



Concluding Remarks of the Eritrean Delegation At the 23rd Session of the Human Rights Council

In Geneva

June 4, 2013

Thank you Mr. Vice President,

1. I would like to thank those delegations that made constructive comments in their interventions, and the Cuban delegation in particular for its principled stand against the country specific resolutions.
2. My delegation is surprised to hear some members raising concern about the prolonged National Service program in Eritrea while remaining silent as the international community does nothing to bring an end to Ethiopia's 11-year long occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories. The International community must shoulder its legal and moral responsibilities to contribute to the Eritrean peoples' full enjoyment of all human rights.
3. The reference by some delegations that there is a common position by the African Group on the human rights situation in Eritrea is incorrect and misleading.
4. Contrary to assertions made by few delegates, that the border issue has no links to the full enjoyment of fundamental human rights, it is a well established principle of human rights that peace, security, development human rights are interlinked, interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Particularly, Ethiopia's comment as an occupier on this issue is purely self-serving.

It is also incredulous to hear the Ethiopian delegation expressing concern for the human rights of the Eritrean people. A regime that deported over 80,000 Eritreans because it did not like the color of their eyes, that separated breastfeeding children by deporting their mothers, that desecrated the cemeteries of Eritrea's war heroes

and is actively supporting insurgent groups that are committing terrorist acts does not have the moral authority to speak about the human rights of our people

What is in fact a pattern is the conduct of the regime in Ethiopia, and one that needs further scrutiny by the international community. This is a regime stands accused by Genocide Watch and Survivors International of committing massacres against its own people in the Gambela, Ogaden and Oromia regions of Ethiopia.

5. It is troubling to hear the SR attempting to appeal to the emotions of the Council and influence its decisions by presenting such unfounded statements, such as the one about 7-8 yrs old. It is imperative that she gets her facts right.
6. Some delegations are feigning concern for the human rights of the Eritreans while violating the rights and well being of the Eritrean people by imposing sanctions and attempting to strangle Eritrea's economy. The destabilizing efforts in the last 11 years are numerous. My delegation finds that to be quite hypocritical. A clear indication of the political motivations of the resolution, the mandate and many of the concerns that have been listed in the interactive dialogue have become evident now more than ever. Eritrea continues to reject this politically motivated pattern and reiterates its position made in yesterday's statement.

I thank you Mr. vice president