

“The HIDRI GAMES”

In order to strengthen our community and be the best ambassadors for Eritrea we must first learn to work together, have the ability to sacrifice our desires for others and be able to tolerate all the obstacles and negativity that might be thrown our way. It is with that spirit that the HIDRI Committee designed the activity based portion of the conference, “The HIDRI Games,” for this year’s 10th annual YPFDJ conference. The HIDRI Games focused on teaching HIDRI members the importance of Bitsaynet (camaraderie), Tewfiynet (Sacrifice), and Tsewarnet (tolerance), the three essential values that are required to ensure we are building a strong, conscious, and patriotic youth that can play leadership roles in their communities.

The HIDRI Games were designed to teach each HIDRI Participant about Eritrea’s history, present with the hopes of building a brighter future. Upon arrival all participants were separated into 8 districts. Each district number represented a significant year in Eritrean History. The 8 districts were then set to compete against each other in a series of tasks and challenges that would not only question their knowledge on Eritrea but also test their skills on Bisaynet (camaraderie), Tewfiynet (Sacrifice) and Tsewarnet (tolerance) and test their leadership, communication and critical thinking skills.

1. **District 77:** This District was named after the Battle of Massawa (the First Battle of Massawa). The battle took place from 1977 to 1978, in and around the coastal city of Massawa, Eritrea. The port was besieged by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) against the forces of Ethiopia, and was one of two battles in and around the city.
2. **District 88:** This District was named after the Battle of Afabet. The Battle at Afabet was a watershed battle in the Eritrean War of Independence. During this battle “The Nadew Command” was defeated; it was one of four commands, or army corps, of the Ethiopian Second Revolutionary Army.
3. **District 98:** This district was named after the Eritrean–Ethiopian border War that took place from May 1998 to June 2000 between Eritrea and Ethiopia. As a result of this war 19,000 Eritrean soldiers were killed in this conflict.
4. **District 91:** This district was named after the last battle during the War of Independence which took place in Assab in 1991. Assab is a port city in the Southern Red Sea Region of Eritrea.
5. **District 9:** This district was named after the unjust sanctions resolutions 1907 and 2023 placed on Eritrea by the U.N.
6. **District 90:** This district was named after Second Battle of Massawa (also known as Operation Fenkil). The battle took place in 1990 in and around the coastal city of Massawa, Eritrea. This offensive was also dubbed the Fenkil Offensive and involved an attack by both land and sea by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) against the Ethiopian Army.
7. **District 61:** This district was named after the Battle of Mount Adal. Hamid Idris Awate who fired the first shot that sparked the armed struggle for Eritrean Independence.
8. **District 78:** This district was named after the Siege of Barentu. The siege took place in 1978 in and around the town of Barentu in western Eritrea. It was laid to siege jointly by the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) against the forces of Ethiopia. This was a decisive battle during the Eritrean War of Independence and marked the beginning of Soviet involvement in the conflict.

Once the theme was announced, each district was instructed to work together to understand the significance of their District number utilizing the “HIDRI History Packet” they were provided. Once they learned the history behind their district number they were left to come up with a strategic plan to

overcome the obstacle challenges they would be faced with. The legacy of our heroes is the memory of a great name and the inheritance of a great example. Each district soon realized that it was their job to represent their district in honor of our brave martyrs who died in our honor.

The games began on Friday where each group had to volunteer a tribute to perform an unknown task. The task included representing their district in what we call the Niqhat Relay. Each district had to race to answer as many question regarding Eritrea from the origin of the Eritrean people to pre-colonial, armed struggle and current events.

The games continued on Sunday with scavenger hunt that required the groups to work together by using their combined knowledge on Eritrean history and Eritrean facts. The Conference venue was transformed into Eritrea by renaming certain areas to represent the 6 regions of Eritrea and it's capital city. Each district was given a clue that directed them from the starting point, Asmara to their next destination. Districts were required to know the capital city of each region and also answer the question in their clues to advance to the next level. Once they made it to their next clue they were faced with obstacle challenges that required critical thinking skills, team work and Niqhat to overcome. From having to loose a leg and sight and depend on your unit to guide you, to trusting your fellow comrade to defend you, to having to sacrifice your self for your Unit, each obstacle challenges were well thought out designed to give our participants an insight to exactly what our martyrs went through to defend our honor and sovereignty.

With the "There is no I in team" mentality, they were able to work together as a unit. Through this exercise they were able to show a sign of growth and maturity. The day continued with many different team bonding activities that were designed to force them to work as a team and accomplish their tasks.

Overall, the event was a great success as HIDRI participants arrived without much knowledge about Eritrea and left armed with knowledge and interest in Eritrea and ready to become the ambassadors and advocates for Eritrea. We would like to thank everyone that attended, but most importantly we would like to thank our volunteers who spent countless hours perfecting the HIDRI games which not only taught us but left us motivated to continue the Eritrean legacy.