Eritrean people of conscious confronted NED event on Eritrea in Washington D.C

About a week ago, I got an e-mail with an invitation to attend an event taking place in Washington DC’s NED (National Endowment For Democracy) headquarters today Friday October 30th, 2015. The event based on the recent report by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea started of at about 10AM Moderated by Dave Peterson who is head of the Africa division at NED. The guests included UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea Chairman Mike Smith, Tiffany Lynch, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, Elizabeth Chyrum, Human Rights Concern-Eritrea and who is also a beneficiary of funds from NED.

For some who may not be aware of NED according to it’s website, The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is a private, nonprofit foundation dedicated to the growth and strengthening of democratic institutions around the world. Each year, NED makes more than 1,200 grants to support the projects of non-governmental groups abroad who are working for democratic goals in more than 90 countries. This organization may be good for some countries who need help in building a democracy but for ERITREA this organization seems to have been nothing but a waste of tax payers money. If one asks how? Well you have people in Elsa Chyrum’s case who travel around the world instigating problems and utilizing & coercing poor economic refugees into political asylums that will turn their back on Eritrea’s government to be able to get their papers to live in the USA and Europe. NED indirectly is getting involved and empowering illegal behavior against sovereign nations including Eritrea. To be exact, NED’s record of instigating and creating problems in other countries is not the best.

After attending the inter-American commission on human rights all of last week today’s gathering looked more like a confirmation of the attacks that have been taking place against the people and government of ERITREA. From the get go Mr. Peterson was so biased and in his full introduction had nothing good to say about ERITREA. He started of talking as part of the huge campaign to defame Eritrea by referring to Eritrea as “the North Korea of Africa.” For someone who has never been to Eritrea and probably North Korea how he can compare the two is an insult to one’s intelligence. It is purely irresponsible, and very inaccurate, as reflected by the many international delegates, foreign workers, tourists, and visitors who have consistently visited Eritrea and claimed otherwise. After he introduced Mr. Mike Smith the chairman of the Commission, Mr. Smith went straight to the point about how the recent report was gathered. He talked about how the Eritrean Government did not allow the commission to go into the country contrary to what the truth is.

He claimed that the only way to gather the abuses that took place was to speak to refugees on the ground in ETHIOPIA & Djibouti two countries whose governments are the abusers of human rights. Two countries that have attempted to destabilize ERITREA and in Ethiopia’s case it currently occupies sovereign Eritrean territories. The mockery of this report is that the root of the refugee problems starts with the underlying issue of not forcing Ethiopia to withdraw. The UN and the US as guarantors of the peace agreement should focus on that problem and when this particular issue was raised during the public response session the guests could not reply. Even Mr. Smith mentioned that he was assigned to do the job by the UN and it is not his mandate to worry about the border. Well sir, how about bringing this issue to solve the problem that you have been tasked to write a report on. This is POLITICALLY MOTIVATED!

Meanwhile I want to say that the room was full and with a very small number of Eritreans who surprised the speakers on how to exersice your rights the proper way with respect and full of passion for the Eritrean nation. Standing up for the truth. One gentleman Mr. Ghidey shocked the entire room and panel when he talked about his life as an Eritrean during the thirty year war and how when genocide was taking place every day of the week, no body heard the cries of Eritreans. In an emotional outburst he laid facts down about Eritrea and spoke about the root cause of the problem Eritrea faces with refugees. I wanted to add, “It is the economy” but chose to observe. I am a strong believer that if ERITREA’s economy gets better the number of people leaving their country will small in numbers. Just like many other diaspora who as a result of economic problems most Eritreans are economic migrants and will never abandon a history of their gallant people who have won their true independence by themselves.

Then came testimonials from a national service member who has completed his Sawa service and was able to express his experience at the military camp that teaches young people to be good citizens and to help defend their country from the hostile neighbors to the south. Another former TEGADALI also let these people have it and clearly expressed his thoughts about the LAME ACCUSATIONS against the government of Eritrea. It is clear that Elsa Chyrum was shocked and surprised to see the number of people who stood up to her in front of her funders and embarrassed her for her politically motivated agenda.

One can clearly see that she nominated the rapporteur for the commission

based on her hate for ERITREA. You can see in the audience the handful individuals and groups, that served as informants, experts, or consultants for the report. They too had a big awakening as they saw ERITREANS getting up one after the other to let them know their feelings and starting off with the term “HANDS OF ERITREA”.

In Washington over my 20 years experience covering as a journalist and attending events related to many different issues national, international and local, I always wondered if I would see Eritreans being engaged in their issues and boy did they. They proved that they are the keepers of their nation. To repeat a message from one of the attendees the son of all ERITREANS by virtue of his loss of parents who gave up their lives to defend ERITREA, he went on to let the commission know Report or no Report, sanctions or no sanctions ERITREA will stand for the truth and will continue to build itself on its own as it has never depended on anyone to bail her out. The one small positive thing I noticed during this hearing is that the USA and some groups including Tiffany Lynch of the US commission on international religious freedom seems to think that engaging Eritrea is a good thing, but one thing she needs to understand is that Eritrea can teach her a thing or two on religious harmony between it’s people and her appointment is also tax payers waste of money. Finally the best way to engage Eritrea is to tell the client state of Ethiopia to leave the illegally occupied Eritrean sovereign territories as soon as possible. Then remove the illegal sanctions. Anything else including this report is considered NULL & VOID to the Eritrean people.