Human Rights and Hypocrisy

By: Berhane Woldu

It amazes me when white people and Westerners non-minorities talk about the rights of people who live in Africa, Asia and Latin America. For purpose of space I will only talk about Eritrea a nation of five million people a country where nine ethno-linguistic groups and two of the oldest and powerful monumental religions have being living side by side in harmony.

Very recently there have been reports about this strong nation that it has imprisoned about 10,000 of its citizens for political opposition and that the Canadian Government has literally kicked out Eritrea’s foreign mission staff out of the country due to its diplomat was collecting 2% tax from Canadian Eritreans.

From the outset I would challenge the so called expert on the number of political prisoners in Eritrea. If there are political prisoners in Eritrea they might be no more than 200 (two hundred). YES NOT ANY MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED POLITCAL PRISONERS. Amenity International came up with their shady report after talking to Eritrean refugees (economic refugees) in neighboring countries. Anyone who is educated would know that when you do a study or research on a subject; there are statistical rules, regulations and research methodologies that one uses. An organization such as Amnesty International should feel ashamed to show its incompetence as an organization to the whole world.

**Or is it racism that a third world country does not need a scientific testimony or report**?

As for the Canadian foreign Minster I would like to inform him/ her that he/she is doing  injustice for not allowing Canadian Eritrean’s to pay their recovery tax of 2%.The Law of The Land is; if you are to benefit from the Eritrean nation you have to pay 2% recovery tax. Now if you are an Eritrean citizen you have properties earned or inherited in Eritrea and want to claim them, then you have to pay your 2% recovery tax. Furthermore; as an Eritrea citizen you are entitled to a five hundred square meter of plotted land to build your house in-addition to a farm land free of charge. Now where in the world does one have that kind of an offer? As a Canadian do you have that benefit? As A Canadian do you not have to abide with the Law of the Land? After all the 2% recovery tax is optional pay if you want to recover or acquire a property.

Coming back to the Amnesty International’s report it reminds me of my own experience living in a white world. You see I went to college in Asheville North Carolina and had a political science teacher who at the end of the semester told me that “You deserve an A as you are bright and good student, but I couldn’t because I can only allocate Three (3) A’s in class and they all went to white students”. My friends, this is a person with a doctorate degree. Prior to and after completing college I was working in Washington, DC at a liquor store I was a porter before and after college while young white high school dropouts were hired as cashiers and assistant managers. I clearly remember an unadulterated manager called Larry Zibert who said that he was saddened at what the owner of the store was doing and did his best to find me a job with my profession. Associated Catholic Charities was one of my employers an executive director by the name of Jack Morison told me that even though I had an MBA degree, I had no future in management position, as I was black, foreigner and male after his advice I had no choice but to leave the organization. The most interesting of all things in race relation is that of my children who were born in the USA, they were schooled at a Catholic school. American kids grade one to six are very mixed at that young age; you will see white, black, Asian and Spanish kids play, have sleep over and celebrate birth days together. Once they reach high school things starts to change based on racial division. At college level pure separation of the races happens.

Why talk about this now because it is the same thing over and over the people you expect to be enlightened are the most racist people in the world more so than the regular people who want serve you a cup of coffee because you are black. The same is true of the person from Amnesty International. Institutional racism is nothing knew it is a daily living condition for minorities.

Eritrea is a country that had gotten its independence on its own after fighting a thirty year war and anyone who knows the history of the armed struggle will know that the Eritrean leadership has always been respectful of human rights. Any war prisoner from Russia, East Germany and Ethiopia will attest to it. Now that Eritrea has achieved its right full place in the world it is most respectful of human rights.

Reports such as that of Amnesty International have no effect to the psychological being of an Eritrean; as Eritrean’s all over the world are well aware of their history and future. No sleep lost over things of this matter the Eritrean people and government are one and the same, focused and working on their desired goals poised to transform the Eritrean nation into something perhaps quite different from what Amnesty International or the Canadian Foreign service wish or imagines.