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جبهة التحرير الإرتريّة
المجلس الثوري
مكتب الرئيس

Eritrean Liberation Front – RC
Chairman’s Office

Important Statement

16.06.2007

On his 8 June 2007 letter to Mr. Johan Verbeke, the current President of the UN Security Council, Mr. Seyoum Mesfin, the Foreign Minister of Ethiopia stated the following:

“Ethiopia has accepted the [Border] Commission’s delimitation decision of 13 April 2002 without precondition”.

This is a significant clarification or development in our conflict-ridden zone and a window to a long-awaited resumption – hopefully within a limited period of time - of normal relations between our two fraternal peoples. We say this because to the suffocated Eritrean people, the news is a harbinger to the removal by our people’s joint struggle of the one-man dictatorship in Eritrea. Therefore, we in the ELF-RC welcome this decision - or further clarification of a crucial position - and once again wish to express our fervent hope that it will be implemented on the ground now.

When the Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Commission passed its final and binding decision, the ELF-RC commended Commission members for the timely action and called on the concerned parties to fully abide by the ruling. This was because the ELF-RC, which has been on record since the start of the border conflict in May 1998 urging for a peaceful legal approach to the problem, still remains of full conviction that resort to hostilities at anytime has no relevance in this issue. In a word, war is against the welfare and the best interests of both peoples.

*On 26 November 2004, when the Ethiopian government retract its former position of rejection of the Commission’s decision and declared to have accepted the ruling, at least “in principle”, **Martyr Seyoum Ogbamichael**, the then ELF-RC chairman, expressed our profound hope for ending of the border conflict through the following ringing terms:*

“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...[Acceptance of the ruling] 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."

Today, it is an open secret known even to those once gullible recipients of PFDJ propaganda, that the current news about Ethiopia's belated, nevertheless responsible position is a very bad news to petty dictator Isayas Afeworki and his ever dwindling small clique in Asmara. We commend the Ethiopian government for having accepted the final and binding ruling, this time "without precondition". One could say more on this subject but, instead, I find it more pertinent to reproduce below what the ELF-RC stated over two and a half years ago through a letter signed by our late chairman, Martyr Seyoum, congratulating Ethiopia for accepting, even "in principle", the ruling of the international arbitration commission.

Woldeyesus Ammar



*Chairman,
Executive Committee of the ELF-RC*

(Following is the ELF-RC statement of 26.11.2004 signed by our late chairman, Martyr Seyoum Ogbamicahel):

“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.”