

## INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS



Eritrean nationals in Doha, Qatar, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Vienna and Austria celebrated the 27<sup>th</sup> Independence Day anniversary under the theme “Vision through Toil”.

Independence Day anniversary celebrated with great zeal in Qatar in which a number of nationals attended the celebrations in Doha.

Stating that Eritrean Independence is the outcome of the struggle and sacrifice of the Eritrean people, Mr. Ali Ibrahim, Eritrea’s Ambassador to Qatar, said that unity and harmony of the people are the foundation for the success of national development endeavors.

In the same vein, Eritrean nationals residing in Riyadh celebrated the 27<sup>th</sup> Independence Day anniversary featuring different activities depicting the unity in diversity of the Eritrean people. Certificates of appreciation were handed over to individuals who made outstanding contribution in the success of the programs of the community.

The Eritrean Ambassador to the

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mr. Mohammed-Omar Mahmud, said that Eritrean Independence beyond funfair and jubilation has deep meaning in which the people reflect their unity and societal values. He also expressed appreciation to those who contributed for the realization of the event.

Eritrean nationals residing in Kuwait also celebrated the 27<sup>th</sup> Independence Day anniversary featuring cultural and artistic activities.

Pointing out that the Eritrean community in Kuwait has been contributing to national programs since the days of the struggle for independence, Mr. Osman Salih, Eritrean Ambassador to Kuwait, called for strong participation in the implementation of the national development programs.

Meanwhile, Eritrean community members in Vienna, Austria, on 12 May celebrated the independence anniversary featuring various activities. The Chairman of the

Eritrean community in Austria, Mr. Omar Jabir, pointed out that the love of a nation emanates from the noble national and societal values and called for transferring to the young generation.

## CONTRIBUTION IN SUPPORT OF DISADVANTAGED CITIZENS

Eritrean nationals residing abroad have contributed over 170 thousand Nakfa in support of four disabled citizens in Ona-Watot, Tsorena sub-zone. The contributors are member of the “Development of Positive Thinking Association” residing in the US, Canada and Israel.

Two members of the Association, Mr. Dawit Tekeste and Ms. Senait Haile, said that they took the initiative after witnessing the condition of the disabled citizens in the national media outlets.

Likewise, three disabled citizens in Aretai Administrative area, Habero sub-zone, received financial assistance from PFDJ members in the Swiss city of Geneva.

The beneficiaries said that the assistance attests to the noble culture of the Eritrean people to help disadvantaged fellow citizens.

## NATIONAL AFFORESTATION DAY OBSERVED

Ministry of Agriculture convenes one-day workshop in Asmara to commemorate 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Afforestation Day observed yesterday under the theme ‘Green Environment-Secured Livelihood’ and to assess accomplishments achieved and challenges faced in the year.

Speaking at the event in which senior Government and PFDJ officials took part, Mr. Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture, said that community-based

agricultural and afforestation activities should be developed so as to ensure effective utilization of the available land resource and minimize deforestation.

The General Manager of Forestry and Wilde Life Authority, Mr. Abraha Garza, pointed out that the National Afforestation Day is an occasion in which we renew pledge to redress the environment with greenery and preserving land and promoting afforestation.

At the event discussions were conducted on issues related to the afforestation activities and the progress registered.

In what has now become an annual event at the day, senior Government and PFDJ officials, religious leaders and other invited guests planted tree seedlings and 88 exemplary institutions and individuals also received certificate of recognition for exemplary role in afforestation endeavors.



## MEETING ON ENHANCING ROLE OF SOCIETY ON DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Public meeting on the role of the community in the implementation of development programs was recently conducted in Serejaka and Gala Nefhi sub zones.

The Governor of the Central region, Maj. General Osman Awliai, gave briefing on the development drives that are being implemented and initiated. Other heads of departments and branches also gave briefings on different issues including the process of land allotment, educational and health care services, and infrastructure, among others

The Central region PFDJ branch, Mr. Yosuf Saiq, Administrators of the sub-zones, director generals of construction development, agriculture and land departments, and several heads of the Ministry of Education and Health branches in the region as well as head of police in the Central region took part in the meeting.



# NEWS

## NEW CHINESE EMBASSY INAUGURATED



The Embassy of the People's Republic of China held a colorful event to officially inaugurate the newly built embassy in Asmara and to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of

the establishment of China-Eritrea diplomatic relations.

The event was attended by Ministers, PFDJ officials and

members of the diplomatic corps. Ambassador Yang Zigang delivered a keynote speech and commended the good relations between the two countries. He

noted that remarkable progress was achieved in bilateral cooperation programs that span extensive sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, mining, trade and investment, education as well as health care.

Ambassador Yang further stated there will be increased bilateral collaboration between China and Eritrea through greater engagement in platforms such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) that will be held in Beijing in September this year. The Belt and Road Initiative is also expected to

increase world connectivity and promote trade, investment and economic development. Eritrea is among the countries along the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road.

Foreign Minister Osman Saleh, for his part, commended the solid cooperation that has been cultivated over the past two decades between the two countries in a broad array of sectors.

The inauguration of the new Embassy is a symbol of the high level mutual political trust and deep traditional friendship between the Eritrea and China.

## COMMENDABLE POPULAR CAMPAIGN

The inhabitants of Malka Administrative area, Foro sub-zone, are conducting dirt road renovation and construction of water diversion schemes popular campaign.

The popular campaign includes renovation of a 17-km long dirt road linking Foro-Malka-Wia as well as construction of water diversion schemes damaged due to heavy flooding in February.

The inhabitants have called for deployment of Harat bus after the completion of the renovation of the dirt road and machinery support for the construction of the water diversion scheme.

There are 4 thousand residents and 800 hectares of cultivable land in Malka Administrative area.

## SCHOOL INDEPENDENCE WEEK IN CENTRAL REGION

Schools Independence Week in the Central region in connection with the 27<sup>th</sup> Independence Day anniversary is being conducted

with different activities under the theme "Vision through Toil".

During an opening ceremony last Monday, a pictorial exhibition was opened by Maj. General Romodan Osman Awoliai, Governor of the Central region, and Mr. Yosuf Saik, Chairman of the PFDJ in the Central region.

Stating that independence week has significant contribution in the development of education and nurturing as well as preserving societal values, Mr. Belai Habtegabir, Head of the

Education Ministry in the Central region, disclosed that over 300 schools are participating in the Independence Week.

The Administrator of Godaif sub-zone, Ms. Tiblets Tewolde, explained that the Independence Week observance is part of the 27<sup>th</sup> Independence Day anniversary celebration.

The Schools Independence Week will continue until May 19 and is being highlighted by cultural and artistic performances.



## NEWS BRIEFS

### SCHOOLS' WEEK IN GELALO AND HAMELMALO

Cultural and sports week has been conducted in the sub-zones of Gelalo and Hamelmalo.

The cultural and sports week was featured with general knowledge contests, cultural and sports activities as well as activities depicting the culture and tradition of the society.

Speaking at the occasions, the administrators of the sub-zones said that the cultural and sports week was conducted with the objective of enabling students identify their talents and share experiences among each other. They also called for the integrated effort of the Government institutions and the public for the sustainability of the program.

At the end of the program awards have been handed over to outstanding students.

### ERIPA: TOWARDS ENHANCING HEALTH SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

The Eritrean Pharmaceutical Association in cooperation with concerned institutions is engaged in providing timely information on the efficiency and credibility of newly introduced medicine and there by contributing in the development of health service provision.

The Chairman of the Association, Pharmacist Abraham Endrias, indicated that the objective of the Association is to ensure the safety of patients and effective application of medicines as well as creating the opportunity for members upgrade their skill through organizing training programs and scholarships.

Pharmacist Abraham reiterated that the association has about 200 active members throughout the country and is member of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Associations and publishes annual magazine in English.

Indicating that the association is among the associations established after independence, Mr. Kidane Woldeyesus, technical advisor at the Ministry of Health, said that the association provides timely information on medicines and conducts awareness raising campaigns through meetings and the mass media.

Mr. Kidane pointed out that the association also engages in designing policies and control mechanisms regarding medicines as well as in designing curriculum for pharmaceutical training and other activities of the association.

he Eritrean Pharmaceutical Association was established in 1992.

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# Development

## PPR Eradication for Food Security, Poverty Alleviation and Resilience

*Kesete Gebrehiwet*

Rinderpest was once a fatal cattle disease that led to huge losses in livestock production. Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) is also a similar and contagious disease which affects sheep and goats. For quite a long period of time, PPR has been a major burden in the socio-economic activities of countries where the livelihoods of a large portion of their population depends on livestock. Controlling and eradicating the prevalence of PPR will play a decisive role in improving the livelihood of farmers in developing countries and in ensuring food security.

Since PPR is a disease of small ruminants, its prevalence is a huge burden for livestock keepers. As an epidemic, PPR affects a large population of sheep and goats thus causing socio-economic burden.

According to a report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), PPR has been endemic all over Eritrea since 1994. There have been several outbreaks all over the country. At the beginning, the mortality rate was very high as the disease was epidemic and the population of small ruminants was very susceptible. There were many outbreaks and the disease remains the main headache of livestock keepers.

Considering a large portion of the Eritrean people depends on livestock, the socio-economic burden of such a challenge is not seen lightly. Annual vaccination programs that are aimed at tackling the problem are carried out throughout the nation. Had the compulsory vaccination and ring vaccination not been carried out, huge economic loss would have occurred.

The MoA launched massive awareness raising programs on PPR, in collaboration with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)



*Mr. Afewerki Mehreteab*

through various media outlets. They also conducted extensive surveillance activities on the distribution of PPR.

Mr. Afewerki Mehreteab, head of Animal and Plant Health Division in the MoA, said that besides the massive awareness raising campaigns, training on PPR was given to agriculture experts in collaboration with the MoA's Animal Health Unit.

Reports from FAO indicate that PPR was first reported in Côte d'Ivoire in 1942. In 2007, China reported PPR for the first time and in 2008, an outbreak occurred in Morocco making it the first time for the disease to appear in North Africa. In 2015, the OIE/FAO Global Strategy for the Control and Eradication of PPR was endorsed, with the vision of eradicating the disease by 2030. In 2016, PPR entered Europe, after reported outbreaks in Georgia.

In Eritrea, PPR was first detected in 1993 in Tserona. The disease spread further to all parts of the country in 1994 and affected a large number of sheep and goats leading to huge losses to farmers and the overall economy of the country.

The underlying principle of the Government of Eritrea is to control and eradicate any possible threat from contagious animal diseases and, thereby, to improve the living

standards of farmers.

In a period between 2013 and 2014, new PPR outbreak was detected in the country and, thus, MoA, in collaboration with FAO, launched mass awareness raising campaigns and charted out concrete plans to eradicate the disease.

According to Mr. Afewerki, in 2015 compulsory mass vaccination programs were carried out in response to overt outbreaks in different areas of the country. Consequently, PPR outbreak was substantially reduced. The vaccination program to all sheep and goats were carried out in two phases. In the second phase a revaccination program was launched to ensure no sheep or goat remains unvaccinated.

A total of 17 outbreaks were detected in 2004 but late in 2017 only two PPR incidents were discovered in some hot spot areas. Mr. Afewerki said, "Intensive vaccination and follow up will soon commence in order to control the prevalence and further spread of PPR."

The wide distribution of PPR has created urgency for world-wide combat. The eradication of rinderpest in 2011 at a global level was a major relief in the provision of animal health services. A progressive control or eradication of PPR both at regional and global levels is also expected to ease the threat of production loss in sheep and goats.

So far vaccination has been the main tool for controlling and eradicating PPR, thereby reducing its negative socio-economic impact. The vaccination program is set to cover a 100 % of the small ruminants that are over 3 months old for a minimum of two successive years, followed by revaccination to the already vaccinated and new ones if necessary. In March 2015, the World



PPR vaccination

Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and FAO officially launched a new program to eradicate PPR by 2030 at a global level.

Owing to the mass vaccination programs so far carried out, Eritrea has successfully implemented two of the four stages of Global Strategy for the Control and Eradication of PPR jointly developed by OIE and FAO.

The global strategy covers three components to be implemented in four stages through a step-by-step approach. The four stages range from stage one; when the epidemic is being assessed, to stage four; when the country provides evidence that there is no incidence and last when the country is ready to apply for the OIE official status of freedom from PPR.

Eritrea is currently at stage two. Assessment has already been carried out and vaccination programs have been implemented. "Eritrea will soon start to implement stage three-eradication of PPR and each stage will be implemented in a period of three years and the global strategy to eradicate PPR will be fully

implemented in a period between 7 to 10 years," Mr. Afewerki elaborated.

Mr. Afewerki reaffirms that Eritrea will implement the global strategy to eradicate PPR before the deadline set by OIE and FAO.

The demand for livestock and livestock products is expected to be influenced with an ever growing population size. So, farmers in Eritrea will depend mainly on the reproduction of small ruminants. Therefore, the importance of preventing and eradicating is increasingly becoming a priority due to an ever increasing demand. A more effective time-bound strategy is, therefore, required in order to play a significant role in achieving the set out goal of PPR eradication.

Around 65% of the Eritrean people earn their living by raising sheep and goats. Raising large ruminants is becoming increasingly difficult as a result of the ensuing lack of grazing areas. In such places, the importance of sheep and goats in fulfilling the role once played by cattle for meat, milk and manure production is being recognized. The increased demand for sheep and goat meat has also increased their importance in lowland pastoral areas as a source of cash income, food security, etc. They provide their owners with a vast range of products such as meat, milk, skin as well as manure.

A total eradication of PPR will create ample opportunities in boosting the number of livestock and which will in turn contribute to the overall economic growth at a national level.



PPR affected sheep and goats





# Evidence of Writing Systems from the Antiquity of Eritrea

*Abraham Zerai*

The very existence of writing systems in antiquity implies the sophistication of the cognitive map of early societies across the world. Written symbols, letterforms and full-fledged alphabets as well as scripts have provided the most effective system devised by humans to describe the world around them in as much as allowing administrative organization of complex societies and the transfer of their accumulated knowledge. Among the literate civilizations (communities with writing systems) of antiquity, pictographs, inscriptions, written records and scribes represent the dearth of ancient writing traditions that evolved in the course of human history. Ancient literature in all its variety provides rich insights into the world of the great civilizations. The accurate and effective use of such evidence requires understanding of the social context and historical genesis of the use of writing in different societies in antiquity.

The antiquity of Eritrea represents the carving of inscriptions on monumental forms, particularly by the 1st millennium BCE. The position of the northern Horn at a nexus of major areas of the world has had significant consequences for the development of the region as an important and unique center for the origins of language groups and cultural exchange, among which the development of writing system in the region becomes an important cultural transformation. The expansion of interregional culture contact and exchange seen during

the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE in Africa and the Red Sea area influenced the development of complex societies. Regional polities greatly expanded in the northern Horn and southern Red Sea area during this period, and the genesis of writing systems particularly in these regions was impacted by these events and processes. The development of writing systems in the northern Horn of Africa, thus, largely seems to have been associated with state development in the region.

With particular reference to the genesis of writing systems in the northern Horn, the dichotomy Sabean/Ge'ez has prevailed over centuries since the recording of inscriptions by epigraphers over much of the highland urban centers that flourished in Eritrea and northern Ethiopia by the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE. In this respect, the origins and evolution of the Ge'ez writing system (an African script found in Eritrea and Ethiopia) has been strongly tied to the processes of interregional culture contact and exchange seen during the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC- 1<sup>st</sup> millennium CE in Africa and the Red Sea area.

Epigraphic and monumental evidence of South Arabian influence in the 1st millennium BCE suggests interactions between the human groups living in the Horn and the South Arabs, in particular, the Sabaeans who dominated the highlands in Yemen in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE. Yet, the nature of the interaction is widely debated. Currently the available archaeological evidence is very fragmentary. The evidence



does not support any south Arabian migration and/or colonizations although it does not exclude the penetration into the highlands of small groups coming from different regions of Yemen, including Saba.

Scholars have long suggested the use of terms such as MKRB (mukarrib) and MLK (malik) and reference to Saba and South Arabian cultural features on inscriptions with ancient Sabaeans script found from archaeological sites in Eritrea and northern Ethiopia implied the dominance of Sabaeans influence. According to the current paradigms, the use of inscriptions in Sabaeans script by 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE communities in the northern Horn of Africa was, however, limited to ways of describing elite political titles and religious references. There is a general absence of epigraphic information concerning administrative function, trade, accounting or other essential aspects of the 1st millennium BCE communities in the northern Horn. Therefore, current scholarship pinpoints that writing in South Arabian-like script does not suggest a wide scale adoption of a South Arabian language by these communities or the existence of Sabaeans migration events, colonization and Sabaeans primacy.

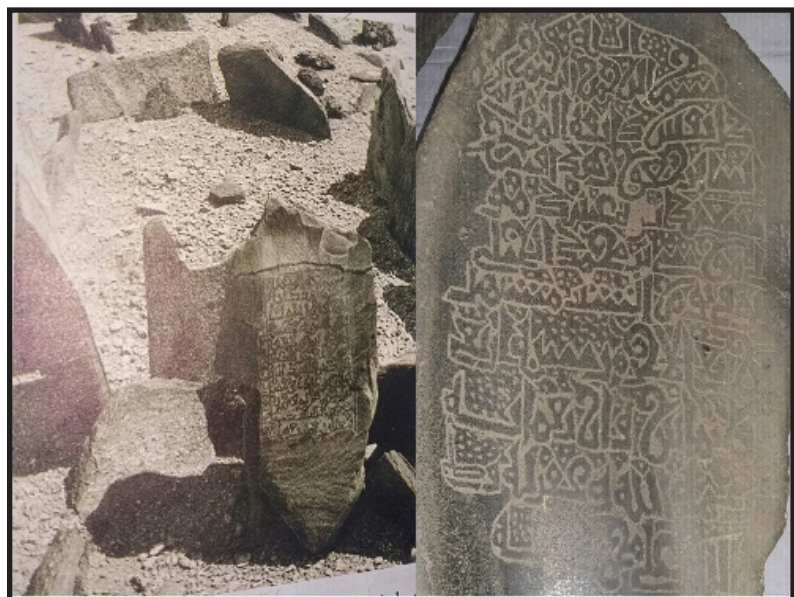
At present, the archaeological evidence points a distinction between the elite who used South Arabian symbols of power and an indigenous people maintaining their local traditions. A South Arabian influence is evident in monumental architecture, inscriptions and small votive altars. The recording of sphinx in an Egyptian/Merotic

style also implies that both South Arabian and African symbols merged into one religious system in the mid-1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE. This evidence, therefore, may indicate that indigenous leaders in the northern Horn of Africa used foreign elements with a different origin to express ranks and power, and it can be said that the genesis of writing systems in the Horn as early as 700 BCE is attributed to the interplay of these processes of cognitive mapping. It is understood generally that the inclusion of such elements may have taken over the course of generations rather than attribution to a limited number of South Arabian colonization or migration events. The genesis of writing systems in the northern Horn of Africa is the result of the agency of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE and the incorporation of features from a diverse range of elements in the southern Red Sea cultural environment. The writing systems and their epigraphic recording represent dynamisms of cultural transformation in the 1st millennium BCE. The archaeological record from 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE- 1<sup>st</sup> millennium CE sites in Eritrea and northern Ethiopia, therefore, constitutes writing systems representing a South-Arabian like script, non-vocalized Ge'ez (Proto-Ge'ez) elements and a full-fledged Ge'ez writing system.

The Ge'ez writing system is one of the oldest working systems in the world. This African writing system has remained unchanged for 2000 years, owing to its adaptability and innovative method of organizing sounds. The writing

system provides not only a system of grammar, but an interface into the ancient world of Africa, its philosophies, belief systems, and advanced early societies. It is generally agreed upon that the writing system achieved perfection by the fourth or fifth century. Ge'ez was kept, in practice, across a wide range of sacred and scholarly activities from the thirteenth through the seventeenth centuries, known as the "classical period" of the Ge'ez literature. The genesis and evolution of this African writing system culminated in the production of texts and scribes constituted in parchments (Branas). Old parchments housed in historical monasteries of Eritrea keep the dearth of chronicles and narratives of particularly the medieval period. Similarly, as far as the evidence of writing systems and written records from Eritrea is concerned, the Dahlak islands store a rich heritage of classical Kuffic inscriptions (classical Arabic script). The islands saw the development of the Arabic writing system from the 8th to 12th centuries.

In conclusion, the richness of the archaeological and historical evidence for writing systems and written records in Eritrea bears a testimony to one of the few indications of writing systems in the African continent. The variety of evidence begs a multi-disciplinary approach to tackle the origin, evolution and development of the writing systems comprehensively and the preservation of these records for posterity is very important.





# OPINION

## Eritrea's Independence: Beacon of Self-reliance and Resilience

Simon Weldemichael

On 24<sup>th</sup> May, the State of Eritrea will celebrate its 27<sup>th</sup> independence since the end of Ethiopia's brutal colonial rule. On this significant date, all Eritreans celebrate the glorious victory and remarkable history of the fight for their independence. This year's anniversary is unique as it is celebrated under conditions of incessant external animosity on the one hand, and the strength of our united resistance on the other.

Eritreans started their organized fight for their rights in the midst of Second World War. At the end of World War II, the newly formed United Nations denied Eritreans their right to self-determination. In 1950, the United Nations General Assembly passed a United States sponsored federal resolution that forcefully federated Eritrea with Ethiopia. The federation was short-lived due to Ethiopia's abrogation of the federal agreement. In 1962, Ethiopia unilaterally dissolved the federation and annexed Eritrea. There was no voice that condemned this move and the architects of the injustice celebrated dishonorable victory. Eritreans again were betrayed by the international community. Eritreans are accustomed to being betrayed, but they always come stronger and more determined than ever.

Under those circumstances, a national armed struggle, no matter how bitter and protracted, became the only effective means of securing Eritrea's national interests, pride and dignity. Eritrea's armed struggle can be viewed as the continuation of the two decades of unsuccessful political struggle for sovereignty and independence. It can also be described as an equal and opposite reaction to Ethiopia's aggression that shaped the negative regional and global stance. Eritrea's armed struggle was not only a reaction against Ethiopia's colonization but also against the general injustice of the international system. Eritreans are proud of this struggle for it was a noble and just struggle that put to an end the humiliating colonization.

Frantz Fanon, an advocate of emancipation and liberation, believes that a violent revolution is a necessary way to confront colonialism because from its inception colonialism has been a violent phenomenon. Ethiopian colonizers used force to gain entry

and possession of the Eritrean land and they used force to maintain their stay there for four decades. Thus, when the peaceful political means failed to persuade the colonizers it was only through force that they can be overthrown. Fanon held the belief that the colonizers would not be persuaded to leave peacefully, until there is a violent revolution. The colonial and international injustice swiftly sparked anger and violence from the peace-loving people of Eritrea. The violence undertaken by Eritreans was a continuation of the nonviolent means of resistance and a desperate act of survival to keep alive. Ethiopia's colonial violence was aimed at depopulating and dehumanizing Eritreans whereas the violence by Eritreans aimed to stop violence and restore peace. Thus our violence was taken as last option to end exploitation, oppression and domination. Eritreans discovered that violence is the only language that the Ethiopian colonizers could understand and, in its course, it transformed into a revolutionary war. Richard Philcox, 'On Retranslating Fanon' mentioned that **"... Violence is a cleansing force. It rids the colonized of the inferiority complex, of their passive and despairing attitude. It emboldens them and restores their self-confidence."** Eritrean war of liberation served as a channel through which the forces accumulated in the forms of aggression were released. Our enemies said that might is right and we struggled to prove that it's right that is right. The Eritrean people defeated its enemies and their surrogates primarily because truth was on their side.

Eritrea's independence was unique in that it was attained after Eritreans endured brutal oppression and colonization of both European and African nature. Eritrea was the only European colony in Africa that was denied its independence and was passed onto an African colonization. Eritrean independence was unique because it was acquired, not given like many African countries. The time and the amount of sacrifice made for it also makes it unique. Our wounds are still too painful and too fresh in our memory. No one can forget the sacrifices, massacres, oppression and exploitation that we experienced during this period. In many of the decolonized countries, independence was followed by political instability, violent conflict and economic stagnation, but, in Eritrea, independence was followed



by peace, stability and progress. Eritrean independence was also unique in that it was supported by referendum. Eritrea's independence was a victory against seemingly impossible odds, and it was achieved without any meaningful outside assistance. Seth Kaplan has said that **"the birth of the Eritrean state resulted entirely from the tenacity, resilience, and keen organizational skills of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF)"** (2016, p3).

Eritrea's victory is not Eritrea's only. Eritrean struggle for independence was not limited to combating the enemy; it also laid the foundation for an independent country. Tanzanian Abdul Rahman Mohamed Babu proclaimed during the struggle in 1985, that **"Eritrea's present is the remote future of others... I am not ashamed to admit that I have been overwhelmed by what I saw. Living, working and eating with these staunch revolutionaries, I am tempted to echo the famous quote: 'I have seen the future of Africa and it works.'"** After independence Eritrea was one of the emerging African states that was expected to play a leading role in the recovery of Africa. The spectacular and all rounded progress of the 1990s was, however, halted due to the TPLF invasion that aimed to undo the independence of Eritrea. The hostilities restricted many of the positive contributions that could have come from Eritrea. Eritrea, as Mr. Yemane Gebreab once said **"is an independent, constructive, active and consciously modest regional and global actor. ... The policy of seeking to isolate and undermine Eritrea has limited our role. It has also deprived the Horn of Africa of the positive contribution we would have been able to make"**.

Eritrean independence was the most challenged independence everywhere in the world. Regional

and global actors have employed all sorts of destabilization to undermine Eritrean independence. However, the military adventure and covert machinations were foiled by the gallantry of our army and the perseverance of our people. The military adventure, psychological warfare, political and economic intrigues and unjust sanction altogether do not produce the dividends expected by those who tried them. Now after 27 years of independence the once economically devastated country has been rehabilitated to grant its citizens protection, justice and social services. Above all, the leadership and people of Eritrea have maintained their aspirations. Considering the military aggression of TPLF and the non-implementation of EEBC and the unjust sanctions, the social transformation and infrastructural development during the last 27 years of independence are promising. Eritrea has scored success in many of the MDGs and it's now on the right track to achieve the SDGs. A number of surprising developments have occurred in Eritrea, showing that the country is determined to throw off the yoke of poverty. While this is the general reality, no one denies that we have many things that have yet to be accomplished.

Eritrea is the freest country that exercises its sovereignty. Freedom means the capability to say yes when yes is needed, to say no when no is needed, and sometimes to keep quiet when nothing is needed. Many third world countries have not yet cut ties from their former colonial masters. They continue to do what was told to do and follow the commands received from their masters. The freedom from something is not true freedom. Eritrea is not only getting freedom from foreign rule. Eritrea enjoyed its freedom. Eritrean independence is not just for mere liberation but also for change. Freedom has two aspects: first, freedom from, and second, freedom for. Many countries attain only

the first kind of freedom- freedom from physical colonization. Eritrea has used its freedom to exercise its sovereignty, to create a national character and identity of its own and to be Eritrea for Eritreans.

President Isaias Afewerki, in his speech on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the AU, said that **"In as far as the nation states are concerned, the experience in the past fifty years has largely been that of dependence on dominant external players for inspiration and policy direction."** Post-independence Africa is nothing but a deprived condition characterized by corruption, indignity, ineptitude of leaders, insensitivity to the plight of the citizenry, lack of political courage and the like. Eritrea's political courage has been manifested in its willingness to sacrifice for the sake of principle. Even though Eritrea's sovereign territory continues to be under the illegal occupation of Ethiopia and the unfair sanction remains un-lifted, the government has led Eritrea to become very peaceful and harmonious.

The world, including our enemies, is now compelled to accept Eritrea's independence and witness the difference it brings. Eritrea is not only an independent country; it's a radiance of hope and paves an alternative way to development. Eritrea has been engineering prosperity by relying on its own human and capital resource and without compromising its independence. The Eritrean people's self-reliance and independence rejected debt in favor of Eritrean ingenuity and sweat.

Let me leave you with a famous Eritrean quote: **"If war with Eritrea was difficult yesterday, it is impossible today."** The resilience, tenacity, perseverance and sacrifice of Eritreans will continue to shield our independence and to disgrace the forces of arrogance. For 77 long years of struggle (1941-2018) successive generations of Eritrea have been fighting for independence, sovereignty and prosperity and our struggle has not yet come to an end. In order to translate the dream of our fallen heroes we have to enhance our legal, political, martial, informational, and psychological resistance. We fight for rights and we got independence for difference, peace and justice. Happy Independence Day to all my citizenry parents, brothers and sisters living inside and outside Eritrea.



# Invitation for Bids

Date: 27/04/2018 ofIFB

Loan/Financing N°: 2100150032395,200155028969

IFB N°: 06.2/02/NCB/ADF/DRSLP-IV/YT/L3/2018

1. This Invitation for Bids (IFB) follows the General Procurement Notice (GPN) for this Project that appeared in *United Nations Development Business online (UNDB online)* No. **AfDB510-07/15** of **30 July, 2015**, and on the African Development Bank's Internet Website ([www.afdb.org](http://www.afdb.org)).

2. The Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) received a financing from the African Development Bank (ADF) in various currencies towards the cost of **Drought Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme-II Eritrea Programme**. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan/financing will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for **Lot 3: Vegetable seeds**

3. The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply of the above mentioned goods (hereinafter called "the Goods"). National Competitive Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the Bank's **Rules and Procedures for Procurement of Goods and Works**.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at the office of PSMU-MoA, Sawa Street, P.O.Box 1048 Tel. 189266/180699, [yacobtesfom@gmail.com](mailto:yacobtesfom@gmail.com).

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders upon the submission of a written application to the said Executing Agency, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **ERN Four Hundred Fifty (ERN450.00)**.

6. The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions are those of the Bank's Standard Bidding Document for Procurement of Goods.

7. Bids must be delivered to the above office<sup>1</sup> on or before **14:30 pm local time on June 12, 2018** and must be accompanied by a security of **Lot 3: Vegetable seeds USD 1900.00**.

8. Bids shall remain valid for **120 days** after the deadline for bid submission prescribed above.

9. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at **15:00 pm hours local time on June 12, 2018**, at the offices of Ministry of Agriculture of the State of Eritrea, Procurement and Supplies Management Unit, Sawa Street, P.O.Box 1048 Tel. 189266/180699, [yacobtesfom@gmail.com](mailto:yacobtesfom@gmail.com).

(Endnotes)

# Invitation for Bids

Date: 9/05/2018 ofIFB

Loan/Financing N°: 2100150032395,200155028969

IFB N°: 06.2/02/NCB/ADF/DRSLP-II/YT/L3-L5/2018

1. This Invitation for Bids (IFB) follows the General Procurement Notice (GPN) for this Project that appeared in *United Nations Development Business online (UNDB online)* No. **AfDB510-07/15** of **30 July, 2015**, and on the African Development Bank's Internet Website ([www.afdb.org](http://www.afdb.org)).

2. The Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) received a financing from the African Development Bank (ADF) in various currencies towards the cost of **Drought Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme-II Eritrea Programme**. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan/financing will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for **Lot 3: Vegetable seeds Lot 4: chemical reagents Lot 5: sets of electronic equipment**

3. The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply of the above mentioned goods (hereinafter called "the Goods"). National Competitive Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the Bank's **Rules and Procedures for Procurement of Goods and Works**.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at the office of PSMU-MoA, Sawa Street, P.O.Box 1048 Tel. 189266/180699, [yacobtesfom@gmail.com](mailto:yacobtesfom@gmail.com).

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders upon the submission of a written application to the said Executing Agency, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **ERN Four Hundred Fifty (ERN450.00)**.

6. The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions are those of the Bank's Standard Bidding Document for Procurement of Goods.

7. Bids must be delivered to the above office<sup>1</sup> on or before **14:30 pm local time on June 12, 2018** and must be accompanied by a security of **Lot 3: Vegetable seeds USD 350.00, Lot 4: chemical reagents USD 150.00, Lot 5: sets of electronic equipment USD 4000.00**.

8. Bids shall remain valid for **120 days** after the deadline for bid submission prescribed above.

9. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at **15:00 pm hours local time on June 12, 2018**, at the offices of Ministry of Agriculture of the State of Eritrea, Procurement and Supplies Management Unit, Sawa Street, P.O.Box 1048 Tel. 189266/180699, [yacobtesfom@gmail.com](mailto:yacobtesfom@gmail.com).

(Endnotes)



## SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE (SPN)

State of Eritrea  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT OF  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
SUPPORT TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR  
EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
[SSDEE] PROJECT

## INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

**Date: May 10, 2018**  
**Grant No.: 2100155029467**  
**IFB No.: SSDEE/ADF/G/NCB/02/2018**

### Procurement of Tools, Equipment and Traditional materials for training centers

1. This Specific Procurement Notice follows the General Procurement Notice for this project which appeared in Development Business Issue on June 12, 2015, and on the African Development Bank's Internet Website ([www.afdb.org](http://www.afdb.org)).

2. The Government of The State of Eritrea (GoSE) has received a financing from the African Development Bank in various currencies towards the cost of SUPPORT TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP [SSDEE] PROJECT. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this financing will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for the Procurement of Tools, Equipment and Traditional Materials for training centers.

3. The Project Management Unit of the Ministry of Education (PMU-MoE) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the procurement of Tools, Equipment and Traditional materials for training centers.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at the office of PMU-MoE, Hday Street No.: 748-1, DembeSembel, Block "A", First Floor, P. O. Box: 1099, Asmara, Eritrea, Tele: +291-1-151614, Fax: +291-1-152181, Email: [mgilagaber@gmail.com](mailto:mgilagaber@gmail.com), or [michaelsheghe@gmail.com](mailto:michaelsheghe@gmail.com)

5. A Complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of written application to the above and upon payment of non-refundable fee of US\$ 50 (Fifty US dollars only) or Eritrean Nakfa (ERN) 750 (seven hundred fifty Nakfa), or in any other freely convertible currency.

6. The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provisions of the African Development Bank Standard Bidding Document: Procurement of Goods.

7. Bids must be delivered to the above office on or before 10:30 hours local time (GMT +3) on July 10, 2018 and must be accompanied by a security of: USD 4,500.00 (Four thousand five hundred only) or ERN 67,500.00 (Sixty seven thousand five hundred only);

8. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 10:30 hours local time (GMT +3) on July 10, 2018, at the offices of PMU-MoE, Hday Street No.: 748-1, DembeSembel, Block "A", First Floor, Asmara, Eritrea.

## SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE (SPN)

State of Eritrea  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT OF  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
SUPPORT TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT  
FOR EMPLOYABILITY AND  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP [SSDEE] PROJECT  
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

**Date: May 10, 2018**  
**Grant No.: 2100155029467**  
**IFB No.: SSDEE/ADF/G/NCB/01/2018**

### Procurement of IT and OFFICE EQUIPMENTS for Training and Monitoring

1. This Specific Procurement Notice follows the General Procurement Notice for this project which appeared in Development Business Issue on June 12, 2015, and on the African Development Bank's Internet Website ([www.afdb.org](http://www.afdb.org)).

2. The Government of The State of Eritrea (GoSE) has received a financing from the African Development Bank in various currencies towards the cost of SUPPORT TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP [SSDEE] PROJECT. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this financing will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for the Procurement of IT and Office Equipment.

3. The Project Management Unit of the Ministry of Education (PMU-MoE) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply of IT and Office Equipment for Training & Monitoring.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at the office of PMU-MoE, Hday Street No.: 748-1, DembeSembel, Block "A", First Floor, P. O. Box: 1099, Asmara, Eritrea, Tele: +291-1-151614, Fax: +291-1-152181, Email: [mgilagaber@gmail.com](mailto:mgilagaber@gmail.com), or [michaelsheghe@gmail.com](mailto:michaelsheghe@gmail.com)

5. A Complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of written application to the above and upon payment of non-refundable fee of US\$ 50 (Fifty US dollars only) or Eritrean Nakfa (ERN) 750 (seven hundred fifty Nakfa), or in any other freely convertible currency.

6. The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provisions of the African Development Bank Standard Bidding Document: Procurement of Goods.

7. Bids must be delivered to the above office on or before 9:30 hours local time (GMT +3) on July 10, 2018 and must be accompanied by a security of: USD 1,000.00 (One thousand only) or ERN 15,000.00 (Fifteen thousand only);

8. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 9:30 hours local time (GMT +3) on July 10, 2018, at the offices of PMU-MoE, Hday Street No.: 748-1, DembeSembel, Block "A", First Floor, Asmara, Eritrea.





# *"Eritrea's Methodology of Decentralizing Development should be a Shared example in the Continent" Ms. Susan Namondo Ngongi*

Billion Temesghen

*It has been almost nine months since Ms. Susan Namondo Ngongi has took up the office of UN Resident Coordinator, UN Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for Eritrea. Eritrea Profile welcomes the UNDP Resident Representative taking excerpts from an interview Ms. Susan had with ERI-TV's show 'Open Mic'. In the interview, Ms. Susan, talked about her impressions and thoughts on Eritrea as well as the collaborations extended between the Government of Eritrea and the UNDP.*



**Thank you for being here with us.**

Thank you very much for having me.

**Let's begin with the functions of UNDP in your own words.**

UNDP and the entire UN family are composed by institutions created by governments to support governments and their people in their development aspirations. The family here in Eritrea is not so big. We have about six resident agencies and many more operating from outside, like UNESCO, for instance. UNDP functions in many ways, but, basically, what we do is draft strategic frame works and sign a plan of cooperation with the government. The latest that we have now, for example, is extended from 2017 to 2021. UNDP has been in Eritrea since 1992. It had a liaison office way back then. And I think the journey UNDP, and the rest of the UN family for that matter, has had with the Eritrean Government has been of a growing collaboration and partnership.

**What sort of coordination would these collaborations and partnerships, which you are talking of, be?**

Speaking in terms of cooperation I think it has changed over the years UNDP has functioned in Eritrea in collaboration with the government. But if we take the latest partnership for cooperation as an instance, we are working in several areas like that of social services, education, health, agriculture, environment and climate change. Collaboration and support have been growing in relation to Eritrea's development plans and aspirations. My understanding is that over the

years UNDP has engaged in many development inspirations of Eritrea. I am proud of so many things that have been carried out in Eritrea. I am relatively new but I am happy of many things I have seen. For example, the Anseba Region is a semi-arid region, so water availability is a big challenge. But farmers are trying to harvest water through the construction of dams and check dams. Also, there have been efforts to help farmers have better management of land and water resources. Another piece of work that I have come across and I am really, really proud of was providing alternative solar energy to the inhabitants of Debub Region. It is a joint project involving the Government of Eritrea, UNDP and the European Union. Its aim is to make sure that about eight thousand households in the region have the benefit from electricity accessibility. The work is going on at the moment and we are hoping that by the end of this year these eight thousand households will be able to use solar energy. So, we are doing different pieces of work, supporting here and there, where the government thinks we are useful most. I think it is yielding great results. I believe that Eritrea has one of the best audited functions in the continent. And those are the sort of things that I hope Eritrea shares with the rest of Africa.

**What has impressed you the most during your stay in Eritrea?**

I am impressed by the development facets of Eritrea. I have seen great achievements in many sectors. But I can't help recognize that Eritrea is only 26 years old. So what has impressed me the most is that the country, even after thirty years of a

devastating war, is back on a strong path of development thanks to the resilience of the people. I think that has impressed me the most. All of the achievements we see in Eritrea happened within this context, and by no stretch of imagination am I suggesting that things are absolutely perfect in Eritrea. There is still so much to be done, but the efforts that have been deployed to try and get there is impressive.

**What did you observe particularly in the advancements Eritrea has made in the health sector?**

Health is one of the best documented areas of Eritrea's achievements. For me, especially MDG4, on reducing 'under five' mortality, was remarkable. If I remember my figures right, I think, in 1995, the figures were a hundred and thirty seven babies dying per thousand life births, but by 2015, it had dropped to forty-seven children dying per one thousand life births. That is a significant achievement and I think Eritrea was within the top ten countries that registered these achievements on the African Continent. Also, in terms of maternal mortality, we know that the rates went significantly down from nine hundred and something in 1995 to four hundred and something in 2015. HIV AIDS was also an area of massive progress and was supported by recent policies in 2015.

I understand that there was a test and treat policy. Accordingly, anybody that got tested and had the virus would be treated regardless of the CD4 count level. This is outstanding, truly. I strongly believe that we are heading towards the elimination of mother-child transmission of HIV AIDS. Therefore, I hope that

these extraordinary success stories are spoken of more publicly and told of. We need for more data to be out there so that we can tell these stories of Eritrea and its development achievements. Data is incredibly motivating. If your people know about registered goals and have access to related data they get to be motivated and want to do more in various aspects of the development undertakings they might be interested in. It is like the watches you put on to count the steps you take in a day. It might be a funny of example but it tells how many steps you've done motivating you for more each time. Therefore, data cannot be, in my view, over stated. Luckily in Eritrea, you do have a sound institution, the National Statics Office. I think it needs more people working there and needs to be strengthened.

**As part of the overall National Development, the wellbeing of women has been a fundamental scheme of the Government of Eritrea. What about securing the rights of women? Do you see the changes achieved on the ground?**

Absolutely. For instance, female genital mutilation has gone down tremendously. Concerted actions were invested from many components of the government like the Ministry of Health, the Ministry Of Labor and Human Welfare, the women's organization, NUEW, more stakeholders and communities. I think it will be good if Eritrea would share its experiences, practices, approaches and ideologies that led to such achievements with other countries.

I noticed that key undertakings and investments are decentralized. That, I think, is important. Because for many things that have to do with development and social wellbeing like, for example in the case of FGM, what you need most is an enabling atmosphere. You need law enforcement and a cultural understanding that lead the people to abide by law. In Eritrea, the chain of activities is very well managed and has well planned backups with policies enforced to shape such conditions.

**What do you think about the Eritrean policy of stretching out its development programs to**

**the furthest places, focusing its attention on less developed areas and then, to towns and cities?**

I think it is a very nice approach to achieving National Development. The GDP figures of many countries are encouraging, but when you look a little bit closer you realize that only few people are enjoying the growth while many still suffer. Even in, some cases, where the spread of growth is vast, there do exist particular group of people who do not benefit from the growth. However, what we understand about the Eritrean Government's policy is that, indeed, any kind of growth can be equitable. In Eritrea, development is equilibrated. Moreover, the government has deliberately put more effort and resources on developing parts of the country that were less developed before. So, that is definitely a good thing. However, coming back to the point I made earlier as regards data, it is an excellent thing that the government is doing great but how do you tell this account to others? Or how do you make sure that all Eritreans understand the policy? When you have data made available, all parts of the society can understand and relate to the overall development plan. That being said, I think what the Government of Eritrea is doing in decentralizing development activities is totally laudable.

**At the end, summarizing your views in these nine months of office, is there anything you'd like to say?**

I think there are many lessons to be learned from Eritrea. I think the key thing would be for the government and the people to be willing to share their story. I don't want to give the impression that everything is smooth and perfect in Eritrea and there is still so much to be done but I do have a message to the People and Government of Eritrea. If you have done so well in areas that at present tend to be problematic in other parts of the continent such as malaria, HIV AIDS control from mother to child and more, it is very important that your methodologies, experiences and stories are shared with other countries. And who knows? Eritrea, then, might also learn from other countries with better experiences in other areas.