

# **EPDP: The True Voice of the Eritrean People**

**The Department of Information  
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The Frankfurt conference didn't only score a unity of three respective organizations and it also echoed the voice of the Eritrean people. Peace, justice and unity have been the components of life to the Eritrean people for decades. The true representation of the people's voice in the conference and its outcome is rekindling the Eritrean spirit to a new beginning.

The conference came out with political program that meets the aspirations of the Eritrean people. Although the full political program of Eritrean Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP) has been distributed through media few weeks ago, we will focus on few of them what we consider the pillars of the new party for the sake of this discussion. The following are some of the pillars of the political program:

- 1- The Eritrean people are the owners of the land
- 2- Assurance of human and democratic rights of the Eritrean people
- 3- Establish a government that is based on checks and balances
- 4- Guarantee social justice

EPDP wants to make clear its positions on issues that matters to the Eritrean people. And that is why we will discuss the topics we listed above. For today's discussion we will focus on our position on land.

The land question has been contentious for a long time. Colonialism had used land to divide and conquer the Eritrean people. And the dictatorship system in Asmara since they came to power had been implementing programs that extend their life by creating cracks amongst the Eritrean bonding. Certainly, the abuse distribution of land was one of the tools the system used to antagonize communities. In the last year some elements in the opposition also instead of looking for a genuine solution to the reality they followed the foot steps of the dictator in using land as a divisive tool to score a political gain.

EPDP understands that land is the identity of our people and it means everything to them. We also believe that land question and democracy are inseparable. That is why the conference magnified its importance. Our party believes land belongs to the people and they should be the primary beneficiaries of it. For years now PFDJ has been taking land in the highlands and lowlands from its owners by force. But in the recent years PFDJ's government had escalated its sly plans by forcing communities from the highlands and relocates them to lands that belong to the lowlanders also taken by force. This is a heinous act intentionally designed to deepen the rift amongst our communities. The conference condemned PFDJ's heinous act and committed to reverse the steps once the system is out of sight. How do we plan to solve the land issue?

Since 1995 the then ELF-RC and later EPP took a clear position that land belongs to the Eritrean people when the ruling party announced that land belonged to the government. The new party also adapted the policy that land belongs to the Eritrean people. It is a naked secret that PFDJ had weaved social issues that would not be easy to repeal. As the famous tygrina proverb says, “Aasha zitekelo lebam nayneklo meaning whatever is done by an ignorant man it will be hard for a wise man to deal with it later”. PFDJ’s sly design of division had rooted deep into the communities that needed masterful of skills and wisdom to deal with. Our party believes the land issue should be resolved amicably, legally, justly, and through the active participation and consultation of the stakeholders. We will respect the stakeholders’ opinion and rights. At the end of the day we believe in united communities that coexist harmoniously side by side and benefit from the land they own.

What all need to understand is the Eritrean people are not at fault it is the PFDJ government and their cronies that are at fault. The opposition need to articulate the root of the problem and finding a remedy to the root cause should be our primary task. Funning phrases of hate one against the other will only widen the rift of division and serve the interests of the dictator. Quarters who shelter on the blaming game are only exposing their lack of solutions and incompetency. EPDP is committed to finding lasting solution on the land issues which is a precious treasure to our people with organizations in the opposition who have similar vision, civic societies, the stakeholders, experts, and the Eritrean people.

When we say land belong to the people we don’t also mean building borders of division and segregation. We believe all Eritreans will be free to live and invest where they deem to believe it meets their objective and dream. We also believe everything needs to be done legally and justly.

