



**Bi-Weekly Newsletter
Permanent Mission of the State of Eritrea to AU
and UNECA
Press Section**



President Isaias Afwerki Received Chinese Delegation



President Isaias Afwerki received on November 6, a delegation of the People's Republic of China led by Mr. Liu Jie, Vice-Governor of Sichuan Provincial People's Government.

President Isaias referred to the long-standing warm ties that exist between the two countries and underlined the reservoir of good will as well as the conducive climate that exists for Chinese companies to actively participate in major investment ventures in the country.

Mr. Liu Jie, for his part, paid tribute to the deep and expanding ties between the People's Republic of China and Eritrea. The Vice Governor stated that Chinese companies are prepared to invest in physical infrastructure and

particularly in mining, the construction of dams and bridges as well as in agricultural projects.

In addition, the Chinese delegation met with Mr. Hagos Ghebrehwet, Head of PFDJ Economic Affairs, Mr. Berhane Habtemariam, the Minister of Finance and Mr. Abraha Asfaha, the Minister of Public Works to assess progress of investments already underway and explore concrete prospects for future engagement.

Mr. Liu also met with the Governor of the Central Region, Major General Romodan Awilyay, for discussions on specific areas of cooperation.

An agreement for the purchase and transfer of Sunridge Gold Corporation's 60% share of the Asmara Mining Project to the Sichuan Road Bridge Mining (SRBM) was signed during the visit of the Chinese Delegation. The Eritrea National Mining Corporation (ENAMCO) owns the remaining 40% equity in the venture.

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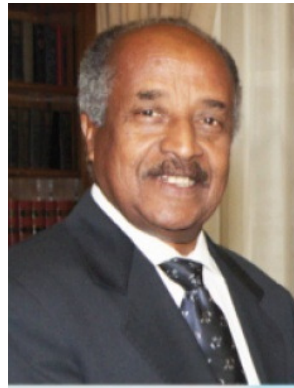
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Eritrean Delegation Attended the Third Africa-India Forum Summit

An Eritrean delegation led by Foreign Minister Osman Saleh attended the 3rd Africa-India Forum Summit, held in New Delhi from 26-29 October.

In a Statement he delivered at the Summit, Mr. Osman highlighted the emerging strong partnership between Africa and India which encompasses politics, diplomacy as well as the common struggle for peace, stability and a more equitable world. On bilateral ties, the Foreign Minister underlined the reservoir of political goodwill that both sides harbor. This has not been translated into a robust programme of cooperation as yet, Mr. Osman stated.



Eritrea and Finland Signed Agreement of Cooperation in Higher Education

Eritrea and Finland signed an Agreement on Technical Cooperation in higher education in Asmara on 2nd of October 2015. The Agreement was signed by Mr. Semere Russom, the Minister of Education and Mr. Pekka Haavisto, Special Envoy of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The cooperation agreement envisages Finnish support in five projects of higher education. These projects will enhance the quality and outreach of higher education; contribute to the further development of Eritrea's education sector; and bolster the efficient use of research-based knowledge. The agreement will in particular promote development of information technologies in Eritrea's institutions of tertiary education; support the installation of digital libraries and strengthen agricultural research.

The Minister of Education, Mr. Semere Russom asserted that the agreement reached will enhance ongoing efforts in professional human resources development and that it will be accomplished within the envisaged time frame.

Executive Director of the Eritrean Commission of Higher Education, Prof. Tadesse Mehari, on his part expressed satisfaction at the level of cooperation reached after a series of meetings in the past years.

Mr. Pekka Haavisto noted that Eritrea is a country known for its peace and tranquility in the Horn of Africa region and expressed his appreciation of the efforts exerted to revitalize and expand the education system in the country.

Eritrea to Change Nakfa Currency Notes

On 4th of November 2015, Bank of Eritrea issued a Regulation on the change of the Nakfa currency notes. Legal Notice No. 124/2015 stipulates that the Commercial Banks operating in the country will redeem the old Nakfa currency notes in circulation

with new legal tender Nakfa currency notes at the rate of one old Nakfa currency note equals one new Nakfa currency note. The redemption of the currency notes in circulation will take place from 18 November to 30 December 2015.

President Isaias Sent Congratulatory Message to the New President of Tanzania

President Isaias Afwerki sent congratulatory message to the newly elected President of Tanzania, H.E. Dr. John Magufuli.

The message was delivered by Eritrea's non-resident Ambassador to Tanzania, Ambassador Beyene Rus-som, who attended the inauguration and swearing-in ceremony held on 5th of November 2015.



Eritrea's Regional Policy Anchored on the Promotion of a Safe and Cooperative Neighbourhood

The Permanent Mission of Eritrea to AU and UNECA as well as the Embassy of Eritrea in Kenya attended the 11th Annual Expert Meeting on Regional Security Policy at the Greater Horn of Africa, held from 3rd – 4th of November 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya. The conference was organized by the offices of the Frederick-Elbert Stiftung in Ethiopia and Kenya in cooperation with the German Institute for international and Security Affairs (SWP).

The purpose of the meeting was to bring together experts of the region in order to discuss and suggest solutions to the conflicts in Somalia, South Sudan and strengthen ties among the countries in the region. The main issues discussed at this meeting were;

- ◆ Eritrea: Strengthening regional ties;
- ◆ The war in South Sudan and regional efforts for peace;
- ◆ The Somalia peace process – time for paradigm shift;
- ◆ Transnational terrorism – a threat for the whole of East Africa; and
- ◆ Migration within the region and its meaning for security.

Ambassador Araya Desta, who was the first speaker stressed on Eritrea's regional policy and described it as anchored on the promotion of a safe and cooperative neighbourhood. He further elaborated that this policy has emanated from compelling economic, political and security considerations.

Eritrea joined IGADD in 1994 soon after its formal independence. Eritrea played an active part in the efforts to revitalize and expand the organization, with the aim to render it an important tool for regional integration leading to the establishing of Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD). Eritrea's pivotal contributions in the articulation of the Declaration of Principles to resolve the conflict in Sudan that IGAD enunciated in 1994 is a matter of historical record.

In the years that followed, Eritrea with its partners in IGAD was constructively involved in the process that eventually led to the signing of the Comprehensive...

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Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan and South Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Ambassador Araya further stressed that **strengthening Regional Ties** is a pre-requisite to peace and security among neighboring countries so that they would implement sincere cooperation towards free movement of people and goods and above all cooperate in challenging and fighting poverty and underdevelopment.

The political imperative is equally evident as almost invariably in all these countries, the same linguistic and ethnic groups straddle the State boundaries and are bound by deep historical ties as well as cultural affiliations.

Eritrea's catalytic role in bringing about an agreement between the central Government of Sudan and the eastern opposition movements which resulted in the Asmara Peace Accord as well as its multiple joint efforts with other regional countries – Chad, Libya, and Qatar – to contribute for the Sudanese solution to the problems in Darfur all fit into its efforts to ensure safe and cooperative neighbourhood.

It is also important to note that Eritrea continued to promote, in its modest capacity and principally through the regional forum of IGAD, an enduring solution to the crisis in Somalia.

However, in 2007 IGAD endorsed Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia, in contravention to its own earlier decisions and UNSC resolution 1725 (2006) that prohibited neighbouring countries from intervening in Somalia. This decision compelled Eritrea to suspend its participation from IGAD meetings. In 2011, Eritrea informed the Executive Secretary of IGAD that it has reactivated its participation in IGAD. However, Ethiopia singlehandedly and illegally has blocked, to date, Eritrea's participation in the organization.

In the past 24 years, and despite some challenges, Eritrea's relations with its immediate neighbours and countries of the region—Djibouti, Sudan, South Sudan, Egypt, Chad, Kenya, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, UAE, Qatar, Uganda... have been generally good.

In the instance in which it was involved in unfortunate confrontations – big or small – with Yemen, Ethiopia and Djibouti, the new territorial claims and push to redraw the colonial boundaries did not emanate from Eritrea. In all these cases too, Eritrea has from the outset argued for the supremacy of international law; for resorting to arbitral instruments, consistent with article 33 and 95 of the UN Charter.

Eritrea advocated a peaceful resolution of the territorial dispute with Yemen, Ethiopia and Djibouti and has acted honorably and in good faith. Thus,

- ◆ Eritrea accepted the verdict of the Eritrea-Yemen Arbitration Commission without conditions or reservations and implemented it promptly.
- ◆ Eritrea is fully and in good faith engaged in the Qatari mediation to resolve the problem with Djibouti peacefully.
- ◆ Eritrea has accepted the final and binding decisions of the EEBC on delimitation and demarcation of the common border with Ethiopia.
- ◆ It has also accepted the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Arbitration Commission without much ado.

Ambassador Araya further emphasized that friendly relations between states can be anchored only on the rule of law, respect for the UN Charter, especially the principles of equality, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of states.

Eritrea has always been ready to engage in political dialogue with the view to fostering good neighborly and cooperative relations with its neighbours because of its vision for a zone of peace, stability and cooperative relations in the Horn of Africa.

Yet, dialogue and confidence building efforts do not thrive in a vacuum but on a wellspring of **good faith** and a commitment to **the rule of law**.

Ethiopia's acceptance of all the decisions of the EEBC without any reservations, and then the faithful and expeditious implementation of the decisions by withdrawing its soldiers from Eritrea's sovereign territories will lead to confidence building and dialogue. Any other option is a non-starter.

Conference on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Eritrea



The National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS), in conjunction with UNICEF, organized a Conference on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Child.

The Conference which was held in Asmara, on 24 and 25 October 2015, was attended by representatives of youth from all the six regions of Eritrea.

The central purpose of the Conference was to sensitize the youth on all the provisions of the Convention and to create a consultative platform for them to voice their opinions and comments on decisions that have direct impact on their rights. Participants of the conference conducted in-depth discussions on measures that need to be taken to mitigate harmful traditional practices.

Forum on Social Dialogue held in Asmara



A forum on “social dialogue at the work place” was jointly organized in Asmara from 3 to 4 November 2015 by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW).

Speaking at the forum, Mr. Yemane Tesfai, Chairman of the Eritrean Employers Federation, stated that

the forum was vital for promoting good relations between workers and employers. The representative of the ILO North Africa Region underlined the significance of the forum in enhancing workers’ capacity, ensuring safe work environment as well in consolidating the ties that exist between the NCEW and the ILO.

Fly Dubai Commenced Regular Flights to Asmara

Fly Dubai commenced regular flights between Asmara and Dubai on 25 October 2015. The Airline is scheduled to have four regular flights per week.

In a speech delivered during the inauguration ceremony, Mr. Paulos Kahsai, Director General of the Eritrean Civil Aviation Authority, stated that Fly Dubai flights will go a long way to meet the existing demand; address issues of competitive pricing and inconvenient flight hours; and enhance overall connectivity. Commending the good working relationship that Fly Dubai has already cultivated with the Civil Aviation Authority, Mr. Paulos expressed the readiness of the Department to cooperate fully with the Airline and facilitate its operations.

The senior advisor to the Head of Commercial Affairs of Fly Dubai, Mr. Sudhir Sridharan, on his part pointed out that the launching of Fly Dubai flights between Asmara and Dubai will be vital in boosting trade and tourism interactions between the two sisterly countries.

Samuel Goitom Won COMAR Marathon in Tunisia

Eritrean athlete Samuel Goitom won the 30th COMAR Marathon held in Tunisia, on 25 October 2015, finishing the race in 2 hours 20 min 20 sec. The second and third places were taken by athletes from Kenya and Morocco, respectively.



Eritrean Youth Cyclists Shine at Tour de Faso 2015

Eritrean youth cyclists showed remarkable performance in the Tour de Faso that was held in Burkina Faso from 30 October to 8 November 2015, covering 1400 kms.

Apart from being the only team in the competition to win the top three places in a stage, the Eritrean youth cyclists won 5 of the 10 stages of competition. Michael Habtom won the point classification, while Mekseb Debesay finished 2nd in the youth classification. In the team classification, Eritrea clinched third place.



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