**Eritrea: Victory Is Certain**

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The slogan “Our struggle is long and victory is certain,” after independence, long pursued victory was at hand and it appeared as though, it is time to rest the slogan in the museum of Eritrean history. Twenty-one years later, the struggle continues and the slogan remains true to the spirit and Eritrea says, “The Struggle may be long but Victory is certain” for there is no other option.

To get anywhere in life, one must first know what it is that they want and secondly, find a way to reach that goal. It was easy For Eritrea, because Eritreans knew exactly what they want and, the creative dedication paved-way to achieve the ultimate goal, which is, the independence of Eritrea through the struggle. And history proves Eritreans are resilient and victorious. History proves Eritreans will do what it takes to come-out victorious and it also proves that Eritreans have paid and will pay dearly with their lives without hesitation.

It has been over 21 eventful years since independence and during this period, Eritrea has gone through many transformations, changing the lives of Eritreans every passing moment. The question, if the struggle is ongoing, what are we struggling for and against? And what does victory mean this time around? To make sense of these important questions, one must rely on the history of Eritrea and, the understanding of the basic needs of mankind.

Eritrea is a nation that operates as one unit hence easy to liken to an individual and apply the hierarchy of needs theory as-is, and try to gauge where we are as a societal unit. Eritreans are very resourceful bunches that have no problem providing for their needs and national defense. History attests to Eritrea’s successes and achievements in various areas based on the credo of Self Reliance. More uniquely, Eritreans have always defined Eritrea’s successes. That is what separates Eritrea from the rest. Even when the West and others try defining what success is for developing nations, Eritrea has always proven capable as with the Millennium Developmental Goals (MDG). Eritrea is ahead and slated to reach these goals without much fanfare and, relying almost entirely on self.

Eritrea achieves these benchmarks easily because Eritreans believe they can-and-will achieve the highest standard of living through hard work, dedication and self-reliance. Eritrea achieves these goals not because it is a standard slated by the international community. It is because Eritrea wants to ensure high quality of life for every Eritrean; it is also a matter of national security. When the scourge HIV AIDS threatened Africa, Eritrea was on the forefront for the fight. Malaria is almost eradicated. Eritrea’s success in the area of child mortality-rate reduction, access to medical treatment and schools is above international expectations. Yet, it is not enough since the goals and expectations are higher.

Eritrea’s achievements are infinite to detail and impossible to discuss in an article such as this. It is also clear to every Eritrean what success or victory means to Eritrea. What has also become clear over the last 12 years is that there has been a tremendous push by the enemies to reverse those achievements albeit fruitlessly. However, if anything, the persistent push of the enemies brought to light how precious Eritrea’s achievements are, and that Eritreans are fiercely protective of it.

The enemies targeted every Eritrean achievement in order to weaken it. They targeted every Eritrean gathering no matter the purpose. This was a favored strategy of the criminal TPLF junta. When threatened by an organization or a party, TPLF creates a similar organization to dilute it. They created Oromo party to counter OLF etc… and tried to do the same with Eritrean gatherings. When Eritreans celebrate independence, they will sponsor a similar event to dilute it.

Eritreans could and sometimes take Eritrea’s major achievements like the festival and other gatherings for granted for they have been doing it for a long time automatically. However, the enemies recognize these gatherings serve as backbone to Eritrean societies, as bridge to Eritrea and, try to derail the bridge. This is a small example of what the enemies have targeted. To their dismay however, Eritreans keep making it better frustrating the enemies.

To understand the struggle and define what victory is, it is critical to determine what the challenges are and isolate the enemies. It is also critical to understand what the enemies want and what success means to them. For example, when they see that Eritreans are united then, they devise strategies to break that unity apart.  That is the reason they target festivals.

**Who is the enemy?**

For decades, Eritreans believed Ethiopia was the reason they struggled for freedom and independence. That in large part was because Ethiopia was the visible barrier between freedom and Eritrea. The warmongering of successive Ethiopian tyrants accentuated that belief. The mercenary nature of successive Ethiopian rulers and the brute force they used to subjugate Eritrea heightened strong feelings. However, without western aid and diplomatic maneuver Ethiopia could not have colonized Eritrea. Even with the entire Western help, Ethiopia was unable to maintain its hold on Eritrea.

The fact remains, the main reason Eritrea was-forced to wage armed struggle for independence was the US. Eritrea started armed struggle soon after former U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in 1952 decided to dissolve Eritrea for their interests. Hence, the struggle was essentially waged against US in the first place albeit in layers. Eritreans were forced to peel-off the layers in order to be free. The first layer was the inner struggle, the second, against Ethiopian rule. Thirdly, the struggle for global recognition, fourth, in defense of Eritrea from US led Western hegemony.

US led Western hegemony on the region and in particular against the people of Eritrea have denied the people of Eritrea, sovereign rights and, the right to live peacefully. In short, the very existence of Eritrea is challenged, held hostage and the US remains as the only obstacle to freedom-free from hostilities.

For a long time, the US used Africans and the UN as cover to pursuit their Eritrea agenda. But when all that failed the US was forced to come-out with gloves off sort-of speak. This was exposed during the Bush Admiration’s period when US officials brazenly discounted the international Hague based decision of the Eritrean Ethiopian Boundary Commission (EEBC) when Dr. Jandai Frazer, former Assistant director for African Affairs went to Badme, the town Eritrea regained based on the Hague decision and, tried to renegotiate the redrawing of the map after international court decided how it will be drawn. It is important to note what her motives were rather than her actions.

A South African online magazine, All Africa posted an article about the border conflict called, “Meles Zenawi: Two Sided Man” where the author Richard Dowden writes that, “Meles told him that he was trying to steal more than just Badme,”  Meles said, “we are claiming much more than that.”

Beggar Meles Zenawi was in no position to feed Ethiopia let alone claim more without the help of his enablers, namely US. The US is currently in the forefront to undo Eritrea’s independence however possible. The sanction US pursued and passed twice through the Security Council speaks to the viciousness of US intentions since the illegal sanctions are based on fabrications. The punishment the US tries to inflict on Eritrea is unwarranted, unjustified and without merit. It is Hostility without provocation, irresponsible act, abuse of power and disregard to its position of international responsibility

The Eritrean Ethiopian borders are demarcated for good and nothing could change that. It is legally binding decision that the people of Eritrea won legally. The idea of illegally occupying sovereign Eritrean territories is for two reasons: Firstly, to perpetuate the conflict using the no war no peace strategy to pursue illegal “regime change” agenda against the government of Eritrea. Secondly, by claiming that the area is contested, Ethiopia can settle any number of people in the area and assert that they are Eritreans. The settlement Meles Zenawi built in Badme attests to that fact. If elections are conducted after they changed the government of Eritrea, any number of Ethiopians can vote as Eritreans. And as long as the border remains un-demarcated, Ethiopia can push these agendas. And once they place a puppet government, it will then be easy to accomplish their Eritrea agenda using Eritrean face as cover. This is a proven strategy they used in Ivory Coast and other places. In Ivory Coast, the UN divided the country into two using “UN peacekeeping forces” enabling outside forces namely the French to control the situation and put in place the regime they wanted. The Eritrean Ethiopian Temporary Security (TSZ) was designed to do just that.

Simply put the intricacies and the web the US put in place was so sophisticated that it stands as an example of the brilliance, the wit and ability of the people and government of Eritrea to stay one-step ahead in thwarting existential threats patiently and in unity. All their attempts to subjugate Eritrea failed for decades because they failed to control the hearts and minds of the people of Eritrea everywhere. Eritreans are amongst the most aware and informed people that know exactly what they want and, they understand what the enemies want as-well.

**The End Game**

One advantage Eritrea possess is that Eritrea is 24/7 business of the Eritrean people since the life of every Eritrean depends on it. Eritrea is also lucky since it comes with lots of revolutionary experience from the days of the armed struggle. The determination, to succeed and willingness to sacrifice is another advantage. In addition, Eritreans are a quick study able to sniff Western trickery from 10,000 miles and can stand against it. Above all, Eritreans are united, love their unity and, want to nurture that unity for it is their main protection.

Thus-far, every war waged against Eritreans has been foiled with the help of the mother’s prayers, hard work and sacrifices. Eritrea was at its worst when Eritreans could not afford shoes. Today however, every step they walk on is turning to gold and keeps getting brighter. The enemies are faltering; breaking apart while the knees that they wanted to see buckle is stronger. Eritreans are united and realizing that victory is at hand while the enemies are evidently shaken and incoherent not knowing what tomorrow will bring. The tentacles of the mighty cut, all the mischief they wove loosening while the people of Eritrea are shining brighter.

Hence, it is more important to maintain, stay the course-vigilantly and with fierce determination. It is important to define what is important and cherish it. It is also critical to understand what got us here and continue on that path as always cheering “Victory to the masses.” It is only then that “The Victory is certain.” That is also the only way to ascertain “Glory to Our Martyrs.”

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