



Eritrean Delegation Statement to the 28th HRC Session: ITEM 4

Presented by Ambassador Tesfamicael Gerahtu

Geneva, 16 March 2015

Mr President

My delegation once again thanks for the opportunity accorded to engage with the Human Right Council. We have listened to the oral report by the COI submitted under Item 4 and Eritrea reiterates its position that country specific mandate without the consent of the concerned State is counterproductive. Hence, the oral report is rejected and this statement will thus focus only on aspects of the reality which require attention of this esteemed Council.

At the outset, Eritrea once again wants to clarify its rational position which is expressed in the following three dimensions:-

1. **Country specific resolutions and mandates** are in breach of the UN principles of impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity and hence do not create any dividend in the promotion and protection of human rights.
2. There is **no gross and systematic violation** of human rights in Eritrea. The presumption under which these mandates have been imposed negates Eritrea's reality in breach of paragraph 87 (a) of annex 5/1 and the accusations are politically motivated.
3. Eritrea has ascertained both in commitment and deeds a veracious path of **engagement and cooperation** with HRC, OHCHR and over bilateral diplomacy.

Moreover, my delegation is dismayed at the protracted reliance on unreliable, unproven and sensational information and interactions. Preconceived ideas and conclusions on Eritrea have become rampant. The activist-like approaches against in contradiction to Mandate Holders' Code of Conduct and the reliance and cooperation with Ethiopia and Djibouti as countries with belligerent stance on Eritrea contravenes IBP principles and is also unacceptable. These have compromised objectivity and should be rejected as they can be used to mislead the Council.

Mr. President,

While the above dimensions of principle and practice are relevant in their own merit, the issue however is much deeper. The approach on Eritrea so far has been to disregard the **essence of the problems** which impinge on Eritrea's sovereignty, the right to development and the right to live in peace without any threats. This negates the basic HRC principle in the interrelationship of peace and security, and human right and development. On this account, my delegation once again urges the Council to consider Eritrea's situation in the context of the continued

occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories, the illegal and unjust sanctions imposed on Eritrea and the belligerent stance and hostilities of some countries.

Eritrea's resilience has, however, been proven against all the pronounced odds. The modest development progress achieved with significant implications to the enjoyment of the human rights is an attestation to the real situation in the country and mention is made of the following:-

1. In terms of social justice, **equal right and opportunity** sanctioned by National Laws continues to uphold human rights obligations
2. Modest success has been achieved in the **adequate standard of living**, by promoting and protecting the rights to food, health, education, water, environment and social security but more effort is still needed to fulfil quality life for our people
3. The **resilience of the economy** has been ascertained by modest growth, but effort is ongoing to mitigate the challenges of macro-economic stability and market stabilization affecting the peoples' living condition
4. As part of the political process of nation building, the **responsible participation** of the people, the development of participatory politics and overall reorganization to strengthen the government administrative system are some examples taking shape but need expansion and consolidation
5. The prevailing **peace and stability** is also a characteristic feature of the nation and is reflected in the harmony, strong social fabric and peaceful coexistence of the diverse population with all rights respected.

Mr President

Mainstreaming of human rights in the sustainable development goals in all sectors of nation building has also been strengthened and recently a Strategic Framework is being developed towards this end. In this perspective, Eritrea's commitment for **expanded and integrated engagement and cooperation paradigm** encompassing the following is thus considered as the sustainable path:-

1. **Engagement and cooperation with the OHCHR** has been extended and already three areas have initially been identified. This includes administration of justice, persons with disability and access to clean and safe water. We thank the High Commissioner for sending his team to Eritrea on March 2015 and will be consolidated in the future once the report of the OHCHR is finalized
2. To maximize the UPR recommendations which Eritrea has accepted as a means of engagement and cooperation, a **UPR2 Framework of Action** has been introduced and a coordination structure is also set up. In this connection, note

should be made that Eritrea has already acceded to the Convention Against Torture, Convention on Transnational Organized Crimes and its protocol to Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children.

3. **Cooperation with the HRC** will further be strengthened and hence priorities on Thematic Mandates and Treaty bodies have been identified for action
4. Preliminary discussions have been made to expand our partnership with the **UN Country Team** and action will be initiated by May 2015
5. Working **at bilateral level** with missions accredited to Eritrea including the EU Delegation in Eritrea is also an integral part of the overall effort (country level cooperation is also considered). In the last 6 months two sessions of dialogue have already been done and will continue on a regular basis

In light of the above position and developments, Mr President, my delegation would like to seize this opportunity to once again assure my Government's commitment to promote and protect genuine human rights for its citizens. In this context, it urges the Council to consider the outlined path of engagement, cooperation and institutional links and avoid the confrontational approach by abandoning the country specific resolutions and mechanisms imposed on Eritrea.

I thank you Mr. President!