



**ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT/ELF-RC
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Statement of 6th Regular Session of
The Executive Committee**

The 6th Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of ELF-RC was held between 17 and 21 October 2005 and concluded its work successfully.

Past Performance/Future Plans

The Executive Committee (EC) reviewed reports of various organs and institutions of the ELF-RC located in different parts of the world, and made all-round assessment of activities and their performance. The meeting also made in-depth evaluation of events and developments that unfolded in Eritrea and the surrounding region. Basing on this and after studying issues of paramount importance to the people and country, the EC meeting adopted a work plan and set the priorities of the next stage, with the aim of further advancing and ensuring the success of the victory strategy that the ELF-RC had laid down for itself.

Salutes to Members and Supporters

The EC saluted ELF-RC members and supporters and registered its admiration to their resolve and unflinching devotion to the national democratic political line of their organisation, against innumerable odds and ill-intentioned campaigns. The meeting commended their exemplary and responsible stand, and the sacrifices they have made to promote the fundamental interests of our country and people. The EC expressed trust in the determined stand of members and supporters of the organisation and their preparedness to step up their efforts to consummate the struggle for the noble objectives.

Call on Eritrean Youth

The EC meeting thoroughly discussed the current state of affairs in Eritrea and concluded that the disruptive and destructive policies of the regime have driven the nation to the brink of collapse that is manifest in the state of extreme poverty, hopelessness and desperation now engulfing the country. As such, the country and its people have been pushed to a critical crossroads. The EC recognised the objective necessity to make this a turning point for change and the salvation of the nation. It called on all Eritreans, and above all the young generation to recognise the urgency for immediate change and rise up to the historic call of this hour to salvage the people and the country.

PFDJ and its Obstructions to Humanitarian Work

The meeting observed that that the distressing human condition of hunger and starvation in Eritrea was a direct result of the callous policies of the criminal and belligerent regime; coupled with the draught of recent years these have plunged the nation into a deep state of deprivation and threatening disintegration. To make the situation worse, the international humanitarian organisations have been obstructed by the irresponsible actions of the dictatorial regime from reaching the people in urgent need of relief assistance. The EC was alarmed by the regime's imposition of heavy taxes on incoming humanitarian relief supplies and equally so by the sale in open market of relief goods supposed to be distributed free of charge to the vulnerable persons and groups in the country.

The pariah PFDJ regime, whose domestic and regional acts of disruption and aggression have isolated it internationally, is once again trying to divert world attention by generating irresponsible gestures that would escalate and further antagonise the situation around the unsettled border issue between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Regrettably, regime ordered a ban on the free movement of the UN peacekeeping mission and intensified its provocations for a crisis through its usual warmongering. The EC strongly rejected and condemned this game with fire that has already incurred heavy toll in the lives of Eritreans and neighbouring peoples. The leadership meeting identified as acts of desperation all the dictatorial regime's measures of collective detention of the youth and parents of others fleeing persecution.

The criminal measures of the regime that have attained the level of crimes against humanity are clear signals of the upcoming popular storm that is gathering for a forceful head-on collision to remove the evil regime.

Eritrean Asylum Seekers

The meeting reviewed the day-to-day suffering of the Eritrean youth who are being forced to flee the country in great numbers to escape persecution, terror and physical liquidation at home. The EC was dismayed in studying the ill-advised decision of the UNHCR that has denied Eritreans the status of asylum, and cautioned of the dire consequences of this decision. As daughters and sons of a nation subjected to endless abuses by a regime bent at killing and evicting its own people, and being themselves specifically targeted by the regime's oppressive policies, Eritrean asylum seekers deserve all the sympathy and support, protection and assistance, as the alarmingly deteriorating political and security situation at home unequivocally entitles them to the right to protection. With this in view, the EC meeting resolved to step up ELF-RC's efforts at regional and international levels to rally world public opinion to ensure that Eritrean asylum seeker's rights are acknowledged and respected.

Towards Making EDA Effective

The EC expressed profound satisfaction with the constructive role played by the ELF-RC in the creation of the Eritrean Democratic Alliance and ongoing effort to strengthen it, as part of the struggle to marshal national capacities to remove the autocratic regime and replace it with a democratic system of governance in which peace and security would prevail. The meeting renewed ELF-RC's commitment to redouble efforts towards reforming the basis of the EDA and boost its performance and operational effectiveness, in the meantime underlining the fact that EDA's strength and effectiveness lies squarely in the strength and harmony of member organisations, thus the importance of promoting work on that level. The meeting also renewed its call on all Eritreans to rally behind the banners and objectives of the Democratic Alliance in the way of realising their rights and dignity and the interests and aspirations of future generations.

On Developments in Sudan and Ethiopia

In considering events and developments within Eritrea's neighbours, the EC meeting expressed great satisfaction with the ongoing peace and reconciliation process in the Sudan. It commended the Sudanese political forces for their wisdom to manage and resolve their internal differences through patient democratic dialogue that has culminated in comprehensive agreements to establish a government of national unity that would usher in an era of peace, democracy and prosperity to their country. This exemplary peaceful and democratic process will no doubt lead to further successes on the remaining issues in the Sudan and reflect positively on other parts of our continent.

Likewise, the ELF-RC leadership meeting noted with great optimism the start of yet another encouraging new chapter in the latest multi-party electoral process in Ethiopia. This democratic experience was a clear reflection and advancement of a prolonged and concerted Ethiopian people's struggle for better governance replacing the ordeals of the dark times that generations of Ethiopians had had to undergo. The EC in the meantime recognised the fact that this experience, as all nascent democratic endeavours do, may need to be nurtured and safeguarded through tolerance, compromises, and an elevated sense of responsibility. The EC Meeting expressed its wish that this achievement is allowed all the chance and space to grow into a full blown, irreversible democratic openness and usher in a new era of stability in Ethiopia and in the meantime constitute a huge contribution to peace and stability in the region and the continent at large.

Appeal for International Support

In concluding, the EC meeting wanted to aptly draw the attention of the international community to the struggle of the Eritrean people to relieve itself of a brutal dictatorship that has caused untold suffering, displacement and death in the country. It called on all parties and states interested in the protection of human rights to raise their voices and apply the weight of their pressure to help release all Eritrean political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. The ELF-RC Executive Committee called on all peace and democracy-loving countries and organisations to shoulder their human and moral responsibilities and stand up with clear political position to confirm their respect and support to the legitimate aspirations of the Eritrean people and contribute for change, democracy and protection of human rights in Eritrea.

The Executive Committee, 21 October, 2005