to help in the matter. There must be two other cases as well to strengthen the claim. Once he is indicted and called to answer for the crimes he has committed, he will be greatly weakened. If he does not appear in court willingly to answer the charges, then preparations should be made to conduct a citizen's arrest anywhere he may be found. The threat itself is enough to throw this disturbed man off balance. The pressures on him from many directions are already taking their toll. He is already a much diminished man now not only politically but also physically. Despite all we have said so far about him, as human beings, we feel sorry for this man who is really nearing the end, by the look of it. But, it is his own making – and he, of course, would have no sympathy for his victims when they suffer and die before his own eyes.

6. Mobilising Support for the Cause

6.1. Eritreans everywhere

- 6.2. The role of community groups
- 6.3. Publications produced by the coalition to promote the cause
- 6.4. Diplomacy and Friends of Eritrea
 - 6.4.1. Ethiopia
 - 6.4.2. The Sudan
 - 6.4.3. The European Union
 - 6.4.4. The United States
 - 6.4.5.

7. The European Union Template, Eritrea, Ethiopia and the Region

European nations fought two bitter wars in the 20th century as if there was no tomorrow. **Over 50 million people died in World War II alone.** After the mayhem, they came to their senses, partly helped by the introduction of nuclear weaponry and the prospect of total mutual annihilation. But, the amazing thing is not only the absence of inter-national war in Europe after 1945, but more importantly the development of genuine amity amongst former mortal enemies. Now, European nations have become allies and economic partners under the umbrella of the **European Union** having a common parliament, common foreign policy framework, common law and judiciary, common central bank, common currency, common defence umbrella, etc. They talk about the European family and they help each other in every way and stand together. There is free movement of people, goods and services between and among the member countries. Any national of any member nation can move to and live and work in another member country. He/She may even claim free medical treatment and social security benefit.

As we have outlined above, **Eritreans have legitimate grievances against their former rulers - first, the Italian state for humiliating them as subhuman and them using them as cannon fodder in its various wars and for spreading the devastating rinderpest disease and subsequently cholera and hunger that killed millions of people in the region, especially in Eritrea. Eritreans have so far never received any reparations for all that they suffered under Italian rule. They should do so as soon as the dictator is gone.**

As we said earlier, Eritreans also have serious complaints against their past **Ethiopian rulers** for exploiting them and using them in various wars without accountability, selling them and their land off to the invaders, mismanaging their affairs, cheating, torturing and amputating them, denying them their civil rights and even their existence, and unfairly accusing them for collaborating with the enemy whereas the real collaborators were actually the Ethiopian

rulers of the past themselves (among them, **Menelik II**, the chief collaborator with the Italians and the French, but also **Ras Mengesha** with the Italians and the British, the quisling **Ras Gugsa** and many *arbegnoch* on the payroll of the Italians of whom we have a long list. In short, Eritreans had no hand in all the horse trading with the enemy. Ordinary Ethiopians, of course, had nothing to do with the misdeeds of their rulers, and they are in no way to blame. **We harbour no feelings of enmity towards the peoples of Ethiopia. We were fellow sufferers under the same oppressors - and we, in fact, extend our hand of friendship to them.**

However, it must be understood that what the Italian and the Ethiopian rulers did to the Eritrean people almost pails into insignificance as compared to the untold crimes committed on the people of Eritrea by none other than their very own delusional dictator - to wit, Isayas Afworki.

For our own good, it is better if we put the past in its proper perspective and come to terms as the Europeans did. We should think about the wonderful opportunities that the present and the future are offering us and all our neighbours to live in harmony as a family and create a prosperous, happy and strong region which is the envy of others, and not only in Africa. We believe that the first step in this direction can be taken by dispelling the myth based on deliberate lies that Ethiopians are our enemies. In fact, Ethiopians and Eritreans are in many ways kinsmen, as they are with the Sudanese, and share the same tradition and history (except in the recent past), have close economic ties and destiny. **In every way, Ethiopians and Eritreans are strategic allies - and will live and die together as we have seen recently in Libya and elsewhere.**

Once that is recognised, there are certain things that must be done in quick succession to make up for lost time. An immediate ceasefire must be declared between the two countries, followed by the start of negotiations to settle the border issue - which in our judgement is a minor problem and can be easily solved. Diplomatic relations should also be resumed immediately. Discussions should start about opening access to the Eritrean ports and trade treaties signed in succession. Once enough trust is created, even border restrictions could be lifted and free movement of people, goods and services allowed as in Europe. Common defence treaties may also be signed. Joint ministerial commissions could be formed as well. But, this is only the start.

This process of integration should, however, not be confined to Ethiopia and Eritrea. **Djibouti**, which has close ties with Ethiopia already could also come in, and at a later stage, **Sudan** and **Somalia**. But, **Al Shabab** must be defeated first. Finally, all members of IGAD may become members gradually one by one.

We are not advocating the dismantling of geographical boundaries, nor the relegation of sovereign nation states in the region. Our intention is not to diminish but to enhance the institutions of state in the region – make them work well for the people. All the member states will keep their armies, laws, parliaments, currencies - if they wish, as in Europe. No state will be above any other. This is important to guarantee that there will not be a repeat of the past - in which one party in good faith burns its bridges and decides to merge with another bigger party but is unable to go back in the event of betrayal or misunderstanding or hidden motives.

We believe that all this is positive departure from the stupidity of the past. The question is, however, so long as the regime of the Butcher of Asmara exists, would this be possible? Sooner or later that notorious regime will go. We are sure of that. But, we should actively work towards that end day and night. But, we can't wait until that happens. The coalition of Eritrean opposition groups should, in the meantime, act as the de facto Eritrean administration and start negotiations with the government of Ethiopia and others on provisional basis.

In all this, globalisation is the key concept. Peoples and nations are rapidly being integrated. We have now already reached a point where no nation can stand on its own. Gradually, national borders will become redundant stage by stage and will ultimately fade away - we believe from the way things are going at the moment. Supra national bodies like the **European Union** and the **United Nations**, and even the **African Union** are becoming increasingly important. Thus, the case between Eritrea and Ethiopia and our entire region should be informed by future possibilities of mutual amity and collective security and well-being and not the mistakes of the past as a result of stupidity, ignorance and humbug.

8. What Should Now Be the Immediate Agenda?

Here is our outline of what must be done with urgency.

8.1. Refreshing and transforming the Eritrean opposition front into a de facto national administration which can take over the affairs of state

8.2. Formation of a strategy and policy drafting committee of **5-8 technocrats** with multi-disciplinary background

8.3. Taking the case of Isayas Afworki to the **ICC**

8.4. Formation of a **strong PR** and media arm of the coalition – opening a website and radio station, Eritrean news bulletin in **Tigrigna** and **Arabic** to be

distributed all over the world in not more than four A4 pages – to be printed locally all over the world but to be centrally published at the headquarters of the coalition

8.5. Linking all **Eritrean community** groups to the coalition as much as possible

8.6. Holding regular panel discussions in different parts of the world

8.7. Targeted **active diplomacy**

8.8. Work inside Eritrea - all those on the periphery of the regime to be seen as potential allies, including a large part of the **Eritrean army**

Conclusion

The regime of Isayas Afwerki is weak, riven with internal divisions, bad faith and wide discontent. Eritrea is ripe for change: it is actually long overdue. The only things sustaining the regime are (a) **fear and suspicion within Eritrea**, and (b) **division and lack of good ideas and strong thinking in the opposition**. We still do not have clear strategies and tactics to outsmart the dictator. The regime's twilight existence keeps extending only because of the glaring weakness of the opposition.

We have said enough about Isayas and his rotten regime. We should now put the focus on ourselves as the opposition. We need to scientifically study thoroughly where we have been going wrong and establish the facts. It will then be clear what we need to do. We may now have some ideas, but they are not adequate - although we may start with them for the time being. Things will start to move quickly and the ground under the dictator's feet start to shake only when we are guided not by guess work and loud talk but research based facts and scientific thinking. We must end the days of guess work, backward thinking, mediocrity and mediocre leadership that have only made us endlessly go in circles in the dark - wasting our lives in vain!!

Thus, our work should now be well informed, well thought through, deliberate and nothing left to chance - steady, resolute, swift and productive. In all this, we have a lot to learn from an extremely influential ancient Chinese book, **The Art of War** (now available in English translation) by the famous Chinese military strategist **Sun Tzu**, who lived about 2500 years ago. His ideas are still being widely and gainfully used in formulating and executing effective, sure and swift strategies in war, business, politics and even social life. One of the sayings of Sun Tsu is, "**The successful strategist fights only when the battle has been won!!**" This means that the main fighting is actually done in the actual preparation for the battle - to wit, in gathering intelligence, in the

detailed planning and gathering of resources (materials and men), etc. long before the actual battle starts at a place and time that will insure victory for the general who has a superior mind and who is in complete control of the battle and its outcome. A mediocre general is a great danger to his men and himself, and he fights leaving the final outcome to chance or the gods.

We are at war by other means, as they say, with the moustachioed devil of Asmara and his criminal cohorts who have been dancing with glee on the dead bodies and graves of their innocent victims – our very own much loved brothers and sisters, sons and daughters. As a first stage of our road to victory, we have to now assemble a body of experts who will quietly do the research and planning without much talk and come up with an effective strategy to end the **Eritrean nightmare**.

Izi kulu chawchawun selamawi selfin, bikyatn, guahin nbeynu kentu iyu. Ziakil meredi'i intehaznan, inte temeramernan, intehasebnan, zewatseana inteweten'nan tray iyu nezi bealege ama'tsin, gebatn, ketalin awegidra mekerana kin'ali nki'il!!

We shall now leave you with a quotation from **Dr Martin Luther King** in the steps of the **Alabama State Capitol** during the dark days of the **Civil Rights movement** in **America** when many people despaired because it was taking too long to see change (quoted by the blessed **Selam Nerayo**):

“I know some of you are asking today, 'How long will it take?' I come to say to you this afternoon however difficult the moment , how frustrating the hour, *it will not be long*, because truth pressed to earth will rise again.

How long? *Not long*, because no lie can live forever.

How long? *Not long*, because you will reap what you sow.

How long? *Not long*, because the arm of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.”

We, thus, say, “Farewell!!!” to you all!! We shall meet in Asmara for the celebration of the downfall and trial of the wicked dictator!! ***Bitsibuk yerakbena!!***

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