



HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT ISAIAS AFWERKI PART III

- Identification of our development priorities for the current year – within the comprehensive medium to long-term developmental roadmap and framework that was charted out in 2019 – is relatively evident. These are indeed predicated on three fundamental and interlinked parameters: i) water infrastructure; ii) energy; and iii) critical physical infrastructure to include roads, railways etc.

- In terms of water infrastructure, the task is not limited to construction of big dams. It includes whole gamut of interlinked measures such as afforestation, terracing, utilization of subterranean water etc. that must be pursued at the village and sub-zoba levels throughout the country and with full participation of local administrations and the wider public.

- The country may have accumulated more than 500 million

cubic meters of water in the big dams constructed so far. But this is not adequate in terms of the latent potential. More importantly, effectiveness will be measured by transition to irrigation, utilization of selected and appropriate seeds, and above all our human capital in terms of optimal organizational and technical capacity. This has not materialized so far.

- In regard to Eritrea's potential in the blue economy, President Isaias underlined that the country's endowment in fisheries is huge as the annual maximum sustainable yield (MYS) is estimated between 80,00 to 120,000 tone. 60% of these are small pelagic fish which may not yield huge export revenues. Still, 40% constitute different species for the high-end export market. But due to infrastructural bottlenecks – harbours, energy, and associated facilities, the exploitation of marine resources remains limited at about 10% which does not fully



cover domestic demand.

- Tourism, other marine-based minerals such as salt etc. are substantial resources which have yet to develop within the Government's Coastal Development Strategy. The potential for wind, solar

and geothermal energy is also considerable.

- In mining, President Isaias noted that the country's mineral resources – Gold, copper, potash, construction materials, cement etc. – are exceptionally huge. These endowments – even if finite – will have considerable catalytic contributions to the country's current and future economic

development. But the mineral extraction projects implemented so far cannot be viewed as yielding optimal revenues in so far as they are not fully processed (80% in the case of Gold and bulky concentrates for copper) in the country for critical value addition. The ultimate aim in exploiting these resources should therefore be geared towards full processing and refinement within the country.

ERITREA AT THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES GROUP SUMMIT

Eritrea has participated at the Summit of the Least Developed Countries Group hosted in Doha, Qatar.

A delegation led by the Permanent Representative of the State of Eritrea at the UN, Ambassador Sofia Tesfamariam, participated at the summit, report indicated.

Eritrea's delegation is also

participating at the 5th UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC 5) which is being held in Doha, Qatar, from the 5th to 9th of March under the theme "From Potential to Prosperity".

The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to accelerate sustainable development in

the places where international assistance is needed the most – and to tap the full potential of the Least Developed Countries and helping them make progress on the road to prosperity.

The LDC5 will feature high-level thematic roundtables, a general debate, and other events. It is expected to adopt a Doha declaration.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS IN DIASPORA

Eritrean nationals in Australia, Canada and the US enthusiastically celebrated the International Women's Day.

At the celebratory event in Melbourne, Australia, Ms. Birhin Okbai, head of the union branch, explained the role and participation of Eritrean women in the national matters, and expressed readiness to strengthen participation.

Mr. Mehari Tekeste, Eritrea's Consul General in Australia, on his part called for strengthening organizational capacity and participation in the implementation of national development programs.

At the event, head of national associations delivered messages of solidarity.

Likewise, nationals in Winnipeg, Canada, celebrated the International Women's Day under the theme "Eritrean Women- Unwavering and Undertaking Sweats to Cultivate".

Speaking at the occasion, Ms. Nebiat Chewai, chairperson of the preparatory committee, commending the participation of the Eritrean women in the national affairs, called for transferring the noble societal values to the young generation.

Similarly, nationals in Cincinnati, the US, celebrated the International Women's Day with patriotic zeal.

STATEMENT OF THE ERITREAN DELEGATION AT THE UNHRC 52ND SESSION

Eritrea's development strategy is anchored on the commitment to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights and social security of all its citizens through an inclusive and participatory process of social justice. This conviction and policy commitment continues to be pursued with higher vigor in spite of unremitting external hostilities essentially aimed at undermining the inalienable rights of Eritrea for peaceful coexistence with its neighbors in the geostrategic Horn of Africa region.

The unrelenting harassment of Eritrea for more than ten years now through the unwarranted appointment of Special Rapporteurs stems from, and is inextricably linked with, the hostile agenda of its detractors as indicated above.

In this respect, it should not surprise us that this charade continues to linger in a vicious cycle from Special Rapporteur to a Commission of Inquiry, from an oral update, to a written report, and, then from a simple interactive dialogue to an enhanced one.

The sad fact is, these "mandates" have never been mechanisms to rectify anomalies or alleged "human rights deficits" exhibited by Eritrea. Their original purpose and rationale always have been to create platforms to advance their ulterior political motives and

agendas.

This is indeed nothing less than weaponization of human rights in its crudest form against a developing country.

As a matter of fact, the principal focus of the Special Rapporteur in the last two years since the TPLF launched its war of choice of insurrection in November 2020, has veered from its stipulated mandate to mendaciously accuse Eritrea to serve greater agendas.

As may be recalled, the Special Rapporteur in his report of last year falsely accused Eritrea of deploying in the war in northern Ethiopia the 5,000 Somalis that were receiving military training in Eritrea as a result of bilateral agreement between Governments of Eritrea and Somalia.

In the event, Eritrea has duly demanded the rescinding of the entire report and the prompt dismissal of the Special Rapporteur for unacceptable political bias and dereliction of duty.



Mr. president,

Eritrea's inviolable rights for independent political choices and economic development should not be misconstrued and utilized as tools of harassment by certain external powers.

Unwarranted hostilities have, and continue to exact, heavy sacrifices on the country to hamper its progress. In spite of

these road bumps however, Eritrea continues to make substantial improvements in fundamental rights and the quality of life of its citizens through greater and equitable access to health, education, food security, etc.

Eritrea has also implemented purposeful, rigorous and extensive programs of soil and water conservation for over two

decades now to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change in an ecologically fragile region.

In conclusion, let me stress that Eritrea will persist in its development agenda in spite of the relentless and unwarranted harassment by certain powers.

*Thank you.
06 March 2023*

Te'awite (I Won): Reflecting on Gender in Eritrea

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help protect women from violence and harmful, traditional practices, such as FGM/C, child or under-age marriage, bride price, dowries, and kidnapping. As well, the National Union of Eritrean Women has helped drive the implementation of a broad array of gender-equality programs and initiatives. In education, there has been a focus on expanding access and opportunities for females, basic education is now compulsory for boys and girls, and the once massive gender disparities in enrollment and literacy have improved significantly.

Attention to gender-equality has also extended to the employment and economic sectors. National Labour and Land Reform Proclamations secure legal protection for women in employment, guarantee women equal opportunities and maternal-protection benefits, and ensure that women are able to use or inherit land without discrimination. Additionally, several national initiatives,

such as the Macro Policy, Micro-Credit, MIHAP, and the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Program, were created to guarantee that women would be appropriately supported in fulfilling their potential.

Later in the day, as I got off the crowded bus and headed home, I saw a group of young children laughing and playing in the distance. I waved, admiring their enthusiasm and carefree exuberance, yet they hardly took notice of me. As I was nearly past them, I eventually came to realize what it was they were doing – racing. Then, almost to underscore my thoughts from the previous two days, a small girl, her spindly little legs propelling her far ahead of the rest of the boys and girls, proudly announced, "Te'awite! Te'awite! (I won! I won!)"

Yes, you can. Yes, you did.

Eritrea's diverse efforts towards promoting equality, coupled with gradual – yet noticeable – societal cultural changes, have seen women integrated into many sectors of society and the economy,

allowing them to play a vital role in the country's development and progress. Women now constitute approximately 50 percent of Eritrea's national labour force, and they remain very active in agriculture, services, and the informal sector. While women have traditionally been concentrated in manufacturing – such as the garment, leather, and tobacco industries – improvements in education and expanded opportunities have meant that more women are transitioning to high-skilled sectors.

Notably, today many women

proudly own land, often using it for farming or to build houses. Their ownership also extends to business, where they retain control over a significant percentage of all small and medium-sized enterprises. Impressively, many of the most successful private business in Eritrea are owned by women. Finally, Eritrea's growing mining sector has received strong impetus from women; they perform a variety of construction, driving, administrative, technical and managerial functions.

Around the world, it has long been the rule that women are inferior, with little to contribute to society. In Eritrea however, especially from the days of the long struggle and since the onset of independence, Eritrean women have proven resilient exceptions to such outdated, patriarchal rules through their wholehearted participation, struggle, contributions, and sacrifice. Today, Eritrean women are contributing in all areas of society and in many diverse, important ways, ultimately playing a crucial role in the country's general development and socio-economic improvement.



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INTERVIEW OF PRESIDENT ISAIAS AFWERKI WITH NATIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS PART III

National media outlets conducted third part of an interview with President Isaias Afwerki on important domestic issues last Saturday. Full text of the translated version of the third part of the interview follows.

In your keynote address at the 28th Independence Anniversary in 2019, you had detailed an 11-point economic and social development roadmap, which highlighted roads, ports and coastlines, transportation, industry, efficiency and transparency, effective implementation, and other key areas and sectors. Although much has been achieved, the myriad extraneous challenges faced have understandably curtailed implementation of all these programmes with the desired pace and scope. As part of continued efforts to push through this roadmap, can you expound on the priorities set out for 2023?

The topic is quite extensive and lumping the various subheadings together would be a disservice to its complexity and breadth. One must recognize innate interdependence of the development sectors. Indeed, any setback in one area affects the rest of the chain. As such, their implementation requires careful sequencing and the setting of priorities. Furthermore, within these priorities, some sectors are fundamental and must be viewed as absolutely critical to our ability to implement all other plans.

Within our context, water, in all its aspects, remains one such fundamental sector. From its administrative and institutional framework, to the utilization of modern technologies, to its various uses (drinking, hygiene, agriculture, industry, etc.) – water is fundamental and our development planning has been predicated on this understanding. The primary priority that must be attached to water is thus palpable as it affects all other sectors and cannot be relegated to the backburner under any circumstances

Another related sector that warrants priority is energy – power generation and electricity supply – which, for obvious reasons, affects the progress of all other sectors and industries.

Following these two priority areas would be the comprehensive sector of physical infrastructure. This entails roads; transportation services, -including by sea, land,

and air - railways; cableway, etc. This sector is wide-ranging and similarly affects all other sectors and industries, which is why it, too, must be listed as a fundamental sector.

Obviously, the prioritization and sequencing of these sectors does not require any re-invention. However, what is important at this point in time is to carefully assess how much of what we planned were we able to achieve; the extent to which the targets set were effectively implemented?

For example, in terms of water infrastructure, the huge task includes the construction of large, medium, and small dams; the geographical mapping of such projects; the ability to conserve rainwater; the utilization of modern and appropriate technologies depending on the terrain; etc. Furthermore, the task includes a wide gamut of other interlinked measures such as afforestation, terracing, as well as the prudent utilization of subterranean and sea water in terms of potential resources that can be tapped beyond rainfall-based water harvesting infrastructures.

The accumulated progress in this multi-layered task; what has been achieved in the annual afforestation and terracing campaigns can be assessed thoroughly. In this respect, although much has been achieved, especially in view of the enormity of the task, a generous estimate would place it at the 20% mark only. That is to say, we have not been able to meet our desired goals and utilize the full potential in this area. Indeed, much remains to be done.

The dam at Kerkebet has the potential of accumulating 300 million cubic meters of water. But the question remains has it been adequately utilized? Moreover, important and pending water infrastructural programmes that are still on the drawing board include the Gash, Anseba, and Setit (with its peculiarities) rivers.

In a nutshell, the demand for drinking water has not been fully met on a national scale.



Whether it is in Asmara, Keren, Massawa, or any other populated urban area, a key goal remains ensuring that every citizen has adequate and clean potable water. The same goal applies to the rural areas; including remote villages. We obviously have network of dams built for the purpose especially in some large urban cities such as Tokor and Mai Nefhi in Asmara. But this is not adequate both in the specific area in question as well as from a nation-wide perspective. We must recognize that the need for clean drinking water, for hygiene, and for all other services related to the population's needs, has yet to be fully met.

All of this is to say that complacency is not an option. Yes, there is full clarity in terms of charting out our development priorities and marshalling our resources for their implementation. But the enormity of the task requires continuous and unremitting endeavours. The agricultural dimension must also be taken into account here. We have to gauge progress in terms of increased harvest from the utilization of the accumulated water; the type of produce as well as agro-industrial processing that we have been able to embark on. All these facts should impel us to work with greater vigour and at an accelerated pace for the coming two-three years.

The concrete plans for accelerated work, and the implementation modalities and time lines, must therefore be charted out with full clarity to instill awareness in each person to take full responsibility and work intensively so as to meet our targets.

The interdependence that obtains between the priority sectors described above as well as the social services and other sectors is profound indeed. Extensive and inclusive discourse at an opportune time will thus be vital to raise public awareness and thereby enhance more effective implementation.

As you have described above, the GOE has since long embarked on building the water infrastructure and related programmes against the backdrop of climate change and to reduce the country's total dependence on rainfall. As such, the number of dams constructed thus far – namely, Kerkebet, Gahtelai, Mslam, Logo, Gerset, and 2 Fancos, Bademit – have a total capacity of 530 million cubic meters. In this respect, what are GOE plans for extensive agricultural irrigation? what are the tangible projects in the offing?

This relates to the points raised earlier. The country may have accumulated more than 500 million cubic meters of water in the big dams constructed so far, but this is not adequate in terms of the latent potential. Furthermore, and to really measure the impact of the water saved, one must be able to calculate and trace the usage of each cubic meter.

More importantly, the impact can be greater when we are able to fully transition from traditional methods of irrigation to more advanced methods that allow the society to not only save water but use it more effectively. Production of fruits and vegetables is increasing all over the country through utilization of

dams or by drilling wells. But the methodology is not optimal and must be supplanted by more effective systems.

Our goal in this area is to effect sustainable behavioral change and move the society away from traditional methods of fallow irrigation that waste water and are not particularly effective. Of course, this requires the concurrent provision of alternative methods, and this is where context-based and cost-effective modern irrigation methods come in.

This is a crucial point because if one uses irrigation methods that do not take the topography and other key physical factors of an area into consideration, then the cost-effectiveness falls short of expectations. One method, for example, that is found to be particularly effective in our context is the utilization of gravity, where we make use of hills and mountains around project areas. Water is pumped from nearby dams to large water silos strategically installed at top of this hills and this is then pushed down through gravity. This method has proven to drastically minimize cost and maximize efficiency.

Professionals in this field have shown that more advanced, modern methods use about one tenth of the water used through traditional irrigation methods. The cost-effectiveness of this is obviously evident as one is able to multiply the efforts by ten.

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As mentioned earlier, this requires the careful selection of irrigation methods that are appropriate to the particular context – this includes ecological variables, topography, soil type, etc. Utilization of appropriate and optimal irrigation methods will enable the country to reap two, three or even four harvests a year; instead of one harvest under rain-fed or fallow irrigation as is broadly the case currently. All this is to emphasize that in order to effectively use water, all the different aspects and input must be taken into account, and this is a much wider area than simply capturing and collecting water in dams. Even as it relates to the capturing and collection of water, we have rivers and subterranean waters that have yet to be fully utilized. This requires further expansion of water infrastructure including the construction of micro and check dams, and wells. All these combined efforts will substantially augment the volume of water that will be accumulated annually at the national level.

In tandem with the appropriate technology of water infrastructure that we introduce, it is vital to focus on the selection of appropriate seeds to increase production. Programmes of Animal husbandry, animal feed, inland fisheries are supplementary programmes that will impact overall production growth.

In fact, if assessed objectively, the current phase can be dubbed as a transitional phase in which much experience was gained and lessons learned – this includes our gradual ability to substitute imported technologies through in-country research and development.

This leads to the point mentioned earlier about the water sector being as wide-ranging and intersecting with various other areas, including energy. On this point, it would seem unsustainable to keep relying on imported input such as generators and fuel. As such, one must examine other more effective methods that would produce energy utilizing the environment around us. This leads us to considerations in areas of renewable energies.

Above all of the points mentioned, however, our human capital – in terms of optimal organizational skills, technical



capacity, as well as the average citizen's understanding of and participation in all areas – remains the most critical and fundamental area that would enable us to fully implement these development plans. This requires the commitment to, and partnership amongst, all sections – particularly administrations in all zobas and subzobas. And, it also requires the provision of key tools and appropriate trainings that would enhance every citizen's ability to contribute to the best of one's abilities.

All of this goes back to a point that must be repeated, the work accomplished thus far, although by some measures considerable, does not meet the latent potential and as such one can conclude that much has not materialized. This requires us to redouble all efforts.

Mr. President, we will now proceed to a sector that is attracting a lot of attention these days; i.e. the blue economy. In this regard, even though Eritrea possess a long coastline and many islands, it has not been able to utilize these endowments as desired due to various reasons. Are there any plans to do so in the coming years?

A. This is yet another topic that falls short of expectations. The gap between aspirations or expectations on the hand, and reality or potential on the other is really big.

The country's endowment in fisheries is huge as the annual maximum sustainable yield (MSY) is estimated to be between 80,000 to 120,000 tones, and the

infrastructure – energy, water as well as sea and land transportation – must be put in place and careful consideration must be paid to the sequencing of inputs.

However, this will not dampen our determination. We have gleaned important lessons. We have to deploy all the essential material inputs in all the main ports and harbours throughout the coastline as well as the requisite skilled manpower in order to effectively utilize all our substantial marine resource, which is something we have already embarked on.

We should note that a Coastal Development Strategy has already been drafted and is under implementation. This provides a roadmap for this sector. The strategy deals with around 1300 kilometers of total coastal area located in a very delicate and strategic zone. The strategy further recognizes the latent potential of this sector including proper and detailed mapping of fishing areas. It also addresses associated development tasks in critical and interlinked sectors – roads, water, harbours, boats, hangars, energy, ice-making machines, etc. – that ought to be accomplished before we can begin to utilize this potential to its fullest.

Our coast extends from Ras Doumeira to Ras Kasar and if one takes stock of the infrastructure put in place thus far, the result is not particularly impressive. To begin with, road construction has not gone beyond temporary structures that require annual maintenance. Similarly, although we speak of two critical ports, Massawa and Assab, the need for smaller harbours along the coast that feed into the overall structure remains evident. Furthermore, we have yet to ensure that our coastal population is fully introduced to new technologies, is able to contribute to, or receive, adequate services from this important sector.

All this is to say that the work accomplished thus far falls far short from our objectives and desired targets even taking into account the prevalent constrains. Nonetheless, as mentioned earlier, this has given us the impetus to redouble our efforts. Obviously, this is not something that can be accomplished overnight, and requires us to honestly recognize the shortcomings and commit to making up for lost opportunities and time. The

potential is absolutely vast and is slated to contribute immensely to the national economy – from exporting fresh fish, to canning, to drying, etc. But again, this requires an integrated and sequenced approach, planning, and implementation.

Another sub-area within this sector that remains underutilized, or to some extent utilized but not at satisfactory levels, is the production of salt. At this time, this is confined to the very basic processing and packaging, and nothing has been done to expand it to larger scale, industrial usage, or even find ways to add value to the basic product. Furthermore, natural resources, other than fish, found on the coast or at sea have also not been fully explored and utilized. This includes the production of natural fertilizers, mangrove planting, among other examples.

Similarly, the potential for renewable energy, including wind, solar and most especially geothermal energy is also considerable. Geothermal energy in particular is an area that we have talked about for a very long time and something that we know can yield great results being as it is located on the Rift Valley.

Interestingly, during the recent State visit to Kenya, we visited a geothermal energy farm that expanded from 20MW capacity ten years ago to its current 1100MW capacity. We, too, have this potential. And again, this is not a new topic but something we have been talking about. Unfortunately, it remains undeveloped to-date.

Now imagine the cumulative effects and impact integrated development in the energy sector – that comprise of geothermal, wind, solar and thermal – would have had on the development of all other sectors, including the programmes of Coastal Development. Let us remember that our national development strategy is anchored on three Development Zones – the Coastal Areas, the Highlands and the Western Lowlands. In this context, the development programmes in the Coastal areas are indeed vast. All this is to say that our Coastal Development Strategy is not confined to fish and fish products and comprises all the endowments found along our ecological-rich shores.

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It is imperative to deploy all the essential facilities at this point in time with a sense of urgency. This is the task at hand. The drawbacks encountered in the past and the lessons gleaned will add impetus to our determination to implement the programmes that we have already embarked on. We are determined to pursue and implement all components of the Blue Economy – port development, the tourism industry etc. extensively. This will require qualitative changes in our methodology of implementation; in our organizational and administrative capabilities.

The mining sector, along with other economic sectors, has evident contributions to national growth. In this regard, there are several ongoing commercial activities in the extractive sector. Are there additional concrete plans to exploit more extensively the latent potential in the sector?

The country's mineral resources are exceptionally huge and, in some respects, incomparable considering its total geographical area. It is also interesting to note that exploration and exploitation of this sector can be traced back to the time of colonialism.

In terms of current realities, one can perhaps point at two main projects, namely, Bisha and Zara, to assess the impact and effectiveness of this sector so far.

Natural resources, viewed as endowments – even if finite – have considerable catalytic contributions to the country's current and future economic development. The income gained from this sector is obviously expected to feed into a national financial basket, used for the benefit of, and to finance, other key development projects. It is for this reason that the effective utilization of this sector remains of utmost importance.

In general, however, the mineral extraction projects implemented so far cannot be viewed as yielding optimal revenues in so far as they were, and are not, fully processed in the country for critical value addition. That is to say, 80% refinement in the case of gold and bulk concentrates for copper was extracted and shipped out of the country.

The overall experience thus far



has raised a series of questions: What was its contribution to financing development projects? How did it contribute to the overall national economic growth? Did it have a positive sustainable effect on the growth of the sector itself? Could we not have further processed these here? Could we not have added value in-country and sold directly to markets at higher rates? Was it cost effective (in terms of fuel, time, tires, and other wear and tear on the roads) to use trucks to haul bulk concentrate from Bisha all the way to the port in Massawa? All of this covers Bisha in particular but there is also the Zara site. And these days, the Asmara site will be operational.

Indeed, faced with all these questions, we now find ourselves regretting some of these decisions that were taken rather hastily. Nonetheless, the experience gained and lessons learned will hopefully enable us to move ahead in a much more effective manner.

This is particularly important when considering the new project, potash, which has been touted as having the potential of lasting 60, 80, 100 years or more. Still, the lessons learned from previous experiences must offer a guide so as to not repeat similar

mistakes.

Obviously, in the first place, all the key infrastructure required, such as roads, rail, harbor, energy, etc., must be adequately available. More importantly, however, and considering the fact that this project is slated to cut across generations, we must also consider all avenues of processing and value addition within country so as to ensure maximum profit. As such, all the required basic infrastructure, as well as human capital, that contribute to the establishment of an adequate processing plant in that vicinity must be put in place ahead of time.

In general, if there are ways to produce input in-house, in the country, then we must absolutely do so. For example, there was no reason for us to import lime when it could have been easily produced domestically. Similarly, cement is another resource that needs to be expanded. The current factory in Gadem, for example, sits on a reserve of about 18-20 million tons of the required raw material. Tio, on the other hand, has an estimated 100 million tons of the required raw material. Other raw materials that are worth exploring include marble, oil, gas, ore, with Asmara and its environs sitting on 20 million tons of ore. This is based on relatively shallow digs

during the Italian colonization period using basic technologies. One can only imagine what the results would be for deeper digs with newer technologies at this time. The rough estimate of that time was 200 million tons.

All this is to say that Eritrea sits on one of the largest endowments of natural resources – from the most basic of resources, which includes marble and other construction materials, and cement, to highly valued metals, including gold, copper, potash, etc. To utilize these endowments effectively, we must expand and develop our manpower and capacity skills, as well as our processing abilities. We should certainly avoid the desire for short term gains and expedient results. Furthermore, we ought to have a comprehensive and refined strategy that covers all areas in this important sector. This strategy must take into consideration the potential, cumulative benefits for future generations. The ultimate aim in exploiting these resources should be geared towards full processing and refinement within the country.

of about 12 meters conducted

NEWS

WORKSHOP ON ENSURING MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH

A workshop focusing on mother and child health was conducted in Barentu, from 28 February to 2 March.

The workshop in which health coordinators and NUEW representatives from the 9 sub-zones of the Gash Barka region participated mainly focused on controlling and eradicating harmful practices that negatively affect the health of the mother and child as well as on ways of instilling societal values. The workshop also covered various issues including the prevention of communicable diseases, eradication of harmful practices, enhancing the awareness of the family on the regulations and guidelines to control harmful practices, as well as on administration and organizational capacity.

Speaking at the workshop, the chairwoman of the NUEW branch in Gash Barka region, Ms. Yehdega Yohannes stated that the activities that have been undertaken have played a positive role in the improvement of the living standard of the society as well as ensuring mother and child health, called for its enhancement. She also underlined the significance of organizing the workshop in addressing the challenges encountered in Gash Barka region.

Participants on their part indicated the importance of the workshop in upgrading their skills and knowledge of the field and called for its sustainability.

OPINION

Te'awite (I Won): Reflecting on Gender in Eritrea

Dr. Fikrejesus Amahazion

“Bismullah... Besmeam... Awet n'Hafash!” As we sat down to eat drar (dinner), a long-time, close friend of my family – who we commonly refer to as auntie – recited a unique blessing. After my mother and I raised our heads and responded with, “Amen,” I asked her what the particular significance of the recital was.

“It is about having reverence, respect, and tolerance for the different faiths and beliefs within our diverse society, and remembering what our long struggle has been and is about,”



she replied.

“Simply beautiful,” I thought to myself, while absorbing the wonderful aromas emanating from the food spread across the table. Although numbering only a few words, the pre-meal blessing resonated deeply with me. I could not help but recall how critical tolerance and respect have historically been for peace, development, and growth, especially within ethnolinguistically and religiously diverse societies – such as Eritrea's. Heartily digging into the food, I pondered how although the young country faced many challenges, my aunt's pre-meal blessing was a microcosm of – and hopefully a positive sign for continued – internal peace, respect, and tolerance.

The meal was “stick-to-the-ribs” good: an array of diverse colors, flavors, spices, sauces, and textures, set atop layers of injera and masterfully combined, with it all being washed down with several cold cups of mai-gas (carbonated water). But

perhaps even more rewarding and fulfilling, a type of food for the soul, was the wide-ranging discussion with my aunt, which lasted several hours. She was a member of the Eritrean struggle since the 1970s – many years before I was even born! – and was now involved in a variety of important development initiatives. I sat in my chair basically mesmerized, like a young child sitting on Santa's lap, soaking in her stories and experiences, and pleading with her to, “go on, tell me more.” I was, as so many times before, struck by the clarity and intelligence she effortlessly

displayed, fluidly touching upon one topic after another, much like my professors in graduate school used to do.

“Ha, Ha, HA, HA!” The loud laughter at the table next to ours caught my attention. A group of middle-aged men were gulping down cold drinks, cracking jokes, and slapping high-fives – basically just enjoying themselves. Turning to get a glance, I noticed how one of the younger men was wearing a shirt with the internationally-recognizable “S” on his chest. Smiling to myself, I reflected on the symbolic relevance of the scene; while he wore a shirt representing “Superman,” here at my table, mere inches from me, was a real-life heroine. A “superwoman,” and one whose story of courage, persistence, dedication, and service was representative of so many Eritrean women, past and present.

The longest African independence war of the 1900s, Eritrea's three decades long

struggle was about far more than just political emancipation; rather, it sought to usher in a complete and radical transformation of society. An important part of the latter agenda – giving special attention to egalitarian, social justice principles – was a particular focus on women's and gender-related issues. No longer would women be viewed narrowly as secondary, subordinate figures within society; instead, they would stand proudly alongside – and as full equals – to men. Embodying the notion of equality through struggle, valiant Eritrean women served honorably, fought bravely, and sacrificed greatly alongside men in the labyrinth-like trenches, on the battlefields, and across the frontlines. Ultimately, women would prove absolutely critical to the eventual achievement of independence. In much the same fashion, since Eritrea's independence three decades ago, women have been key drivers of the nation's pursuit of inclusive national development and socio-economic progress.

The next morning, as I walked past Catedrale, still positively buzzing after the wonderful meal with my aunt and mother, I continued to reflect on the vital role and significance of women within developing societies, and I thought of what Eritrean women represented. I remembered the confident, self-assured women taxi and bus drivers who spoke about jobs: “there are no [men's] jobs or [women's] jobs...there are jobs, and anyone can do them.” I fondly recalled the various female shop owners and entrepreneurs, such as the lady with the ducan (store) by my place, and I also pondered about the farmers in rural areas and the women selling items in the shouk (marketplace). Making my way past the Ministry of Education and one of the regional courts, my mind also drifted to thinking about the students, teachers, ministers, judges, soldiers, and administrators – all who worked diligently and proudly.

Sitting on an empty bench to collect my thoughts, I moved over as I saw a young lady approaching. I smiled and motioned for her to have a seat.



She was professionally dressed, and as she sat down, she said, “thank you,” in English (with less of an accent than I could say the equivalent yekinyelay in Tigrinya or shukran in Arabic). “Where are you headed?” I asked. “Srah (work),” she replied. “It figures,” I pleasantly thought to myself, taking out my notebook to put my thoughts on paper.

As a number of scholars have discussed, the historical

examples that shattered those presumptions. Women, of all ages and ethnicities, daily exhibited empowerment, agency, initiative, and independence, and they were intricately involved within many of the positive changes and developments in the country.

After independence, in honor of Eritrean women's monumental contribution to the struggle, in recognition of the differing life conditions and experiences



paternalistic image and depiction of “Third World” women is one of poor women, living in hovels, having too many children, illiterate, ignorant, tradition-bound, victimized, and either dependent on a man for survival or impoverished because they lack one. “Third World” women are “out there” somewhere, to be known through theories and intervened upon from outside. They have “needs” and “problems” but few choices and no freedom or power to act. Yet, here beside me, and throughout the country, were countless

of women and girls, and in an attempt to redress past inequities and historical disadvantages or discrimination, many progressive and affirmative action measures have been enacted, most notably within the spheres of education, employment, and public life. Eritrea signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1995 and it has established national laws and firm enforcement measures to

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Bisha Mining Share Company is inviting interested applicants to apply for the following position for Bisha site project:

1. Position: Instrumentation Technician

Department: Process Plant / Engineering - Electrical and Instrumentation

Number Required: Three (03)

Primary Purpose

- Instrumentation technician work in the field of Instrumentation for Process control.
- General understanding of process instrumentation and electronics and Perform calibration and maintenance tasks.
- Fault finding, troubleshooting techniques and diagnoses of problems that arise when equipment fails. Perform Control Loop tuning and configuration and maintenance.
- Report to the Instrumentation Supervisor and Basic PLC and SCADA principles or good electronic skills.
- The successful candidate will be legally appointed and found competent to do all instrumentation and electronic work.
- Perform Control Loop tuning and configuration and maintenance.

Essential Function

- Plan job to maximize efficient use of available time and material and to always ensure safe and correct working practices.
- Job exists to provide continuous operations and performance of all instrumentation and related functions of instrumentation installation to existing and new installations.
- Be able to work with people and to supervise co-workers.
- To do fault finding in such a manner not to damage equipment or injure people.
- To keep all registers up to date and time sheets signed.

Main Function

- Skilled trade – Instrumentation calibrations and installation, fault finding and optimization of instrumentation equipment to set standards.
- Routine maintenance checks and performance on instrumentation.
- Intimate knowledge of Temperature, Density, Mass, Flow, Pressure, Level type instrumentation; Variable speed drives (VSD) for motor control; PLC and SCADA programming will be an advantage or basic programming skill will help.
- Ensures optimal performance of all Process control systems.
- Ensures that faulty parts are replaced and calibrated before commissioning.
- Schedule maintenance and planned work as required and attend to breakdowns and minimize downtime.
- Ensure the disaster/recovery of the Process control system is

up to date and done regularly Ensure process control systems are always in line with latest versions in industry.

Knowledge, Experience and Skills

Qualifications:

Electrical/Instrumentation Degree or Diploma).

Knowledge and Experience:

2 years working as Instrumentation technician.
Knowledge on Allen Bradley, Siemens, Schneider PLC and on Wonderware Suite.

Technical Skills	Behavioral Skills
Computer Literacy (MS Office, CAD programs) Attention to detail; Analytical and Problem-Solving skills, Relevant trade skills or prior experience, Geometric development – recommended, Project planning and implementation	Communication (English) Communication, Prioritizing, Self-motivated, driven. Assertiveness, Interpersonal Relations, Integrity & Conflict resolution Ability to work towards strict deadlines and High level of accuracy, Discretion. High Safety attitude, Leadership & Capable of working independently, Report

General Information and other requirements:

- **Place of Work:** Bisha.
- **Salary:** As per Company salary scale.
- **Type of Contract:** Indefinite

Additional requirement for Nationals:

- **Having fulfilled his/her National Service obligation and provide evidence of release paper from the Ministry of Defense.**
- **Present clearance paper from current/last employer.**
- **Testimonial documents to be attached (CV, work experience credentials, a copy of your National Identity Card etc.).**
- **Only shortlisted applicants will be considered as potential candidates for an interview.**
- **Application documents will not be returned to sender.**
- **All applications should be sent through the post office.**
- **Deadline for application: 10 days from the day of publication in the Newspaper.**

Address: Please mail your applications to: -

- Bisha Mining Share Company,
- P. O. Box 4276 Asmara, Eritrea

Note to Non-Eritrean applicants:

- Please send a copy of your application
- Aliens Employment permits Affairs,
- P. O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea.

SpotLight

Celebrating March 8 With Great Dignity

Lwam Kahsay

March 8, International Women's Day, is a very significant day of the year for women around the world.

overthrown the enigma imposed by old cultural beliefs that are characteristic of patriarchal societies like ours. They fought for their rights and echoed their

Whenever we celebrate March 8, we pay tribute to those who gave their precious lives for Eritrea's independence and those who fought to transform their society to a better life. The day is used as an occasion to reflect on the success achieved so far in political, social and economic aspects of Eritrean women. An active participation of women should be considered a measure of success in the concerted efforts for women's empowerment.

young Eritrean women struggled to defend their land and preserve our independence. When Eritrea was under sanctions, Eritrean women in diaspora played a vital role by working on diplomatic matters and public relations. Despite all the hard times we have been able to preserve our hard earned right to be masters of our destiny. The role of Eritrean women in all this has been extraordinary.

participation in all walks of life. We celebrate March 8 with great pride and dignity by organizing colourful programs in all regions. We do it with a lot of festivities and cultural activities. This celebration has become possible because of the dedication and sacrifice of our Eritrean female fighters.

We are celebrating March 8 in a very good atmosphere looking at a promising future where all the challenges are dealt with. Let us use the occasion, March 8, to renew our pledge as women and as members of the general public to contribute towards efforts to strengthen the National Union of Eritrean Women and to develop our nation.

For 20 years, we successfully engaged in a series of struggles against the Ethiopian war of aggression, economic sanctions and false allegations aimed at denigrating Eritrea. In the Ethiopian war of aggression,

The National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) works to empower women, in general, and the young generation, in particular, to play a leading role in the development of the nation. It perseveres to protect women's rights and ensure their equal



It is an occasion women use to celebrate their successes in their struggle for women's rights and women's empowerment.

voices showing their strength to chauvinists who believe that the safest place for women is the kitchen.

March 8 has very important meaning for Eritrean women who became triumphant by fighting against both natural and social barriers that prevented them from participating in the decision making

When the Eritrean liberation struggle was transformed from political to armed struggle, women flocked to join their brothers-in-arms in the liberation fronts. They had great love for their nation and gave everything for their country. Their flesh and bones are beneath every step of the country. Their right becomes their nation's right and this has direct relation with their dignity. They developed the



process that affect the society and the country. They have

consciousness that their own right and dignity is connected with the right to an independent and liberated state. Through their struggle, they were able to declare their emancipation and equal participation in all aspects of life.

Photographers Corner

