

Eritreans In Indianapolis Celebrated 18th Year of Independence Day

By Kip Mackey, Louisville, Kentucky

Emulating the old Latin Proverb, “*Many are called, but few are chosen*”, around 180 Eritreans and Eritrean-Americans assembled to attend a very colorful and successful Independence Day celebration, which took place on May 30, 2009.

The 18th year anniversary of *Nezamet* [Independence] was held at the *Ramada Inn* in the outskirts of Indiana’s largest metropolis, Indianapolis. Passionate PFDJ members and other nationalist Eritreans opened the event with speeches, and other remarks that applied to the occasion.

Mr. Woldeab Seyoum welcomed everyone, while *Tesfa Mariam Tesfa Sellassie* read the address of President Isaias Afwerki, which was given on May 24, 2009, in Asmara, Eritrea. Several poems were read, which added some artistic flair and creativity to the celebration. These caused a buildup of the spirit of the venue and the participants.

The well-dressed and famous Eritrean singer, *Dashem Misghina*, filled the hall with Tigringa and Tigre music. His music was, without a doubt, outstanding. Everyone enjoyed the evening.

Many of the women were dressed in both lowland and highland attires. This created a merry go round of flashing arrays of bright colors that seem to illuminate and paint the room with striking colors of Eritrean national dress. Young children painted their faces with different colors, and mingled amongst the crowd. These young people felt the responsibility of helping their kinfolds in Eritrea, and began asking the audience to donate some monies to help and support the children of martyred Eritreans who have become orphans. The donations will be sent to the families in Eritrea.

Later in the evening, and during the event, the children engaged the crowd to answer some math quiz. Each person who joined in the quiz session had to donate extra money to support the Eritrean orphans. Eventually, the young people were able to collect about \$ 500.00 dollars. The evening possessed a happy mood, coupled with a sense of determination to show a sense of Eritrean pride, resiliency, and happiness. It is true the Economic Realities in Eritrea were discussed, along with the economic uncertainty of what is going on now, and here in the US.

The U.S. government continues to ignore African issues, and plainly displays its arrogant intent for its hegemony over the Horn of Africa, and in particular not understanding Eritrea’s need to live in peace with its neighbors, practice its doctrine of self-reliance, remaining vigilant to protect its sovereignty from Ethiopian aggression. It is to be recalled Ethiopia has refused to accept the decision of The Border Commission’s ruling, which was issued *on 13 April 2002*, as *final and binding*, and still occupies Eritrean territories.

Many Eritreans are keenly aware of the struggle for justice continues. History’s shadow draws great men and women to endure and continue to build their societies. Eritrea was meant to be independent, no matter what the odds against it were, and the circumstances it faced. Finally, victory was achieved, which happened on May 24, 1991!

I will remember this event for many days to come, and look forward to the 19th year Independence Day Celebration with great anticipation and hope, and join my Eritrean friends.