



Eritrean Afar State in Exile(EASE)

Restoring the Dignity of the Eritrean Afar People Democratically
"Eretriyah Qafarih Konnabna Demokraasil Daabisenno"



Press Release

EASE CONGRESS RESOLUTION

At this very moment as we are conducting our congress in Brussels, our fellow Eritreans, especially our Afar people are being violently persecuted by the Eritrean government and its ruling PFDJ junta in Eritrea. Our people, the Eritrean Afar, are exposed to unprecedented human rights violations, including mass murders, extrajudicial killings, rapes, mass displacements, disappearances and tortures. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea and the UN Commission of Inquiry in Eritrea (COI) have confirmed Eritrean government's systematic targeting of the Eritrean Afar in order to force them from their traditional homeland of (Dankalia), a resources rich and strategic coast along the Red Sea.

In June 2015 Report, COI raised concern for Afar displacement from their homeland. The COI stated the actions by Eritrean authority "may be construed as an intentional act to dispossess them [the Afar] of their ancestral lands, their livelihood and their culture" (Para 1171) and that:

The killing of members of the Afar ethnic group and reports of existence of Mass-graves... have also triggered their displacement from their lands within the country and across borders to Ethiopia and Djibouti. This has posed great difficulty to their livelihoods as they depend on their traditional lands for the sustenance as an indigenous ethnic group. (Para-b 1121)

Furthermore, the COI report also "confirmed" that:

Land traditionally belonging to or used by the Afars was seized in the framework of the Land reform and afterwards by decision of the Government, without consultation of the impacted communities; (Para 1157)

More recently, The Commission of Inquiry on human rights in Eritrea concluded, that the Eritrean officials have intentionally and severely deprived Eritrean Kunama and Afar of fundamental rights contrary to international law on ethnic grounds and that Eritrean officials have committed the ***crime of persecution, a crime against humanity***, in a large-scale and routine manner since May 1991. (Paragraphs 295-296)

The egregious human and political rights violation against the Eritrean Afar was at the center of the 2nd EASE conference which was held on September 1st -2nd in Brussels-Belgium under the theme of "***Restoring the Eritrean Afar self-Rule and Federal Eritrea***".

Delegates of EASE congress, including Eritrean political opposition leaders, Afar traditional leaders, human rights groups and nongovernmental organizations together expressed their solidarity with the Afar Eritreans and condemned the treatments of Afar by tyrannical rule of PFDJ in Eritrea.

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Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) is an exiled Eritrean Afar political organization dedicated to self-determination and self-rule of Eritrean Afar people in their coastal homeland of Dankalia, Eritrea, where the indigenous Afar are subjected to marginalization, persecution and ethnic cleansing at the hands of the current Eritrean government. EASE is the voice of the Eritrean Afar people. EASE draws its mandate from the political and traditional Afar leaders, the leadership of Afar women and youth groups, the Eritrean Afar Diaspora and Eritrean-Afar refugees.



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EASE conference delegates acknowledged the current Eritrean Afar situation and reaffirmed the followings:

- EASE and its delegates believe the policies and actions by Eritrean authorities amount to **Crimes against Humanity**. The actions of Eritrean government pose existential threat to Afar lives, Afar economic wellbeing and Afar cultural institutions and their ethnic identity.
- The Lands, resources and the strategic coasts in Dankalia belongs to the Eritrean Afar people. Therefore, Eritrean government should stop **illegal** confiscation of Afar lands and properties, the displacement of Eritrean Afar from their homes and businesses, the exploitation of their natural resources and selling of their strategic coasts to Gulf Arab States and to other multinational corporations.
- Following no-war, no-peace situations with neighbouring countries, Dankalia still classified as the only no go military zone in the country. Dankalia still ruled by top military and Navy Generals. Thus, off limit to foreign visitors, foreign aid, humanitarian groups and other media observers.
- After 25 years of economic and social embargo on Eritrean Afar population, the Eritrean Afar are now the most impoverished community in the county. All the trade routes in and out of Dankalia are closed. Afar traditional economic activities such as fishing and animal raising are systematically destroyed.
- The strategic coast of Assab port and the Airport have been sold illegally and used as military outpost and are subject to further militarization of Afar region and dragging Afar strategic assets into conflict across the red sea.

Call to Action:

1. Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) and its members have resolved to fight to end the tyrannical rule of PFDJ and call upon all Eritrean opposition groups to join hands with EASE to hasten the demise of PFDJ rule in Eritrea.
2. Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) has unveiled a [new political roadmap](#) for democratic reform in Eritrea and call upon Eritrean political organizations, civil society and activist groups to work closely with the Afar model to realize democratic governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law, self rule, promotion of diversity and establish a federation based on brotherly coexistence and equality between multicultural, multiethnic and multi-religious Eritreans in order to secure our national unity and protect national sovereign territories of Eritrea.

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3. Eritrean Afar were the pioneers of Eritrean liberation struggle. Afar played major role in Eritrea's independence struggle. EASE and Afar people of Dankalia will continue to safeguard the sovereignty and national borders of Eritrea. EASE extends its hands of solidarity and call on all Eritreans to come join hands with us to restore Afar self rule and the dignity of our fellow Eritreans.
4. The current unimplemented Eritrean Constitution is highly centralized constitution. Eritrea's 1997 constitution goes against the values and principles of Eritrean societies. Eritrea needs a powers sharing constitution. EASE calls upon fellow Eritreans, Eritrean constitutional experts, regional policy advisors and international community to come together to help draft the multicultural and multiethnic constitution that reflects the ethnic diversity, the Eritrean history, customary laws and culture of Eritrea's nationalities.
5. Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) call upon our neighborly counties such as Djibouti, Ethiopia and our Arab neighbors across the red sea to respect Eritrean Afar lives, their political freedoms and aspirations, respect the Afar territories and its natural resources and work hard for garnering cultural cohesiveness and socioeconomic partnerships for lasting and sustainable economic development and peace and security of our region.
6. Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) would like to acknowledge and thanks the Governments of Ethiopia and Afar Regional State in Ethiopia for extending hands to host our Eritrean Afar refugees. We call upon other nations to help with Afar refugees in dire situation across the region.
7. Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) call upon Afar traditional leadership, the political leaders, activist groups, movements and NGO's to work hand-in-hand with newly established EASE offices and executives in the region and in the Diaspora.

In conclusion, the congress announces the election of Twenty-one (21) Members' of Legislative council, of which nine (9) are Executive Committee members. Mr. Ahmed Youssouf Mohamed was elected as president of EASE, and Mr. Mohamed Balua as vice-President and Secretary of Foreign relations.

GICLO BISOH
Sept 16, 2016

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