Open Letter to Foundation Max van der Stoel (FMS)

Dear Sir,

I read your article (Feb 29, 2024) on Eritrea entitled ‘**’Where do the tensions within the Eritrean diaspora come from**?’’ with great interest. I also concede that given the disgraceful event of Feb 17 2024, it is appropriate on your part to write about it.

However regrettably, I must say your article falls well short of informative and truthful journalism. It is immensely less than banal journalism. Let me explain why one at a time.

In the first instance to label the shock and anger of this generous, accommodating and tolerant society, as xenophobic is a serious misjudgement. Which society wouldn’t feel betrayed when such virulent behaviour wreaks its streets with impunity? Hasn’t this country accepted, fed, clothed and cared for these young people? Would you take it for a gratitude when its norms and values are abused in this fashion? I beg to differ sir.

Secondly you mention borders, languages and ethnicity in respect of Eritrea’s history. So what then and what is implied here? If you find this relevant why didn’t show its impact on the event of 17 Feb? I will return to this later to explain from my own perspective.

You assert lack of good governance in Eritrea with absolute disregard to the predicament and trajectory of such development. Sir, in your narration there is no place neither for the ever present cloud of existential threat the country faces nor acknowledgement for the invasion of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. A fair and truthful journalism would not gloss over such glaring detrimental events obtaining on the ground particularly as regards the relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia during the past 5 + decades.

Sir, if you had the respect for decent and truthful journalism, you could have investigated and dug a little deeper to get a better and insightful perspective as to why things are in Eritrea as they are.

One of the most ridiculous falsehood I found in your article is the assertion that the government Eritrea trains and mobilizes the youth in the diaspora to control its citizens!

Let us accept this premises for the sake of argument

* Are these youngsters mobilised and trained? In the Netherlands? .
* If so, then the security of this country is seriously compromised. This means it is incapable of dealing with foreign forces training on its territory! Really? Please provide a veritable evidence for the interest of your readers.

A third allegation is that the government of Eritrea threatens with violence the families of those in the Netherland if they refuse to pay diaspora tax.

Sir here there is something nauseatingly wrong:

* Correction It is not ‘’ diaspora tax’’. Its legal and proper designation is ‘’ Recovery and Rehabilitation tax’’ and is a volitional act. It is don’t want don’t pay!
* Please provide witnesses who have been watched, threatened or intimidated for refusing to pay the 2% tax. Threats and intimidations are criminal and punishable offences in the Netherlands. Hence I put it to you: have you interviewed individuals who have been subjected to this criminal act? If so have they reported this to the police? Have you verified this with the police? Sir I remain wanting to hear from you.

A fourth outlandish assertion you tell us is that events such as cultural festivals, Independence Day anniversaries are used by the government to harass and threaten disobedient people and to raise money. If so can we therefore say Netherlanders are guilty because they observe **National Remembrance Day** (May 4). **Liberation Day** (May 5), **Labour Day**, and **Carniva**l (Feb 19 - 21). Wouldn’t it be therefore an outrageous and extremely scandalous if Netherlanders were denied to celebrate and observe these events which they cherish and value as elements of their national history? If not why would the denial and negation be applicable only to the peacefully celebrated Eritrean events! Can we really say this is not racist and extremely discriminatory?

Sir in which country have you heard that a cultural celebration, tribute to martyrs and independence anniversary are considered offensive. Should the Germans feel offended because the Dutch celebrate May 5? This is light–years madness but also an insult to our intelligence with impunity.

 Sir the allegations in your article are not new. They are the incessantly regurgitated fabricated accusations none of which have neither been reported to the law enforcement agencies nor presented openly by any aggrieved accuser. All what you have presented can be retrieved from the archived literature on Eritrea by people the likes Professor Mirjam van Reisen and Martin Plaut - the two champions of the agenda to destroy Eritrea.

Sir you write and I ‘’ The Eritrean regime trains and directs a paramilitary organisation called 'Eri-Blood'**.**[**According to Eritrea expert Mirjam van Reisen**](https://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/in-den-haag-botste-de-lange-arm-van-het-eritrese-regime-met-de-vuist-van-de-oppositie-en-niet-voor-het-eerst~b110f345/)**these thugs are strategically deployed at pro-regime events to provoke incidents with counter-demonstrators, who usually want to protest peacefully’’**. Really? Are you telling us that pro-government thugs as you call them go out to the opponents of the government’s events to provoke them? Can you provide a single incidence that this happened? But this is a dysrationalia of the highest order. A person of average intelligence like myself would seek help to understand the literal essence and rationality of this contrived allegation. Clearly it is meant to absolve those who come out to the streets to kill and maim peaceful and law abiding citizens. Peaceful and law abiding protesters do not carry lethal objects to stone and stab. Remarkably the above avowal from the **learned** professor has no parallel in any sense. But when hatred rules the mind, one can excel the Lucifer in aberrant thinking.

By your failure to be guided by honest investigative journalism and generate evidence based wisdom to purify your report, you have joined the people bent on erasing Eritrea and its proud peace loving people from the face of the earth. The border, language and ethnicity considerations you mentioned in respect of Eritrea’s history, have relevance to the issues the Tigreans are discussing in this link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrQ7G5w13CM>

What is said here clearly shows the depth of the congruence of the agenda of the establishment of Greater Tigray and the destruction of Eritrea’s statehood as driven by the so called opponents of the government of the State of Eritrea. You be pretty sure Tigreans were among those who fought with the police in Den hag on 17 Feb 2024. **(Please get a translation beginning at 1:47:34/2:45:34**) I hope that you will appreciate why genuine diaspora Eritreans cherish and are zealous to celebrate Eritrea’s Independence Day’s anniversaries and their cultural festivals. They will pay any price for the perpetuity of their ancestral country and cultural heritage.

Let me say this in concluding my case. Like or not Eritrea and its people are here to stay. As a country that rose from the ashes of heinous subjugation through immeasurable sacrifice against ALL OODS and with its unique NATIONAL IDENTITY, Eritrea will march on with heads high among all free nations for eternity.

Long Live Eritrea Libre

Haile.

Holland