

Eritrea Today

At this moment Eritrea is a country where diversity is seen as a blessing rather than an impediment. The country has nine ethnic groups, speaking nine different languages and practicing many religions, and yet none of these are seen as negative but colors that add to the beauty of the Eritrean mosaic.

Eritrea's achievements in education in the past two decades of independence are praiseworthy. Between 1991-2013 student enrollment in Grades K-12 has more than tripled. In the same period the number of institutions of higher learning has grown eight-fold from 1 to 8.

Equally impressive in this period is Eritrea's success in providing commendable healthcare services to its citizens. Today close to 75% of Eritreans have access to health services within 6 miles of their homes; 99% of Eritrea's children are vaccinated, HIV infection is less than 0.5%, and there is no one who dies because of malaria. At the same time more than 75% of the population has access to clean drinking water, up from about 10% twenty years ago.



Gold Pour at the Bisha Gold Mine

“Eritrea’s Present is a Remote Future of Others!”

- “I am not ashamed to admit that I have been overwhelmed by what I saw in Eritrea. Living, working and eating with these staunch revolutionaries I am tempted to echo the famous quote: ‘I have seen the future of Africa and it works.’” -- **African Events, October, 1985**
- “Eritrea has become an unlikely oasis of peace and civility and a beacon of hope astride the Horn of Africa.”-- **The Wall Street Journal, 5/31/1994**
- “Eritrea is virtually without peer in Africa as it pursues its own model of development and vision of democracy.”-- **London Financial Times, 1/18/1996**
- “Eritrea is being seen as a model for the regeneration of a whole continent... This country could be one of the biggest success stories. The nationals' sense of purpose, the discipline of its people, the hard work, which is evident in the countryside, gives us cause for hope.” -- **Washington Times, 9/14/1996**

Eritrea is one of three African countries that have met 7 out of 8 U. N. Millennium Development Goals such as: reducing maternal, infants, children under 5 mortality rate, and gender equality. According to UNESCO, Eritrea is also leading sub-Saharan Africa in adult literacy and the literacy of youth ages between 15-24 years.

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Happy Birthday, Eritrea!



Beauty Under Eritrea's Red Sea Waters



May 24, 1991

Symbolizes the triumph of the human spirit

May 24, 1991 is a sacred day in the annals of Eritrean history and the history of all those who rise, in the face of overwhelming odds, to determine their own destiny and defend their basic rights. This is a celebration of the triumph of the human spirit in the quest for freedom against all odds. This day embodies what the essence of Eritrea represents: the spirit of unflinching determination, unwavering dedication and, when necessary, unyielding and principled defiance.

May 24 also marks the birth of an independent nation that many had solemnly predicted would never happen. The birth of independent Eritrea took a long, twisted and tortuous road because the Eritrean people were unwilling to compromise on their basic right to determine their own destiny. It began to emerge soon after the total and complete destruction of the Ethiopian army became obvious when the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) liberated Asmara, the Eritrean capital on this historic day. This was a birth that many had predicted would not see the light of day, a birth that many others hoped would not happen. In fact, there was nothing the superpowers and others didn't do to derail the emergence of an independent and sovereign Eritrea. The war was routinely described as a David-vs.-Goliath matchup, reflecting the huge financial, military and



Eritrea's Unpolluted Coastline



A Big Stride to Ensure Food Security

diplomatic support external forces continually supplied the successive rulers of Ethiopia mostly to quash the aspirations of the Eritrean people. However, the EPLF, guided by a policy driven by the principle of self-reliance—relying almost entirely on its people and the country's meager resources, overcame one obstacle after another, and defeated the huge, well-financed Ethiopian Goliath and triumphantly entered Asmara, the Eritrean capital, in the morning of May 24, 1991.

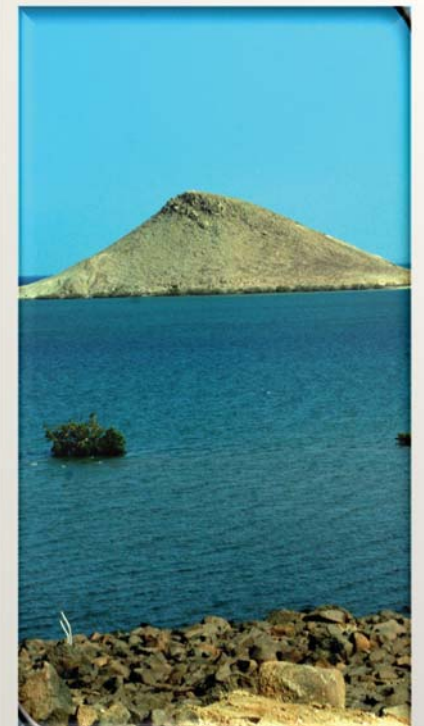
May 24 also marks the end of more than a century of domination of modern-day Eritrea by external powers, small and big, starting with the Italians, who set it up as their first colony in Africa in 1890. The Italians were forced to give up the colony following their defeat in 1941 by the Allied Powers in World War II. They were followed by the British who administered the territory until 1952 when, under the cover of the a UN resolution, the Western powers, led by the United States, decided to hand it over to their client state Ethiopia camouflaged as a federation.

One Naysayer's Voice

"From the point of view of justice, the opinions of the Eritrean people must receive consideration. Nevertheless the strategic interests of the United States in the Red Sea basin and considerations of security and world peace make it necessary that the country has to be linked with our ally, Ethiopia."

-- John Foster Dulles, US Secretary of State, 1952

However, May 24 is also a day of renewal, a day of recommitment to ensure the realization of the promise enshrined in the spark that launched the armed struggle on September 1, 1961, and the solemn pledge given to those who made the ultimate sacrifice so that the Eritrean people can determine their own destiny and enjoy what May 24 represents.



Eritrea: Tourists' Heaven