

# **UNPROVOKED US HOSTILITIES AGAINST ERITREA**

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## **Introduction**

The United States continues to pursue a relentless policy of unprovoked hostility against Eritrea. While the isolated manifestations of this unwarranted policy are readily recognized, the underlying reasons behind this policy, its continuity for the past sixty years, as well as its actual dynamics have not been exposed in much detail and remain blurred. The purpose of this report is to fill this gap.

The myriad details and instances of US adversarial positions recounted in some chronological order in the report accentuate one central narrative: that US hostility towards Eritrea does not emanate from incompatible values in regard to justice, democracy, human rights, or fundamental principles of international law. The fact is the United States has all along believed that its perceived interests and strategies in the region are better served by Ethiopia: irrespective of the philosophical persuasions and political colour of the regimes in power in Addis Abeba. This was true during Haile Selassie's imperial period and Mengistu's military dictatorship. It is also true today.



## **Unprovoked US Hostilities Against Eritrea**

1. The profound antipathy that characterizes US-Eritrean ties does not emanate, as is often insinuated, from recent differences on the war in Somalia. It predates this singular event. Indeed, since the 1950s when overriding US strategic interests compromised Eritrea's right of decolonization, successive US Administrations have invariably propped up Ethiopian colonial presence in Eritrea. US principal responsibility in stifling Eritrea's right of decolonization in the 1950s to promote its global strategic interests with the advent of the Cold War; its huge military support, including the training of local "counter-insurgency forces" to the Imperial Haile Selassie regime; its less prominent support to the Mengistu regime in spite of its undeniable alliance with the Soviet Union; and its opposition, until the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, to Eritrea's legitimate struggle for liberation are indeed matters of indisputable historical record.
2. The human and opportunity costs that these policies entailed to the Eritrean people, who had to pay the huge price of more than 65,000 deaths in combat of their best sons and daughters, is too evident to merit emphasis. Following liberation, the Government of Eritrea chose to forgive and

forget, to close the dark chapter, and, to begin on a new slate by fostering a new relationship of cooperation and friendship. This was reciprocated by the US Administrations and bilateral relations were good until 1998.

3. However, when Ethiopia declared war against Eritrea on 14 May 1998, and as Ethiopian jet fighters attacked Eritrea's capital, Asmara, on 5 June 1998, the then US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa broke diplomatic precedence to directly address the OAU Summit in Ouagadougou in support of Ethiopia and to lobby the OAU to adopt a resolution against Eritrea.
4. In July the same year, President Clinton brokered a Moratorium on Air Strikes between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Eritrea's declared preference was for a comprehensive secession of hostilities. But the Clinton Administration insisted on a partial arrangement arguing that Ethiopia was not prepared to contemplate a comprehensive truce. Ethiopia abused the window of peace to purchase SU-27 jet fighters, mostly with Western financial support. And on 6 February 1999, it launched a new military offensive against Eritrea by fabricating a bogus event: "Eritrea's air bombardment of Adi Grat!", a town in northern Ethiopia. The US authorities were fully aware of, and ascertained without a shred of doubt, Ethiopia's bogus pretext and its flagrant breach of

the Moratorium on Air Strikes. Still, they abstained from taking appropriate remedial action.

5. The United States nonetheless continued to “facilitate” the peace talks in conjunction with the European Union and the OAU. In the course of the tortuous negotiating process, the US “Facilitators” came up, in August 1999, with a detailed final document known as the “Technical Arrangements”. This Agreement was submitted to the parties as a “take it or leave it” package. Both parties accepted the document and pledged to be bound by its provisions. Soon after, Eritrea learned that Ethiopia had not accepted the Agreement in good-faith and was only biding time to launch another war. Subsequently, Eritrea’s Head of State conveyed this information to the highest authorities in Washington who reassured Eritrea that Ethiopia would face severe consequences should this turn out to be the case. As it happened, Ethiopia declared the peace process in “terminal phase” and launched the third offensive on 12 May 2000. The US Administration backtracked on its commitments and only nudged the UN Security Council to impose military sanctions on both the guilty and aggrieved parties.
6. The US also extended both directly and mostly through convenient proxies, military support to Ethiopia during the war. Although the Government of Eritrea has not to date disclosed fully the

information at its disposal, US intelligence agencies were further embroiled, at the height of Ethiopia's third offensive in May 2000, in instigating acts of sedition and treason, including attempted liaison with Ethiopia, within a small ring of senior government officials.

7. Since 2001, Eritrean diplomats in Washington were denied of their diplomatic privileges on tax exemption in contravention of the provisions of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Eritrea did not take reciprocal action and US diplomats continued to enjoy their tax exemption privileges.
8. In June 2003, Eritrea was omitted from the list of East African countries slated to receive US funding for counter-terrorism barely three months after its inclusion, and while at the same time retaining Eritrea's membership, in the "Coalition of the Willing".
9. In October 2003, a visiting military team of the US Task Force based in Djibouti (CJTF-HOA) assisted the unlawful departure of an Eritrean citizen to Djibouti aboard its Helicopter in violation of the domestic laws of the country.
10. In 2003, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) published its annual religious freedom report accusing the Government of Eritrea for "violation of religious freedom". In February 2004, the US

Administration designated Eritrea a “country of particular concern” and imposed sanctions on military sales.

11. In December 2003, President Bush announced the cancellation of Eritrea’s membership to AGOA, barely two years after its inclusion.
12. Since 2004, the US has continued to reject the right of, and expressed request by, Eritrea to purchase property in New York for the residence of its permanent representative to the United Nations.
13. On 13 April, 2004, US Homeland Officers raided the Eritrean Community Centre in Washington D.C. and confiscated money and documents forcefully from the Eritrean diplomatic agent at gunpoint. In spite of Eritrea’s repeated requests and in violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the US government continued to refuse returning the Embassy property.
14. In September 2004, Eritrea’s Minister of Foreign Affairs was strip searched by US Security officers at the airport in New York.
15. At various times since 2003, the US embassy in Asmara intentionally delayed or refused to issue entry visas for numerous Eritrean senior government officials who sought to leave for the USA for official business. Officials denied visas include senior Government Ministers, PFDJ

officials and even musical groups for concerts at festivals of Eritrean communities in the US.

16. In January 2006, the US Assistant Secretary of State visited the occupied Eritrean town of Badme through Ethiopia and without the knowledge and authorization of Eritrea. In doing so, Ms. Frazer not only sanctioned Ethiopia's occupation of a sovereign Eritrean town, but to add insult to injury, she proposed that a "referendum" be held to decide the future of "Badme".
17. In November 2006, the US Ambassador to Eritrea demanded that the Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare pay 4.5 million US dollars for food aid donated to the needy by two NGOs (Mercy Corps and Catholic Relief Services) and that was utilized in accordance with the food-monetization policy. Similarly, the US Administration had previously demanded that Eritrea pay for food aid destined to Ethiopia and that perished in the Port of Assab in 1998 when the regime in Addis Abeba declared war and boycotted the port.
18. In November 2006, US authorities imposed travel restrictions on Eritrean embassy members and their dependents in Washington and Oakland. Ever since, State Department officials almost routinely reject most of the travel requests by the Ambassador and other Eritrean diplomats beyond the 25 km limit.

19. Although the Eritrean Government issued a visa to the US Embassy's new Visa Officer in Asmara, the US embassy nonetheless informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in November 2006 that "effective December 4, 2006, non-immigrant visa services will be temporarily suspended due to staffing shortages. Non-immigrant visa services will resume as soon as staff are granted permission to travel to Eritrea to provide this service". This notice, that was posted in the website the same day, remains effective until today and Eritreans who wish to visit their relatives in the US have to travel to Nairobi or Cairo to apply for entry visas which are not always granted.
20. In July 2006, Eritrea's new Ambassador to the US was warned that "he will have a hard time during his tenure in Washington" during a courtesy call to the US Under-Secretary for Political Affairs.
21. In January 2007, US security officers at New York's JFK airport conducted unlawful search on the person of Eritrea's Ambassador to the United Nations. The Ambassador was isolated from the other passengers and ordered to pass through a special search machine. His hand luggage was searched in a special spot, disregarding his Diplomatic Identification Card. The security officer in charge informed the Ambassador that the special search was an order from higher authorities. Furthermore, upon arrival in Asmara, the

Ambassador discovered that his baggage was forcefully opened and searched, without his approval and presence. A “Notice of Inspection” was inserted inside his baggage in acknowledgement of the act. This is in violation of Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations which clearly states: “inspection shall be conducted in the presence of the Diplomatic Agent or of his authorized representative”.

22. In February 2007, the US Embassy in Asmara wrote in Note Verbale No. 046/07: “the embassy wishes to inform the Government of the State of Eritrea that its continued failure to allow the unhindered entry of our diplomatic pouches, which contain items necessary for the full functioning of the mission, including materials vital to the issuance of the visas, has unduly interfered with Embassy operations. Unless we are able to resolve this matter, effective February 14, the Embassy of the United States will close to the public and suspend all visa operations”.
23. In February 2007, US visa revalidation office in the State Department delayed the renewal of visa of the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in the Eritrean Embassy in Washington under the flimsy excuse of “administrative review” process.
24. In May 2007, the US Embassy in Asmara informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the

HIV/AIDS prevention programme will be terminated on 31 May 2007. The termination of the programme, which was incidentally very small compared to other countries in Africa, was again justified by the spurious pretext of permission obstacles to inspection trips.

25. In June 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order 1349 putting Eritrea in the league of “human trafficking” nations and imposing a series of financial sanctions against it. In reality, it was US Administrations that were willfully engaged in inducing human flight from Eritrea for reasons better known to them. In 2004, the US Government employed the services of the UNHCR to encourage the entire Kunama language group in Eritrea to seek and obtain asylum in the United States. Again in February 2009, the Bureau of Refugees in the State Department announced that it has allocated asylum rights for 10,000 Eritrean youth who may desert the National Service. (This act in fact violates US laws against army deserters as well as undermining the elaborate extradition proceedings that the Pentagon routinely resorts to so as to bring to court US army deserters from Iraq, Afghanistan and other war zones who seek asylum in third countries.)

The following cable from the US Ambassador to Eritrea shows the intention of US Officials to drain Eritrea of its educated young people:

“Posts plans to restart visa services (completely suspended in 2007) for student visa applicants; we intend to give opportunities to study in the United States to those who oppose the regime, as well as others. Thus, Post requests that CA seek to establish a limited category-specific exemption to the passport requirement for Eritreans found eligible for student visas....”-- Ambassador Ronald K. McMullen, Tue, 5 May 2009

26. The Obama Administration has continued the annual and offensive ritual of designating Eritrea as a “Country of Particular Concern (CPC)” for practicing religious persecution.

### **I. Unlawful interference in the Boundary Demarcation Process**

27. The US Administration acted unlawfully to obstruct the demarcation of the boundary in accordance with the “final and binding” decisions of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC). When Ethiopia’s Prime Minister rejected, in September 2003, the EEBC Award as “illegal, irresponsible and unjust” and requested the UN Security Council to create an “alternative

mechanism”, this was done in consultation and with the approval of the US Administration. The appointment of Lloyd Axworthy and the subsequent decision of the US Government to appoint General Fulford are, among other things, clear testimonies to the collusion between the United States and Ethiopia to alter the colonial boundary by circumventing the EEBC.

28. Indeed, General Fulford, rather unwisely, wrote to Eritrea’s Legal Counsel that he was seeking operational latitude to shift the boundary by about 1Km. In her press statement in May 2007, the Assistant Secretary of State crowed about “satellite technology” to address the issues of “some farms that would be split from their wells”. It must be underlined that there are no “mosques” or “churches” that will be split into two. We are talking about a 1000Km borderline with no “nightmarish” scenarios. But above all, the litigation process was exhaustive and conducted over a two-year period with the submission of voluminous memorials, counter-memorials, and, hearings where all issues were argued out and trashed. In any case, if US official position is the implementation of the “final and binding” Award of the EEBC decision without any qualification, in accordance with the Algiers Agreement, the stance of the Assistant Secretary of State is at variance with her government’s views.

29. Ambassador John Bolton, former US Permanent Representative to the UN, in his book *'Surrender is not an Option: Defending America at the United Nations'* notes, in regard to the border issue between Eritrea and Ethiopia:

"I certainly had no favourite, but it seemed that Eritrea had a point. Ethiopia had agreed on a mechanism to resolve the border dispute in 2000 and now was welching on its deal in flat violation of its commitments.... I said we should solve the problem and not let it fester forever, France, Japan and several other Council members agreed with me.... For reasons I never understood, however, Frazer reversed course, and asked in early February to reopen the 2002 EEBC decision, which she had concluded was wrong, and award a major piece of disputed territory to Ethiopia. I was at a loss how to explain that to the Security Council...."

30. On similar issue, Mr. Azouz Ennifar, former Acting Special Representative of the UNSG to Eritrea and Ethiopia reported:

"I met on 24 June 2006 with Jendayi Frazer, U.S Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in Addis Ababa. She regretted that the EEBC is not flexible.

She told me that she has developed parallel tracks to deal with the matter. In her view, demarcation as Eritrea wants it is not feasible. She also said that the status quo would benefit Ethiopia and demarcation would not take place without dialogue." U.S. Embassy Berlin cable of 11 August 2009, similarly, reads: "We agreed that Ethiopia is an 'indispensable partner' to stability in the region, the border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea is 'frozen' for the foreseeable future;"

31. The United States has been instrumental in ensuring that UN Security Council Resolutions are distorted to apportion equal blame to Eritrea and Ethiopia. At times, the US has even succeeded in portraying Eritrea as the culprit party. Ethiopia has rejected the EEBC decision which should have been enforced by the UN Security Council. Ethiopia continues to occupy sovereign Eritrean territories in violation of the Algiers Peace Agreement, the Charter of the UN as well as UN Security Council Resolutions adopted in 2002 requesting Ethiopia to dismantle settlements in the Badme area. All these issues have "faded with time" and US leverage is being brought to bear on the UN Security Council so as to misdirect its punitive measures against Eritrea. In a confidential

cable communication from the US Secretary of State issued on March 1<sup>st</sup> 2008, the US mission to the UN is instructed to canvass for support from certain Security Council members and UN troop contributing countries for sanctions against Eritrea “for its interference with UNMEE, especially its recent refusal to reinstate fuel supplies to the Mission”. The cable states: “potential options include, i) imposing a travel ban on key Eritrean government officials; ii) placing an assets freeze on these same officials and/or other Eritrean assets/resources; iii) imposing trade, investment, or other restrictions related to Eritrean resources, including mining; iv) imposing an arms embargo on Eritrea”.

## **II. US role in exacerbating the conflict with Djibouti**

32. The United States and Ethiopia colluded to nudge Djibouti to fabricate a border dispute and falsely accuse Eritrea “for military aggression against its small neighbor.” Indeed, Djibouti-Eritrea relations were improving steadily even as the situation in Somalia was taking a turn for the worse in 2006. A 14 September 2006 cable from the Embassy of France reports on a September 7-8 meetings with U.S. Ambassador to Djibouti W. Stuart Symington

and French officials, Helene Le Gal and desk officer Francois Gautier; President Chirac's Africa Advisor Michel de Bonnecorse and his deputy Jacques Champagne de Labriolle. According to the cable: "...Djibouti had managed to maintain a balanced relationship with Ethiopia and Eritrea... The French noted that the possibility of social unrest existed in Djibouti, in part because income from the bases was not necessarily being distributed broadly...The widespread use of khat, a stimulant imported mainly from Ethiopia, was a significant factor in Djiboutian society. It had generally negative effects on the political process and economy. Social unrest was always possible when supplies of khat dwindled...Increasing numbers of Somalis, Eritreans, and Ethiopians were in Djibouti, attracted by Djibouti's port and the illusion that it would always provide more jobs, which was not the case. Ethnic tensions were growing in Djibouti..."

33. In a 16 September 2006 cable titled, "Ethiopia: Deputy Minister Tekeda Talks Somalia, Regional Issues with Das Yamamoto", the Ethiopian Deputy Minister Tekeda Alemu tells the US official in Addis that he wants a break in Djibouti-Eritrea ties. The cable from US Ambassador Donald Yamamoto begins with this: "...Tekeda expressed concern about increasing Eritrean influence over Djibouti as well as CIC contacts with President Guelleh. He

encouraged the USG to speak frankly with Djibouti about the risks of its behaviour.... Tekeda maintained that the GOD was ‘on the wrong path’ and added that Djibouti was not strong enough to take Ethiopia's continued friendship and forbearance for granted....”

34. But in February-March 2008, a putative Eritrea-Djibouti border dispute was deliberately escalated to advance US-Ethiopia agenda against the State of Eritrea. The Government of Djibouti unleashed an intensive campaign accusing Eritrea of deploying forward troops in the common border. This was not contested by the French Government as the following cable illustrates: “...French Ambassador to Djibouti Dominique Decherf said that while he had to take note of the assertions by Djibouti's Foreign Minister, French military observers in the field had not seen any concentration of Eritrean troops along the border with Djibouti. He said French fixed-wing aircraft dispatched to the area on April 17 ‘did not see anything conclusive’, and did not/not see massive troop concentrations along the border....”
35. On 12 May 2008, France’s position on the issue remained the same. A cable from the US Embassy in Paris reported the following: “...Le Gal said the Djiboutians had been phoning her ‘three times a day’ and that her message to them was to avoid raising tensions in the region over an incident that

had resolved itself peacefully. She repeated that, while Ethiopia's border dispute with Eritrea was long-standing, there appeared to be no historical basis for a border dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti, which was another reason that both sides should avoid turning this episode into a real problem....”

36. But while France offered to mediate between Djibouti and Eritrea to resolve the issue, the United States took Djibouti's side from the very first instance. And when Djibouti forces attacked Eritrean units on June 10, 2008, the US promptly condemned what it termed “Eritrean aggression” and pushed the UNSC to pass a resolution against Eritrea. US conduct in this affair is again illustrated by the following WikiLeaks cables: “A 15 January 2009 cable shows the close coordination between the US and Djibouti and the agenda vis a vis Eritrea. ‘...Foreign Minister Mahmoud Youssouf called Ambassador January 15 to express thanks for UNSCR 1862 regarding the Djibouti/Eritrea border dispute. Youssouf said the GODJ was pleased with the outcome. Ambassador responded that we, too, thought it was a strong resolution -- one that had resulted from a collaborative effort, including close consultation with Djiboutian Permanent Representative Roble Olhaye.’ Separately, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs circulated the text of UNSCR 1862 via

diplomatic note to all foreign missions in Djibouti, highlighting that ‘the Security Council placed responsibility for the aggression on Eritrea and demanded that it withdraw its troops from Ras Doumeira and Doumeira Island within five weeks.’ Admitting it was unlikely that the GSE would respond positively to the resolution, the Foreign Minister commented that the GODJ must now begin to develop a strategy for ‘the next stage,’ after the five-week deadline has elapsed. This is a point that the Embassy of Djibouti has made repeatedly over the past two months to senior GODJ contacts, including Youssouf, National Security Advisor Hassan Said Khaireh, and Presidency Secretary General Ismail Tani. The Ambassador offered to work closely with Youssouf as the GODJ develops its strategy.’”

### **III. US primary role in UNSC Resolutions 1907 and 2023**

37. The United States was and remains the principal architect behind the punitive sanctions that the UN Security Council has imposed against Eritrea in 2009 and 2011 respectively. In the words of Jendayi Frazer, the former Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, the strategy pursued by the US Administration was to “pin down and punish

Eritrea” for refusing to give up the legal course. This fact is illustrated by, among other evidences, Wikileaks cables that are now in the public domain.

38. According to these cables, Ambassador Susan Rice was personally involved in the push for sanctions against Eritrea under the ruse of Eritrea’s conduct of “regional destabilisation”. The cable, “UGANDA TO CONSIDER ERITREA SANCTIONS RESOLUTION WHICH COVERS DJIBOUTI; REMAINS COMMITTED TO AMISOM”, details a conversation Susan Rice had on 20 September 2009 with Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda: “...Rice emphasized that the U.S. strongly supports a resolution that addresses the issue of Eritrea invading Djibouti. It is a matter of principle that the U.S. cannot ignore, which puts UNSC credibility at stake, and would make Eritrea feel it can continue to invade neighbours with impunity, she said. Museveni expressed concern that references to both Somalia and Djibouti in the draft UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions resolution might jeopardize its adoption chances. Rice said that she believes there is only one chance to secure a resolution, so Djibouti must be included, and noted that the international community has never effectively confronted Eritrea for invading neighbouring countries on five occasions (Yemen, Sudan, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Somalia). She noted

that in January, the UNSC gave Eritrea a deadline of six weeks to leave Djibouti or face sanctions...”

39. Rice was not interested in providing evidence to support her allegations against Eritrea and her remarks about the members of the UN Security Council shows her that she was willing to deceive the Council to advance her agenda: “...Rice reminded Museveni that past experience suggested that the UNSC would not block a resolution led by African members and supported by the African Union. She shared the U.S. read that, if Burkina Faso and Uganda co-sponsor this resolution, the British will support, the French will ‘keep their heads down’ and will not block. FM Kutesa noted that Uganda had no substantive concerns over including Djibouti in the resolution. His concern, he said, was that because the AU had never passed an actual resolution that included Djibouti, the Russian and Chinese delegations would have to consult with their capitals before agreeing to it. Rice advised Kutesa not to be overly cautious, and reasserted that a resolution perceived to be African-led would not fail. She noted that if it became clear during consultations that Russia and China had insurmountable concerns about including Djibouti, they could be dealt with before the issue came to vote...”

#### **IV. Persistent Smear Campaigns**

40. The US State Department has been obsessed, especially in the last ten years, with demonizing Eritrea and its Government. The annual human rights report is invariably replete with gross distortion of facts and events.
41. The US State Department put Eritrea as a “Country of particular concern” on religious freedom purely for political reasons. Eritrea is a secular State where all religions are respected and where Christianity and Islam have co-existed in harmony for over 1400 years. The trumped up charge of religious persecution is being vigorously pursued for other ulterior motives. In reality, the regulatory monitoring pertains to few fringe groups, whose membership does not exceed a couple of hundreds, and who receive financing from abroad. These groups were asked to register in accordance with the laws of the country and to declare their income. But they have and continue to routinely defy these regulations and refuse to comply with the laws of the country.
42. The controversy over diplomatic pouches has also been blown out of proportion. The two incidents arose when there were grounds to believe that the external markings of large crates that the US embassy was bringing as “diplomatic pouches” were at variance with the declared contents. The

containers were not however detained. The Embassy was requested to allow the Customs officials to open the containers in the presence of US Embassy personnel. When this was not granted, the Embassy was asked to take back the containers. This happened only on two occasions. The US Embassy has otherwise enjoyed unfettered access to bring hundreds of these containers. The US Embassy is in fact operating a relaying radio station from within the Embassy premises without notifying the Government of Eritrea or requesting operational permission for the equipment as expressly stipulated in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

43. The decision to close the Eritrean Consulate in Oakland cannot be interpreted as “reciprocal action”. In the first place, US authorities have all along taken various measures against the Eritrean Embassy in Washington, including unlawful seizure of money and documents. The Government of Eritrea never took reciprocal action. The travel restrictions that Eritrea introduced in view of the prevailing tense situation with Ethiopia did not also single out the US Embassy. Temporary measures of this nature are indeed normative practices that States routinely take. The explanations of the Assistant Secretary of State cannot, therefore, be convincing. There are not, also, “400 Americans in Eritrea whose right of

Consular protection has been adversely affected by this measure”.

44. The charges of “sponsoring terrorism” and “destabilizing the region” are the most preposterous allegations that belie the ulterior motives of the US State Department. Eritrea’s position on Somalia has been spelled out unequivocally in various occasions and forums before; including at the IGAD and UN sessions. Equating Somalia’s quest for national reconstitution after 20 years of mayhem with “Islamist terrorism” is either inexcusable ignorance or deliberate distortion of facts and events. As Eritrea has underlined repeatedly, the presumed presence of one or two alleged international terrorists cannot justify, by any stretch of imagination, the invasion of a sovereign country; and, the deaths of tens of thousands and the displacement of almost half a million civilians.
45. The charge of regional destabilization is equally preposterous. Ethiopia has invaded Somalia in violation of UN Security Council Resolutions which were adjusted to “fit the new reality” because of US support. Ethiopia’s invasion of Somalia was long planned with the tacit encouragement and joint planning of the respective US agencies. Ethiopia is violating international law to occupy sovereign Eritrean territories and to

spawn a permanent situation of regional tension and instability.

46. In the same vein, Eritrea's constructive role in the Sudan cannot be sullied as "positive influence for the wrong reasons". True, Eritrea in cooperation with Uganda and Ethiopia, pursued a policy of containment against the Sudan in the 1990s when Khartoum was flirting with terrorism and when Bin Laden had his headquarters there. The United States was, at least nominally, supportive of what it called the "Frontline States" in those times. Apparently, the US Assistant Secretary of State had not checked, or had deliberately chosen to ignore, the well-known positions of her government in the recent past.
47. Furthermore, the United States has been feverishly working, especially in the last five years, to isolate Eritrea and to undermine the flow investment and economic cooperation from Europe and the Middle East in particular. The following cables illustrate the scope and extent of this campaigns.
48. According to a 29 May 2009 cable, A/S CARTER'S APRIL 23 MEETING WITH BELGIAN MFA AFRICA TEAM, at a breakfast on 23 April 2009 for visiting Acting A/S for African Affairs Phillip Carter and NSC Senior Director for Africa Michelle Gavin with the Belgian MFA Africa Team, Phillip Carter repeated his accusations against Eritrea and questioned

EU's assistance to Eritrea. "...Carter also asked about the EU's large grant to the regime in Eritrea....Carter hoped the international community would support AU calls for sanctions. He also questioned the wisdom of giving EUR 122 million to a regionally-destabilizing pariah regime in Eritrea...."

49. In his conversation with Meles Zenawi in Ethiopia on 19 November 2009, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Karl Wycoff divulges US campaign to isolate Eritrea. "...Wycoff agreed there is no evidence that Eritrea has showed improvement in its behavior, although he added that President Isaias had recently undertaken something of a charm offensive targeted at European diplomats, a possible indication that he may be considering options. Wycoff assured Meles that the U.S. remains committed to achieving a UNSC sanctions regime against Asmara and continues to broaden the discussion beyond the P3 and Uganda with a hard push by USUN. He said the USG was also expanding efforts to undercut support for Asmara, noting for example that he has been sent on a trip to Cairo, Riyadh, Jeddah and other cities both to promote efforts to undercut flows of support to Asmara but also to seek concrete support for Somalia's TFG. He said he has observed that some EU member states, formerly more supportive of

Eritrea, have come to accept that Eritrea is playing a seriously negative role in the region and that the UK now believes that Eritrea has become a significant threat to its own domestic security....”

## **V. Reasons Behind Misguided US Hostility**

50. The spiral of hostility that characterizes US policy towards Eritrea boils down to one overriding reason. This was true in the 1950s and it is also true today. It has nothing to do with principles of international law or with values of justice, democracy and human rights. The United States has all along believed that its perceived strategies in the region can be better served by Ethiopia; irrespective of the philosophical persuasions of the regime in power in Addis Abeba. This consistent and overriding policy was couched in Cold War terms in the 1950s. It has now been articulated in terms of the regional “Anchor States” as spelled out in the US National Security Strategy of 2002.
51. This policy did not serve the interests of Eritrea, Ethiopia, the region, and even the United States itself when we look, in retrospect, to what has transpired in the second half of the last century. It is unfortunate to note that the follies of the past century are not being redressed today.



