

PRESIDENT ISAIAS CONDUCTS OFFICIAL WORKING VISIT TO KENYA

President Isaias Afwerki on invitation from President William Ruto of the Republic of Kenya conducted a two-day working visit to Kenya from 8 to 9 February.

Upon arrival at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, President Isaias was accorded a warm welcome by Dr. Alfred Nganga Mutua, Minister of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Mr. Aden Bare Duale, Minister of Defense of Kenya, and Mr. Beyene Russom, Eritrea's Ambassador to Kenya.

During his stay in Kenya, President Isaias, accompanied by a high-level delegation including Mr. Osman Saleh, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Presidential Adviser Mr. Yemane Gebreab, conducted extensive and fruitful discussions with President Ruto and other Kenyan government officials.

At their meeting, President Isaias underlined the significance



of President Ruto's visit to Eritrea in December last year that ushered in a new chapter in the bilateral relations between Eritrea and Kenya as well as impactful regional cooperation.

President Isaias also stated

that the visit has expanded the scope of cooperation in various developmental sectors, announced Eritrea's decision to renew its membership in Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and declared its readiness to play its

part in its revitalization.

On his part, President Ruto expressed Kenya's appreciation for Eritrea's role in the regional peace and stability, as well as its contribution in building Somalia's National Army. He also announced that Kenya will open an Embassy

in Asmara.

Eritrea and Kenya further agreed that the abolition of visa requirements for citizens travelling to the two countries will be effective from 9 February 2023.

President Isaias Afwerki and his delegation visited a wind turbine site in Kenya and the two Heads of State and Government planted seedlings at State House as an emblem of Eritrea-Kenya ties of friendship and cooperation.

At the conclusion of the visit a joint communiqué was signed by FM Osman and Dr. Alfred N. Mutua, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs.

President Isaias Afwerki and his delegation returned home in the morning hours of 10 February concluding a two-day fruitful visit to Kenya.

(Editor's note: the full text of the joint communiqué is on page 2.)

EXHIBITION IN CONNECTION WITH FENKIL OPERATION COMMEMORATION



Exhibition in connection with the 33rd anniversary of Fenkil Operation commemoration was opened in the port city of Massawa in the morning hours of today.

The exhibition organized by the Promotion and Information office of the Ministry of Defense and other Government institutions was officially opened by Mr. Tewolde Kelati, Minister of Marine Resources, in the presence of Maj. Gen. Humed Karikare, Commander of the Eritrean Navy, and Ms. Asmeret Abraha, Governor of Northern Red Sea Region.

The exhibition includes photos depicting the heroism, unity and resilience of the Eritrean people as well as the struggle for national independence and atrocity committed by enemy forces on the innocent Eritrean people.

The exhibition also included contribution of the Ministry of Marine Resources in the national economic development and in ensuring food security.

Fisheries Corporation, Ministry of Health, Diving Center, Plastic Factory and other enterprises are also displaying their materials and products in the exhibition.

FENKIL OPERATION COMMEMORATION COMMENCES

The 33rd anniversary of Fenkil Operation commemoration commenced today, 10 February with Eastern Africa Half Marathon Championship 2023.

At the competition that athletes from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda took part, Eritrean Olympian Athlete Nazareth Woldu from the Central

Region and Athlete Yohannes Gebregergis, member of the national team, stood first from the females and men categories.

Athlete Afwerki Berhane, member of the national team, and Kenyan Athlete Muteti Daniel stood second and third respectively.

In the females' category, Eritrean

Athletes Regbe Habteselasie and Netsha Neguse finished second and third respectively.

The winners were handed over medals by Ms. Asmeret Abraha, Governor of the Northern Red Sea Region, Ambassador Zemed Tekle, Commissioner of Culture and Sports and Col. Solomon Seyum, from National Olympics and Para-Olympics Committee.





JOINT COMMUNIQUE ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY ISAIAS AFWERKI, PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ERITREA, TO THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA



1. At the invitation of His Excellency William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya, His Excellency Isaias Afwerki, President of the State of Eritrea, made an Official Visit to Kenya from 8th - 9th February, 2023. President Afwerki led a high-level delegation from Eritrea, which included the Minister of Foreign Affairs and senior government officials.

2. President Ruto was accompanied by Prime Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet Secretaries in charge of: Foreign Affairs; Defence, Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs, his National Security Advisor, the Attorney General as well as other senior government officials.

3. President Ruto and President Afwerki held high-level talks in Nairobi on 9th February, 2023. The discussions, held in a friendly atmosphere, recalled the deep historical bonds of friendship that had been forged between the two countries over many years. The discussions focused on bilateral, regional, and international issues of mutual interest and concern.

4. At the bilateral level, the two Principals agreed to deepen relations across the political,

economic, social and cultural areas. In this regard, they instructed the development of comprehensive plans of cooperation in various sectors including agriculture, trade and investment; air transport; mining, education, renewable energy, water management, tourism, the blue economy and regional integration.

5. To facilitate growth in trade and connectivity between the two countries, the two leaders **agreed to abolish the requirement of Visas permanently, effective today** and instructed their respective ministries of interior to work on the modalities for the ratification of this directive.

6. President Ruto announced the standing of a **diplomatic mission representation in Asmara** and instructed the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs to commence the process of operationalizing this commitment.

7. The respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs signed a Framework Agreement for Cooperation, which will form the basis for elaborating joint action across the various sectors. They also committed to the convening



thanked President Afwerki for his declaration to rejoin our regional organization, IGAD.

of Africa. They affirmed their strong commitment to uphold the sovereignty and territorial

by external forces.

10. The two principals also re-affirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation at the multilateral level. Consequently, President Ruto thanked his counterpart for his gracious support of Kenya, including during its campaign for the United Nations Security Council seat. They underscored the imperative for stronger cooperation to drive the African agenda at the global level, at a time when dynamics beyond the continent continue to impact negatively on the lives of the African people.

11. At the conclusion of the official visit, President Afwerki expressed profound gratitude and appreciation to President Ruto, the Government, and the people of the Republic of Kenya for the warm reception and generous hospitality extended to him and to his delegation.

Issued at Nairobi in the Republic of Kenya on this 9th Day of February, 2023



of a Joint Commission of Cooperation, in the near future, to elaborate on the various areas of action.

8. In the spirit to further enhance regional integration, they discussed strategic cooperation between the two countries. **In this regard President Ruto**

They agreed to work closely with the rest of the member states to re-engineer IGAD, make it fit for purpose and enable it respond effectively to the needs of our region.

9. The two Leaders underscored the need to maintain peace, security and stability in the Horn

integrity of States as well as non-interference in domestic political processes of African Countries

**Dr. Alfred N. Mutua, E.G.H.
CABINET SECRETARY FOR
FOREIGN AND DIASPORA
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF KENYA.**

**H.E. Osman Saleh Mohammed
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE STATE
OF ERITREA.**

**ERITREA
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OPINION

Highlighting Recent Eritrea-Kenya Engagement

Dr. Fikrejesus Amahazion

Earlier this week, President Isaias Afwerki travelled to Kenya to meet with President William Ruto, following up on the latter's visit to Eritrea late last year. During the two-day working trip to Nairobi, President Isaias, accompanied by a high-level delegation, conducted extensive talks with his counterpart and other Kenyan government officials. To conclude the trip, the two leaders held a short press conference and a joint communiqué was signed by FM Osman and Dr. Alfred N. Mutua, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs. While the press briefing and joint communiqué offered numerous significant points, a few interesting ones are highlighted below.

Mutual respect

The two leaders demonstrated their mutual respect on several occasions. In comments directed to President Isaias, President Ruto stated, "Your wisdom in making sure we build a more harmonious region speaks for itself. I look forward to working together." Similarly, President Isaias praised his counterpart, encouraging him to, "Keep it up," and declaring, "Kenya is my second home, and Eritrea is your second home." President Ruto also thanked President Isaias for his "gracious support of Kenya"

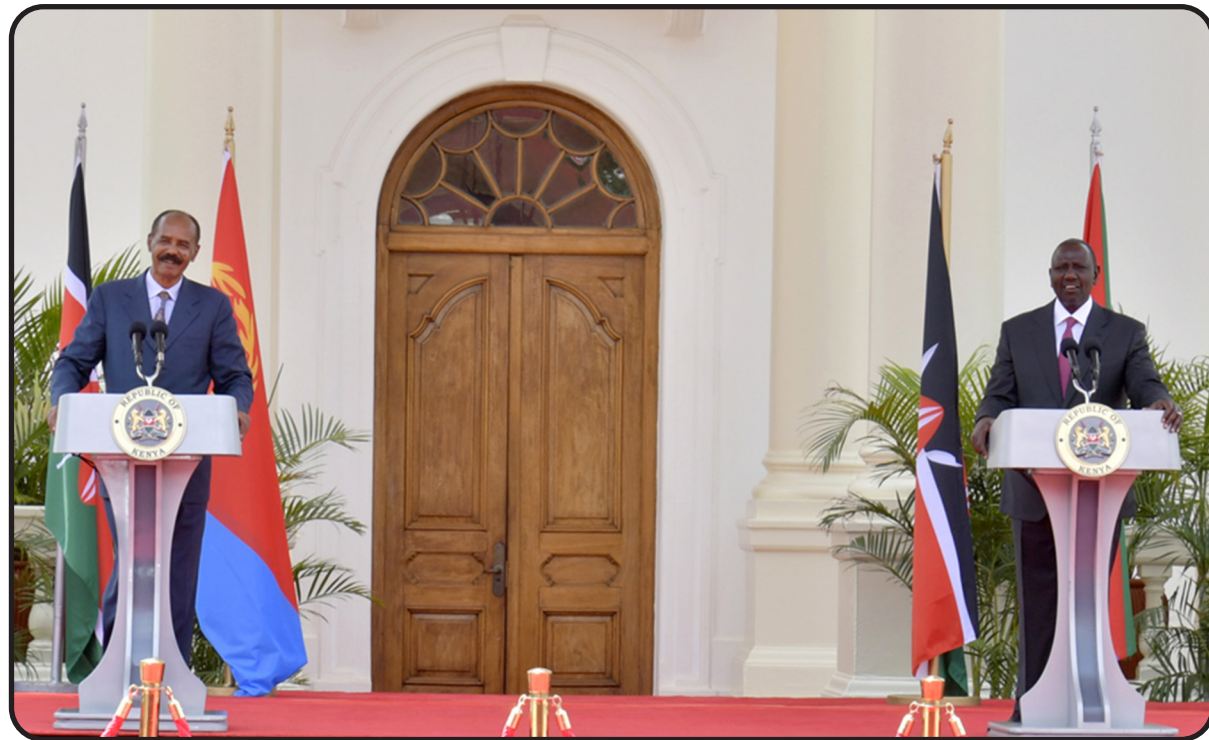
during its campaign for a seat on the United Nations Security Council.

This was extremely positive and highly welcome, particularly within the context of a region that has historically been characterized by – and frustratingly held back through – bitter rivalry, animosity, and hostility. Mutual respect is a key building block to cultivating trust and developing tight-knit, enduring relationships. Greater cooperation and a strong, effective partnership between Kenya and Eritrea, with mutual respect and understanding at its fundamental core, will not only greatly benefit the peoples of the two nations, but also have a positive and multifaceted impact across the Greater Horn of Africa.

Establishment of Kenyan embassy in Asmara and abolishment of visas for citizens

It was announced that Kenya would soon open an embassy in Asmara, Eritrea's capital, and that the two countries have abolished visa requirements for their citizens, effective immediately (9 February 2023).

The establishment of a Kenyan embassy in Eritrea is a noteworthy milestone. Not only is it a reflection of the two countries' rapidly growing bilateral ties, it also represents the underlying commitment that both states share to deepening their relationship and strengthening



long-term cooperation across various spheres (e.g., political, economic, commercial, people-to-people, cultural, etc.). To consider just one dimension, a large body of scholarly work has demonstrated how the establishment of embassies and foreign diplomatic posts can have a significant and positive effect on increasing bilateral trade, facilitating investment flows, and deepening commercial or other engagements.

As well, the mutual waiver of visa requirements for citizens should help to increase the number of visitors travelling to each country and boost the two countries' travel and tourism sectors. Eritrea has

rich biodiversity, an abundance of unique socio-cultural and historical sites, untouched and unspoiled islands, and favorable climate, combined with general peace, relative security, and a population that is extremely warm and welcoming. Kenya, meanwhile, is globally renowned for its scenic landscapes, breathtaking mountain highlands and Great Rift Valley, vast wildlife reserves, and spectacular coastline.

While a broad array of factors can impact international travel (e.g., general economic conditions, currency exchange rates, bilateral relations, etc.), reducing the inconvenience, time, and costs that are generally associated with visa application processes can help to increase the number of travelers. In turn, this can play a positive role in creating jobs across a variety of interlinked sectors, supporting economic growth, raising foreign exchange revenue, and promoting sustainable development.

Eritrea's critical contribution to peace and security in Somalia

During the press briefing, President Ruto expressed his appreciation to President Isaias for Eritrea's contribution in training Somali troops and promoting regional security.

Although it holds a rich history, the past several decades in Somalia have unfortunately been characterized by a tragic

cycle of prolonged civil war, chaos, insecurity, and terror. Throughout, however, the country's resilient people have continued to seek peace and worked to improve the situation of the country, with recent times involving renewed efforts to form a credible government and establish a professional, competent national defense and security force.

Over the past few years, Eritrea and Somalia have made efforts to strengthen bonds, establish genuine cooperation, and tackle mutual challenges, rooted in a shared vision of a region that is safe, at peace, and prosperous. One dimension of the two countries' growing solidarity and multifaceted cooperative framework has been within defense and security; upon the expressed will, desire, and request of the government in Somalia, Eritrea has trained Somali troops.

While these developments have disappointingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, led to disinformation and elicited a loud chorus of extremely hypocritical condemnation from a number of Western voices, the Somali trainees are expected to positively contribute to peace and security in Somalia (and the wider region). It is also worth noting that on several occasions, Somali officials, including

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Development

Social Services in Mai-Dima

Mussie Efriem

When it was established around 1964, Mai-Dima, 57 kms to the South West of Mendefera, was merely a small trade center with a church, few tea houses and mobile shops. But its importance has grown over the years and the number of its residents has increased manifold. Today, it's the most densely populated town in Areza sub-zone, Southern region. Mai-Dima borders Molqi (Gash Barka region) to the west and Mai-Mine to the south.

Mai-Dima administrative area comprises 12 villages and 3 urbanizing villages, Adi Gaba, Mlad Manta and Hadish-Adi. It has an estimated population of 15,000 who earn a living as farmers and traders.

Mai-Dima is a strategic town linking the Southern and Gash-Barka regions. It's a trade center that hosts merchants from different regions and sub-zones of the country. In Mai-Dima, there are 327 small and large business enterprises and one modern grain, vegetable and fruit market. According to Mr. Mehari Alazar, administrator of Mai-Dima administrative area, allocation of land for residential houses in the town started in 2003 and since then

around 500 plots of land have been allocated.

And regarding the educational services, there have been so many improvements in these post-independence. There are eight schools Mai-Dima administrative area -- one kindergarten, five primary schools, and one junior high and one secondary schools -- which serve students who live in Mai-Dima and its surrounding villages. Currently 6,895 students are enrolled in all the schools.

The town has a health center, which was upgraded from a health station two years ago, and the quality of healthcare service is improving from time to time.

The healthcare service given at the health center is as good as that given at Areza's (the sub-zone's capital.) In addition to serving communities who live in the subzone, the health center at Mai-Dima also provides services to patients who come from Gash-Barka region, especially Molqi sub-zone. In spite of its limited capacity, it caters to very large demands. Mr. Mehari said that the health center is being equipped with modern equipment and its services are improving.

Mai-Dima has abundant water

supply. Two big check dams have been constructed in the past two years with the cooperation of the Southern region's administration office. Drainage channels have been constructed to reduce wastage of water and to enrich the underground water in the area. Mr. Mehari said that the construction of dams has helped in soil and water conservation and underground water augmentation. There are some irrigation farms in Mai-Dima, where mangoes and guavas are commonly grown. The wells and reservoirs in the area are plenty, making it easy to sustain farms. Mai-Dima has abundant underground water, which shows

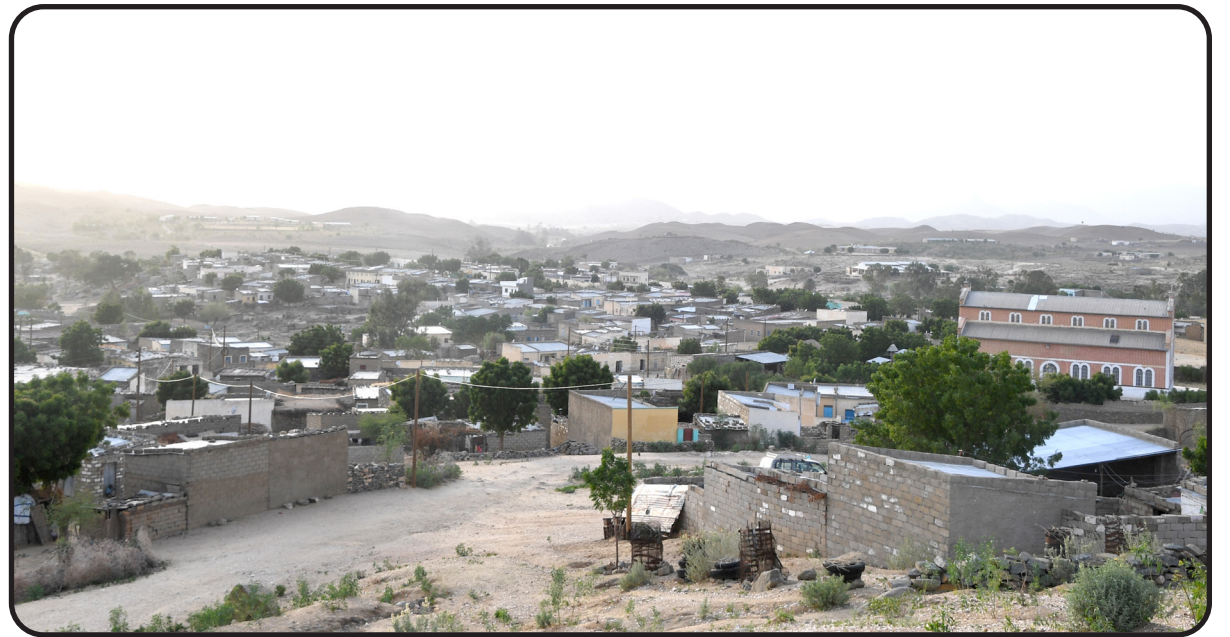


M.r Mehari Alazar

further in agriculture. There is sufficient clean drinking water

distributed to residents from two tanks installed at two different sites in the town.

Mai-Dima is at a very important location and connects two major routes. On its north east there is the Mendefera-Asmara route and on the west there is Barentu-Tessenie route. And as part of the efforts to expand transportation services across the country, Harat Transportation Company gives public transport service daily on both routes. There is also another route that links Mai-Dima, Ubel and Mai-Mine sub-zone. Mr. Mehari said that Mai-Dima ought to be given more attention consider-



the potential to develop the area in Mai-Dima. Drinking water is

ing the huge demand of transport service there.



One of the most important developments in Mai-Dima has been the solar power installed there, which supplies electricity 24 hours a day. The electricity has also been made available to small villages surrounding the town. This has given residents and business owners in Mai-Dima and surrounding villages great relief and improved their livelihood. It is helping enhance public health by providing smokeless energy, keep the environment safe by reducing the cutting down of trees and make low-cost alternative source of energy accessible.

Another unique feature that has made Mai-Dima important is its large and diverse livestock market, the largest market in the region. Its strategic location, linking important trade routes of the country, has made Mai-Dima one of the largest and diverse livestock markets in the country.

SpotLight

Operation Fenkil: Swift and Decisive Victory

Simon Woldemichael

Eritrea is celebrating the 33rd anniversary of Operation Fenkil, the greatest military victory by the Eritrean People's Liberation Army (EPLA) in the struggle for independence from Ethiopian colonization. Operation Fenkil, which saw the liberation of the port city of Massawa, began on the night of 8 February 1990, at 1 o'clock. The EPLA took no more than fifty hours to destroy the Ethiopian army, including its

gic military offensive against the Ethiopian colonial army. In March 1988, the EPLF had broken the spinal cord of Ethiopia's strongest command (Nadew Command), which had been stationed at Nakfa front for ten-years, in a historic three-day battle that Basil Davidson famously compared to the Vietnamese defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu. The demise of Nadew Command and the subsequent liberation of Afabet inflicted a devastating blow to the politico-military structure and

lanta and Nairobi meetings.

The objective of Operation Fenkil was to annihilate the Ethiopian army stationed in the plains of Semhar, to control the strategic Massawa-Asmara Road and to liberate Massawa. Operation Fenkil opened the door to independence. For the first time in the history of Eritrea's struggle for liberation, the EPLA conducted an operation by engaging its infantry and mechanized units as well as its navy. General Sibhat Efriem described the operation as "amphibious operation" conducted both on land and sea in a vast area that covered 1560 square kilometers. And General Flipos Weld-eyohannes described it as tightening the noose on the throat of the enemy. With the capture of Massawa in February 1990, the EPLF effectively cut off the supply line of Ethiopian forces in Eritrea.

In many respects, Operation Fenkil is a unique military experience in Eritrea and probably in Africa. One hundred and fifty tanks were deployed in the conventional war that included tank-to-tank engagement. The speed with which the operation was carried out was astonishing. Brigadier General Ali Haj Abdulahi, an Ethiopian commander of the third mechanized unit who was captured by the EPLA, expressed his admiration of the planning and execution of the operation. He said, "I have noticed that your army has quick mobility. I can give my testimony that the speed in undertaking the offensive, the competence of the commanders



infantry and mechanized units as well as its 35-year-old navy, to liberate Massawa. Operation Fenkil ended with a swift and decisive victory that paved the way for the ultimate and inevitable victory – the independence of Eritrea.

Two years before Operation Fenkil was launched, the EPLF conducted a successful strate-

organization of the Derg regime. Many high ranking military commanders of the Ethiopian army were either demoted or executed by the frenzy regime. A year later, in May 1989, senior Ethiopian military officers staged a coup d'état against Mengistu Hailemar-iam. By all measures, the demise of Nadew Command tilted the balance of power in favour of the EPLF and led to peace talks in At-



and the utilization of artillery is well coordinated and prepared." Another prisoner of war during Operation Fenkil, Brigadier General Tilahun Kifle, commander of 606 corps, also confessed saying, "I have seen many battles but here I have been defeated militarily and lost my spirit of fighting in the battle." The strategy, the plan, the operational tactics and the way they were executed at the battlefield surpassed the competence of the commanders of the Derg army.

In 1990, in an interview with Sagim, an official organ of the EPLF, the then chairman of the EPLF, tegadalay Issaias Afwerki delineated the military, political and diplomatic implications of Operation Fenkil. He said: "[Fenkil] was planned to push the war to its final stage. From all the wars that we have conducted, it's by far the largest operation having utmost strategic importance." The acumen of EPLF's highest level of command (political leadership) and the decision and flexibility of the commanders on the battlefield neutralized the advantages of the colonial army in terms of the number of its military personnel and its armaments. The many tactical and operational successes that had been accumulated over the years

set the stage for the strategic victory of Operation Fenkil.

Operation Fenkil demonstrated the mysterious mobility skills, fighting capabilities and inventiveness of EPLA commanders. All the requirements needed to conduct a decisive battle were put together to cause shock to the enemy. A decisive battle, however, requires more than just a shock. After the EPLA unsettled the center of gravity of the Ethiopian army on the first day, it was able to put continuous pressure from different directions until the enemy's final defeat. The Ethiopian army's capacity to defend was overwhelmed by the EPLA's stormy offensives. The heavy

blow the enemy suffered can be measured by the results of the battle. During the battle, 8000 Derg soldiers, including two generals, were taken prisoners. Five warships were seized while twelve were sunk, and members of the Ethiopian navy were either killed or captured, bringing an end to the existence of the Ethiopian navy as an institution. Eighty tanks along with a lot of long and medium range artilleries and missiles were captured.

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Highlighting Recent . . . Operation Fenkil . . .

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President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, have thanked Eritrea for its partnership and commended the quality of training delivered, while Somalis in the country and around the world have continued to express their appreciation and gratitude for Eritrea’s support.

Eritrea to reactivate membership in Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

Among the major developments of the trip was the announcement that Eritrea will reactive its membership in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). It was also reiterated that the country is ready to play a part in revitalizing the Horn of Africa’s regional organization.

Created in 1996 to supersede the earlier Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development, IGAD has largely failed to achieve its lofty mandate or objectives and only scratched the surface of its vast true potential. Rather than embodying a genuine regional bloc undergirded by the cooperation and trust of its member states, it became a platform for toxic rivalry and mistrust. IGAD was repeatedly instrumentalized to attack some member states and achieve politicized aims, ultimately doing little to genuinely promote peace, cooperation, security, or sustainable development across the region.

Eritrea suspended its membership in IGAD in 2007 in the wake of TPLF-led Ethiopia’s illegal invasion of Somalia and the failure of regional body to condemn the acts of aggression against a member state (which not only violated international law but also IGAD’s own charter and resolutions).

Looking forward, a truly reformed, revitalized, and cooperative IGAD would be a tremendous boon for the region. In addition to assisting to effectively prevent or mediate conflict and improving regional peace, stability, and security, it would help to coordinate collective solutions to various mutual challenges (e.g., hunger, climate change, etc.) and promote economic interdependence and development. As well, with high and growing interest in the Horn from an array of established and rising regional and global powers, a stronger, more unified IGAD would allow the region an opportunity to more effectively leverage or bargain its diverse advantages and achieve outcomes that better meet the interests of the region.

Another important dimension of Eritrea’s renewing its membership in IGAD is that it serves as even further evidence that the longstanding attempts to isolate Eritrea – which were primarily led by some Western states and their regional proxy, the TPLF – are failing. Instead of being isolated, Eritrea continues to establish and deepen ties with a growing number of partners, large and small, both from within the region and across the world.

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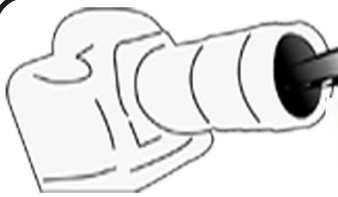
The enormous loss of weaponry and loss of morale on the part of the Ethiopian army led to a swift and decisive victory. An open admission of defeat by Mengistu Hailemariam who said “we have been caught by our throat,” is another testimony of the magnitude of the victory.

The EPLA fought against an Ethiopian army that was alternately supported by western and eastern powers, and after thirty years of bitter struggle won independence for Eritrea. In the long struggle for liberation, Eritrea developed a tactically, operationally and strategically superb army. The way the EPLA conducted war helped achieve its mission -- defeating the colonial army and attaining national independence. The victory of Operation Fen-

kil was decisive. It played a major role in shaping the military and the political and diplomatic landscape.

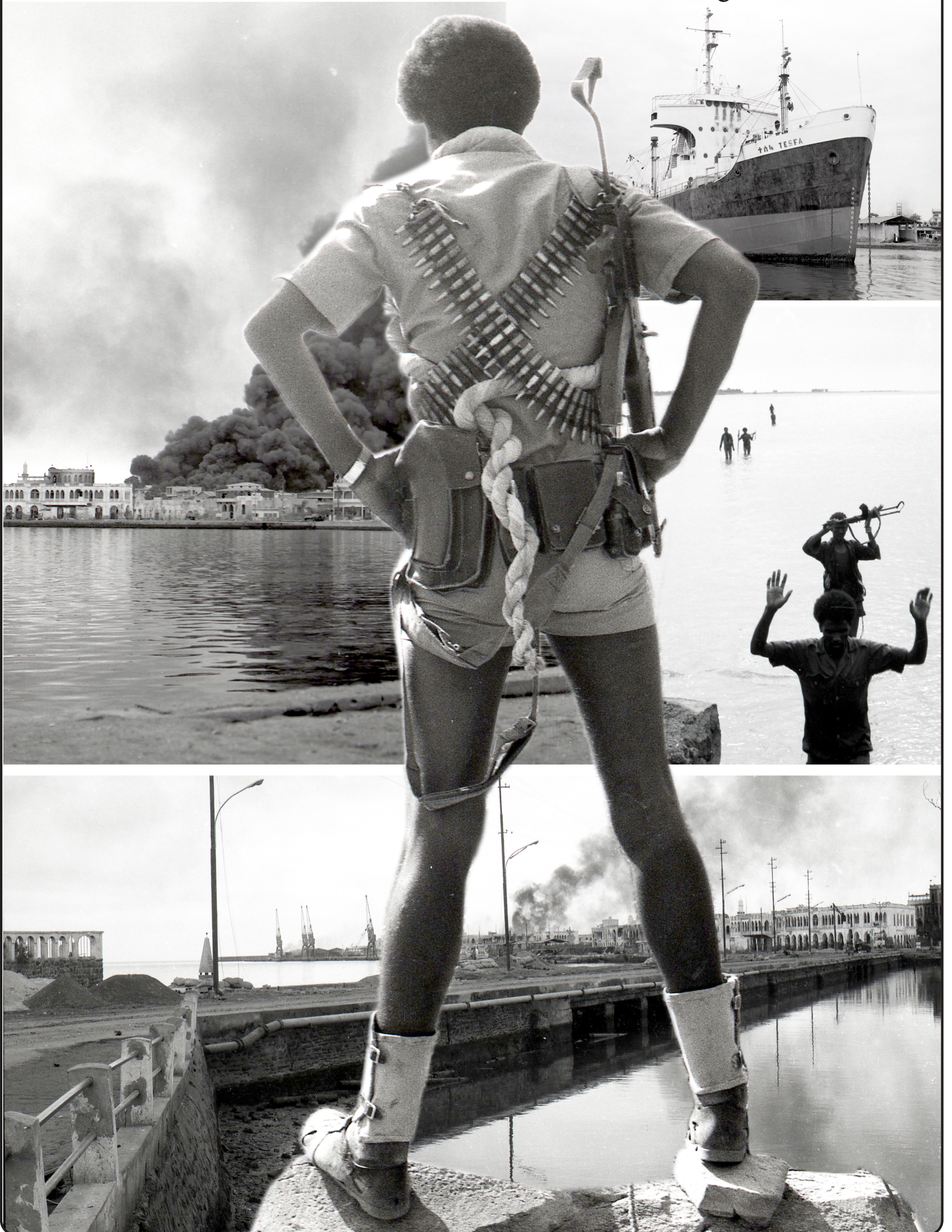
According to military scholars, for a victory to be decisive, it must meet certain conditions. One of the conditions is that the defeated side must accept the fact of defeat and realize there is no chance of reversing the verdict in the foreseeable future. Mengistu’s statement “we have been caught by our throat” is a clear indication of the acceptance of defeat and ineptness. As the Tigrigna proverb “hnuq entay yewx’e Afra” (a strangulated person can do nothing but emit saliva) goes, the Derg could not regain control in Eritrea through military or diplomatic means. As Carl von Clausewitz said, “War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will.” And the EPLA was able to impose its will on the enemy by rendering it powerless.





Design; Tazaz Abreha

*Fenkil: Resolute
Commitment!*



Fenkil: Resolute Commitment!



“Eritrean Culture is Being Inherited in all its Aspects.”

Gual Kindya

Luwam Kahsay H.

Please, introduce yourself.

My name is Tiibe Kindya, and I am in charge of the Department of Political and Organizational Affairs at the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW). I was born on 21 December 1963 in Massawa. In 1977, after studying for two months in the 8th grade, my family and I fled Massawa because of war and sought refuge in Dogali. Not long after that I joined the Eritrean People's Liberation Front.

What followed next?

After completing military training, I was assigned to the northern front. And I was later assigned to the newly formed military intelligence unit. I worked for the intelligence service until 2014, and since 2015 I have been in charge of the political and organizational affairs at the NUEW.

Tell us about your experience as a member of the intelligence unit?

At the beginning because of my strong desire to fight at the front lines, I wasn't excited to be assigned to the intelligence unit. But when I started getting seriously involved in the job, I loved it. The work demanded dedication and competence. I benefited a lot in the unit because most of its members were highly educated. For me it was an opportunity to satisfy my thirst for knowledge.

Tell us about your family.

I got married to Ahmed Mohamed Abdelmena in 1982.



Two years later we had a baby girl, Banuna. Ahmed paid the ultimate price when our baby girl

Our guest today, Tiibe Kindya (gual kindya), was in 8th grade when she joined the EPLF in the 1970s. Motivated by her quest for knowledge, she started off as an 8th grader after Eritrea's Independence and went all the way up to earn a bachelor's degree in Law.

was nine months old. Banuna got a bachelor's degree in English literature in 2010 from the college at May Nefhi.

In February 1996, I got married to Lieutenant Colonel Welday Haile. We have a boy, Abiel, who also got a bachelor's degree in



Computer Science in 2019. As a mother, I am proud of my two successful children.

How do you feel about the role of women during the armed struggle?

The EPLF believed Eritrea's independence couldn't be realized without the participation of women. And the women in the EPLF's armed forces did miracles for Eritrea's independence. This became possible because of the platform made available for women to prove their heroism to the entire world.

Where were you on Eritrea's Independence?

I was in Massawa, where I grew up. When I heard the breaking news on Radio Dmxi Hafash, I burst into tears, tears of happiness.

Did you go back to school after independence?

Yes, right away. The one year and half I spent in Massawa following Independence, I studied 8th grade and enrolled in 9th grade. Then I was reassigned to

Asmara in 1992 and I completed 9th and 10th grades. I won a prize when I completed 10th grade. In 1995, I took the matriculation exam, went to college and got a certificate, graduating with a GPA of 3.5. In 2000, I went to university and got a bachelor's degree in law.

Why law?

The certificate program I attended made me fall in love with law. I remember scoring 4 in the second semester.

What is your position at NUEW?

I am working as administrator of the Department of Political and Organizational Affairs, which has two units. The political affairs unit deals with political campaigns targeting women and works with partners on raising political awareness of the society. The other unit – organizational affairs -- works on the organization of women in all aspects. Organization is power and it empowers women, and we do all that we can for the rights of women in all walks of life and in all age groups.

When can a girl be a member of the Union, and how many do you have in your membership?

A girl can be a member when she is 16. At the moment we have 350,000 members in Eritrea and abroad.

What do you think of the role of women in the development and defense of Eritrea?

Our women are showing their heroism by participating in development and defense alongside their brothers. Sawa is playing a major role in this by helping transfer the values of the independence struggle to the young.

What was your husband's role in your life?

I have achieved everything because of him, especially my academic achievements. There were times when I wanted to withdraw from college because he was severely ill. But thanks to his support I was able to complete my studies. I remember the time when he helped me in typing



Any other message ...

Most freedom fighters have used the opportunities they have been given to improve their lives. So, I would suggest to everyone, especially women, to take every



my research paper by enduring his severe pain. I thank him wholeheartedly.

opportunity to be better people.

Thank you for your time.

