



**ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT / ELFRC
CHAIRMAN OFFICE**

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We in the ELF-RC have received with warm welcome Ethiopia's recent stated decision to accept in principle and hopefully abide by the Border Commission's ruling as good news for the peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia and for the Horn Region in general. This hopefully genuine position would no doubt help remove the threat of renewal of hostilities that had negatively charged and polluted the security and political atmosphere in the region for a long time now.

The emergence of the Ethiopian Government's positive stance would deny the dictatorial regime in Eritrea the justifications and pretexts it has all along used to hide its sinister intentions and hold the people of Eritrea hostage to all real and imagined factors of external threat and state of war. This position would as well significantly narrow the space before the dictatorship's profiteering stance exploited in light of Ethiopia's rejection of the border ruling. Above all, this would signify Ethiopia's recognition of the fact that the issues related to land and peace are basically issues of fundamental concern to the Eritrean people, and the coming generations, long before they entered into the Eritrean tyrant's power calculations, and would remain so long after the dictatorship itself is gone.

Ethiopia's acceptance of the border ruling and more so its implementation would also remove one important negative factor in overall Ethio-Eritrean relations and so help improve relations between Ethiopia and the Eritrean people's mainstream opposition, as rejection of the ruling had cast its shadow on the arena and frustrated genuine efforts for understanding, thus threatening to erode away confidence, undermine relations and all prospects of their consolidation.

We in the meantime hope that the possibly approaching end of this chapter in the history of Ethio-Eritrean relations with the resolution of the border issue would clear the arena for the Eritrean people's democratic struggle to effect fundamental change of governance in the country and contribute to the guarantees of lasting peace between the two peoples and peoples of the region.

The ELF-RC believes that in the last analysis, the question of abiding by the internationally sanctioned border ruling is more a matter of responsibility of peace and safeguarding the destiny of coming generations than a question of loss or gain of contested border territory.

Basing on this principled position and true to its long-held conviction that lasting resolution of border conflicts could only be attained through peaceful and legal means, the ELF-RC welcomes the long-delayed but responsible position now taken by the Ethiopian Government and Parliament to abide by the ruling of the Border Commission, as this represents an option for peace. In the meantime, we urge that all the arsenal of non basic and unnecessary accessories, preconditions and delaying factors in the position of both parties be dropped to unequivocally give way to a positive atmosphere more conducive to peace and thus more helpful to speed up and facilitate actual implementation of the ruling which is final and binding.

We believe that by consummating its position of principle down to implementation, Ethiopia would be well positioned to play a positive and constructive role in the ongoing healing and pacification process on local and regional levels. In light of this, and at this historic juncture, which also happens to be the closing stage of its very existence, the Eritrean regime is required to drop the long exposed futile practice of exploiting the border ruling for unholy purposes of its tragically narrow power agenda and engage instead in serious and constructive talks that could facilitate the implementation of the ruling on the ground and so give peace a chance, a blessing the two brotherly peoples long aspired to and deserve to attain.

**Seyoum O.Michael
Chairman of Executive Committee**