

CONGRESS OF ERITREAN WOMEN AGRIBUSINESS ASSOCIATION



The Eritrean Women Agribusiness Association conducted its 5th congress in Asmara on 14 February.

According to report presented at the congress, the association has organized training programs inside the country and abroad on development and business administration, law, poultry and bee farming, mushroom cultivation, food safety, digital service as well as climate information among others.

At the congress, members of the executive committee of the association said that the increased number of members as well as

the opportunity created by the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers and micro-credit and saving program has significant contribution in the development of the association.

The executive members also commended the support extended by the Ministry of Agriculture and national training institutions.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture, congratulated the association for incorporating female members, and stressed need to diversify their relations with similar global associations.

Mr. Arefaine also called on the association members to give due attention to agricultural development in general and that of sweet potato in particular. The minister also expressed readiness of the Ministry of Agriculture to stand alongside the association in all its endeavors.

MICRO-CREDIT AND SAVING PROGRAM IN TESENEY

At an activity assessment meeting organized in Teseny sub-zone on 11 February, it was reported that the micro-credit and saving program in the sub-zone has carried out commendable activities in improving the livelihoods of beneficiaries.

According to Mr. Tadese Mebrahtu, head of the office, in 2022 in Teseny sub-zone 22.6 million Nakfa loan has been disbursed to 2 thousand 338 groups, individuals and Government employees in the sub-

zone including.

Mr. Tadese went on to say that out of the 12 thousand 830 customers of the program 47.5% are females.

Explaining on the objective of the micro-credit and saving program, Mr. Tafla Asmerom, acting head of the program, called on the area administrator in the sub-zone to play due part in the effort.

Micro-credit and saving program has 155 village banks in the sub-zones of Forto, Haikota, Teseney and Goloj.



COMMEMORATION OF FENKIL OPERATION IN ITALY AND FRANCE

Nationals in Italy enthusiastically commemorated the 33rd anniversary of Fenkil Operation on 12 February under the theme "Fenkil-Resolute Commitment".

The commemoration events in the cities of Rome, Bari, Catania, Pisa, Abruzzo, Parma, Verona and Bologna have been highlighted by cultural and artistic programs.

At the occasion organized in Rome, Mr. Fisehatsion Petros, Eritrea's Ambassador to Italy, explaining the historical, military and political impact of Fenkil Operation said that the commemoration anniversary of the operation that signaled the total independence of Eritrea shoulders every citizen to live up to expectations of martyrs that

gave their precious lives.

Similar briefings have also been provided by heads of organization in the commemoration events organized in the other cities.

According to report, commemoration events will be organized on 19 February in the cities of Milano, Firenze, Napoli, Palermo and Torino.

Meanwhile, nationals in France have also commemorated the 33rd anniversary of Fenkil Operation on 12 February with patriotic zeal under the theme "Fenkil-Resolute Commitment".

The commemoration event that was organized in Nantes has been participated by a number of nationals from the French cities of Paris, Rennes, Ange, Marseilles

and Nantes.

The event has been highlighted by cultural and artistic programs.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Bereket Paulos, Charge d'Affairs at the Eritrean Embassy, and Mr. Berhane Kidane, chairman of the YPFDJ in France, said that the heroic feat demonstrated by the Eritrea's liberation fighters at the coordinated land and naval Fenkil Operation will be proudly commemorated by the Eritrean people for posterity.

They also said that commemoration anniversary of the operation that signaled the total independence of Eritrea shoulders every citizen to live up to expectations of martyrs and commitment to strengthen participation in the national affairs.



TRAINING ON ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP

The National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students branch in the Southern Region organized a training program on administration and leadership to 70 youth from the 12 sub-zones of the region.

Indicating that the objective of the program was to develop overall capacity of the youth, Mr. Ghirmay Gebru, head of the union branch in the region, said that the training included administration and leadership concept, gender equality and leadership, communication and leadership, as well as time management.

In the same vein, the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students branch in Emni-Haili sub-zone provided one moth training to 21 females on poultry farming and to over youth on 360 youth on various fields of social science.

Speaking at the conclusion event of the training, Mr. Ghirmay said that effort is being exerted to create conducive situation to enable women become self-supportive and productive members of the society.

The trainees on their part commending for the training opportunity they were provided, expressed readiness to practically apply the training they received in improving their livelihoods.

INTERVIEW OF PRESIDENT ISAIAS AFWERKI WITH NATIONAL MEDIA OUTLETS

National media outlets conducted a first part of an interview with President Isaias Afwerki on important regional and international issues and trends last Sunday. Full text of the translated version of the interview follows.

Q1. In your interview last year, you had indicated that the TPLF's reckless adventures had been foiled, even if its Enablers continued to dwell on their subversive campaigns. As you had predicted, the TPLF unleashed its third offensive (in August last year) during the critical harvest season as it was invariably the case with the two previous offensives. The TPLF was subsequently compelled to sign the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. What were the political and military developments that underpinned this event? What is its likely trajectory in the period ahead?

A. When broaching this subject, the first question that comes to mind is why was war necessary in the first place? And, what

launched in the first place at a time when a Peace Agreement was signed. In our view, this was not really a TPLF agenda; but essentially the agenda of Washington. The sad fact is, perturbed and anxious as they were by the advent of peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia, impeding and scuttling it became their dogged obsession. The vehicle of choice to implement this wicked agenda was their subordinate – the TPLF clique. The TPLF was subservient to their agenda for almost thirty years thereby plunging Ethiopia into a quagmire. The TPLF had done its part as a loyal surrogate in those decades. Finally, it was utterly incapacitated and became a spent force. Nonetheless, its Enablers did not abandon their agendas. When it was said GAME



misalculation. The presumptuous assessment by Washington further amplified and multiplied the TPLF clique's erroneous perspectives. They unleashed the offensive expecting huge results. Bombing Asmara with missiles cannot have substantive military impact. Yet the US Embassy in Asmara amplified it with its megaphones in a celebratory tone.

There is nothing new or novel to us in TPLF's unbridled conduct which is akin to a bankrupt merchant who wallows in yet more gambles. Furthermore, the TPLF has external Enablers and masters. Its main task is to do their bidding; to implement their express instructions.

The first phase of the TPLF's initial offensive ended in a debacle. I will not delve into greater details on the dynamics and specifics of how the first offensive was foiled. They should have drawn appropriate lessons from this utter failure. But its Enablers concocted various subterfuges to salvage the TPLF clique.

The second option that was developed subsequently was to attack Wollo and Combolcha and enter Addis Abeba. All the accompanying themes and dramas were meticulously prepared. The propaganda that was floating was that this was indeed a second chance. What could the TPLF achieve by spreading itself in a vast area, in a huge morass? In retrospect it is clear that this was a disastrous folly. Only a fool will keep playing when the game is finished. The sheer size of the army they had amassed through extensive and forced conscription might have been a factor that misled them. They pinned their hopes on outnumbering the Federal Army. These were the calculations

that they reached in their closed circle. But the outcome was predictable. The outcome that would accrue when operating in unfamiliar and expansive terrain extending to Addis Abeba cannot be lost to a sober mind. This was utter insanity. As it happened, the offensive met utter failure.

And yet, TPLF's Enablers concocted another ploy. They pressed for the termination of the counter-offensive campaign and to hinder its advance to the Tigray Region. This was inexplicable by any standards. But it was evident that this would lead to the launching of the third offensive. Indeed, old habits die hard and the pattern or playbook was in any case the same.

Frantic preparations for the third round of the military adventure, which was dubbed "final and decisive," continued in full swing. A large army was amassed through coercion, deceit and intimidation. The preparations, including the propaganda, were reminiscent of the fanfare during the Dergue's regime. The pomp and insanity was hard to fathom. They had sustained major defeats in the two previous rounds. Their desire was now not to miss the opportunity in the third round. I attribute this agenda to the clique in Washington and its ilk elsewhere. The only vehicle of implementation was of course the TPLF clique. The TPLF had no problem to advance external agendas by agitating the people of Tigray through deceitful promises and dreams.

In the last military adventure, the plan was to open new fronts in the eastern and western flanks in addition to the northern and southern fronts. The preparations that were made on Sudanese territory were enormous both in terms of magnitude and capacity.

The intention and strategy was to open a corridor through this western front. An additional army was thus created through recruitment in the refugee camps in Sudan and from the contingents that were deployed in Darfur on a peacekeeping mission. Similarly, attempts were made to secure a corridor to Djibouti on the eastern front by inciting ethnic conflicts in the border areas. All-round preparations were thus made for over six months. Weapons and other equipment were smuggled [into Tigray] by airplanes under the cover of darkness to augment the TPLF's military capability.

In the meantime, the Federal Army, which had gleaned vital lessons from the previous two rounds, had undertaken substantive preparations. The fact was the preparations were not adequate during the first two offensives that were unleashed by the TPLF. One element that contributed to the miscalculation of the TPLF clique and its Enablers was the notion that the Federal Army was virtually impotent. The TPLF had of course an inside track as it had incessantly worked, for almost thirty years, to weaken and fragment it. The Northern Command was an army of 30,000-32,000. Over 10,000 of these soldiers were TPLF loyalists or soldiers. To infiltrate and disarm this force in the first offensive was thus deemed as relatively easy. In retrospect, it is clear that TPLF strategy consisted of weakening and fragmenting the national army to advance its overarching objective of controlling and ultimately balkanizing the country along ethnic lines. The TPLF's modus operandi for maintaining power rested on inciting interminable ethnic divisions and planting time bombs here and there.

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For eighty years, they have harassed and declared wars on us that we never wanted. Can we not be allowed to live in peace as a people? Of course, there is no reason for us to ask for their permission.

was the rationale for launching the third adventurist offensive? It is imperative to examine the dynamics of the preceding reckless offensives in order to properly gauge and understand the third and final gambit.

As I stressed earlier, the crucial question is why this war was

OVER, the thrust of their actions focused on resuscitating the TPLF and their agenda. The schemes that were being concocted were transparent to us.

As I explained on previous occasions, I was not keen to meet the Chief of the TPLF clique during the celebratory occasion in Omhager. But eventually, I decided to meet him briefly – for a couple of seconds at most – to ask him why they were making preparations for war. I told him, "I am baffled; What are your intentions in going to war? His response was "this is not going to happen...it will not happen". This was not, really, an honest response.

Soon after, the reckless adventures ensued including missile attacks on Asmara. They had mapped out 72 targets for missile attacks against the country. The full details will be divulged at the appropriate time. In a nutshell, it can be summed up as the reckless gamble of a bankrupt merchant. Of course, they had made necessary preparations. The end game was to disrupt the conducive climate of peace and impose a new reality of chaos and instability. The military offensives stemmed – as it was graphically depicted in the play during the Fenkil celebrations yesterday – from

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As a result, robust and sovereign federal institutions, including security and defense organs, were not developed. TPLF's reckless first offensive was, no doubt, prompted by these considerations. The shallow strategy was to overrun and route these "nominal institutions" and subsequently funnel the military assault towards the North (i.e. Eritrea).

But the plan did not materialize. Although we may not quantify it at this stage, there were many who refused to surrender when the TPLF unleashed the first assaults. What transpired thereafter is of course well-known.

As I stated earlier, the Federal Army had drawn appropriate lessons from the two offensives to undertake requisite preparations for the third offensive. Still, all the variables in war cannot be foreseen in advance as they are determined by the side starts the war.

In our case, in the past eighty years of our history, waging war has never been our choice. If we went into war it has always been reactive and in self-defense.

In the first round, we cannot talk about adequate preparation to counter TPLF's adventures. But the ensuing months provided opportunities for requisite preparations. In Ethiopia, in particular, it afforded opportunities for greater popular awareness as well as more effective operational capacity. Based on the lessons learned from the two previous rounds, we were able to synchronize our operations.

War has never been our choice. Accordingly, we need to work together to deny the capability to those who continue to disturb peace in the region by unleashing incessant wars against us. Deterrent action was thus imperative to ascertain peace and stability in the region

The operational changes made had tangible contributions. In addition, we possessed detailed information of what they envisaged. This was critical to our preparations. The task consisted of collecting vital information and meticulous monitoring of their movements and force-deployments until they initiate the military assault. This state of affairs continued for almost six months. The third round was dubbed by them as "final and decisive". Likewise, this was also our position. The view was that this round should be consummated, and not be halted in mid-stream in order to avert another disastrous

adventure.

The problem is they don't know their capability. They live in a fantasy world. Their advisers and masters are even worse. The clique in Washington are clueless about the reality on the ground. Their situational analysis is flawed. They dubbed the third round "final and decisive", because deep down, they believed in it. So, to make it a lesson for everyone, to bring the war to an end and for genuine peace to prevail, adequate preparations were made to foil their schemes.

Developments on the ground were really dramatic. The preparations of the counter-offensive were substantial. When the war began, it did not take much time. The losses inculcated on the TPLF within a short period of time was colossal. Within three weeks, TPLF's leadership began to wail and make preparations to flee from the country. The developments on the ground were swift and forceful. This caused panic not just within the TPLF camp but more so in its Enablers. They began crying out for help and asked to be rescued. A meeting was arranged to be held in Pretoria on 24 October. The

fully disarmed and put in camps, there's no need for continued war. The implementation process must be monitored fully. Washington's principal preoccupation was to rescue the TPLF from the abyss and create a new condition for them to survive and gradually look for other potential options. But there is no need to be alarmed by this. It is good that an agreement has been made, and it should be implemented. Until the agreement is implemented, we cannot comment further. We will not prematurely say that it is all done as we know TPLF's track-record and its propensity to revert to its old tricks.

The new tactics we now see is bidding for time using lame excuses. To this end, they are peddling new claims alleging that "Eritrea hasn't pulled out [its forces... it's killing people and looting property ... there is the issue of Welkait... etc.".

The ploy, until yesterday, is to use flimsy pretexts to delay the implementation of the Agreement, and, to exploit the resultant uncertainty to concoct a new scheme. This is Washington's normative way of thinking, which is applied

The phrase 'GAME OVER' was not uttered casually. But like a bankrupt gambler who does not give up irrespective of his mounting losses and even incurs more debt in the hope of some gains, they launched the three disastrous offensives.

US military base in Djibouti sent an aircraft to Mekele to pick up TPLF's negotiators who were taken to Djibouti and then to Pretoria on another flight.

There, they were presented with a document and asked to sign it. It was all arranged by the clique in Washington. The AU envoys – Obasanjo, Uhuru – were there for cosmetic purposes. The whole scheme revolved around halting the military progress and advances of the counter-offensive in the field in Shire, Aksum, Adwa, Adigrat,... Mekelle etc. TPLF was severely downgraded and reduced to seeking rescue from its Enablers who obliged accordingly.

One can ask why the meeting was held in Pretoria and not in some other place; and why the subsequent meeting was held in Nairobi. Anyway, through the Djibouti operation, some members of the TPLF clique were taken to Kampala while others were taken to Pretoria to sign.

In short, the plan for halting the counter-offensive was implemented. But so long as they are

in other global affairs too. If you encounter an unfamiliar situation, you create chaos to buy time and then to refine and chart out new plans. This is conceivable only if there is going to be a fourth round. In reality, though, the situation will not deteriorate to that level; even if we assume that old habits die hard. The possibilities for reorganization (for TPLF) are indeed very slim. However, we will not make a premature judgement at this juncture; but we will talk about it at the right time.

We are going to closely monitor the implementation of the agreement. But generally, we can say that we are in a better position because of our endurance and the counter-offensive measures that were taken. We cannot say they will change their behavior; but the third round might have taught them a lesson. How many hundreds of thousands have died? How many have been injured? Where are they? This kind of disaster is not seen in any war. It is difficult to imagine the magnitude of the losses caused by the military adventure. It is a crime. After declaring an aimless war; plunging innocent people into a quagmire; causing huge loss of life



and property; squandering much opportunity; should not there be due accountability? What does this mean? (Instead of admitting their guilt), they are looking for cover and shifting the blame to others. This is not admissible. There has to be a day when this question has to be raised. Those that are responsible have to be held accountable. It is not just about the three rounds of TPLF's military adventures. The destruction and loss of opportunity meted out to the Eritrean people for 30 long years without accountability cannot be downplayed or shrugged off.

At the end of the day, it all boils down to the question I raised at the beginning. Why war? How can it be justified politically; even from their own perspective? Why are they conducting this war? What is the real rationale? What are the objectives that the implementers and their Enablers want to achieve? What could be its regional or global benefits? It is mind-boggling.

They have been operating through proxies to-date. The agenda and approach has not changed. The clique in Washington is not happy about the prevailing situation. So, it has to constantly create problems. If it can find an obedient servant like the TPLF clique, well and good. Otherwise, it has to look for an alternative. That has been their modus operandi. And as the global situation compounds their worries, will they ever be relieved from anguish?

A sane person would not accommodate the latest, third adventure, of the TPLF and its Enablers. It is possible for anyone to miscalculate. One may exaggerate his capacity and opportunities while undermining those of his opponent. But when you sustain very heavy losses, you

have to stop. The three rounds of military adventures should be seen within the context of the past thirty years as well as the future. The question is, will they change their behavior? Will they embrace peace following the implementation of the Pretoria and Nairobi agreements? We shall see. May be some will flee. After what has happened, there is no space in Tigray where they can play the same game. And there has not been any in the first place. They might have instilled a false sense of invincibility or some other reasons to galvanize support. The last episode provides, however, a big lesson to the people of Tigray who were forced into a costly war they did not need.

The destruction caused by the war cannot be compared to any event. That is why we are insisting on accountability. Also, in order to deter similar adventures from recurring in the future. We should see the events within a broader context; and not in isolation. When we look at the events, we wonder why they are not tired of doing it; they should not have transpired in the first place.

For eighty years, they have harassed and declared wars on us that we never wanted. Can we not be allowed to live in peace as a people? Of course, there is no reason for us to ask for their permission. But as a people, we have the right to live in peace. What is the argument for the successive wars they have been declaring against us ever since they made the statement that Eritrea wouldn't serve their strategic interests? Don't they learn from their incessant failures? Couldn't they change when the Cold War ended, and a unipolar world was created?

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In our perspective, the game that went on for a long time came to an end with the demise of TPLF. The phrase “Game over” was not uttered casually. But like a bankrupt gambler who does not give up irrespective of his growing losses and even incurs more debt in the hope of some gains, they launched the three disastrous offensives. And we took, with patience, the required counteroffensive measures. We cannot say similar attempts will not be made in the future because we cannot speak for them. But a big lesson has been learned from the disaster. Above all, we have gained a big experience as a result of working together with the Federal Forces as one team. We can say we have shared experiences that will be helpful in building regional peace. This is a big headache for them. They do not want to see peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia. They will not stay idle. They may try to trigger a conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia and use the resultant instability to foment other problems in the region. Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan would be potential targets in this destabilizing scheme.

The current situation poses a big challenge to them. I call it a “historic challenge”. For the past eighty years, they have exploited the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia under various ruses and arrangements. The war between Eritrea and Ethiopia has served them beyond measure. The habit that they have nurtured for eighty years cannot be expected to change overnight. The loss incurred because of this is unbelievable. And if you go back in time and look at the loss, it is unimaginable. That is why it is important to assess the cumulative damage inculcated in the three rounds of military adventures within the larger context. It is a big experience; and a big lesson has been learned.

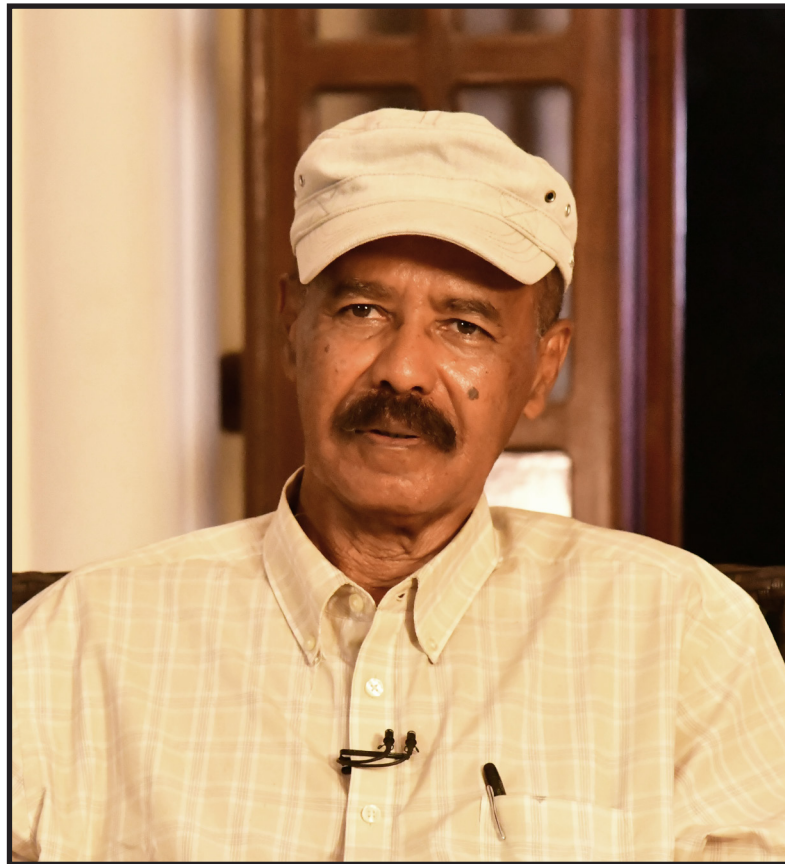
Q2. Still on the topic you have raised, there is no doubt that

the situation in Ethiopia and the policies of the US and its allies, which have been affecting negatively the international and regional situation in general, have played a devastating role for the past half century. Today, in a critical transition period, the Washington administration has developed a new National Security Strategy that it says will determine the course of events for the next ten years. What can we expect from this new strategy? What might be its global and regional implications?

A. One has to always return to the source of the issue and answer key questions – who is responsible for global insecurity dating back to the pre-Cold War era and up to this day? For what purposes? These recurring questions can help one decipher the recently published national security strategy document. Superficial changes in language aside, which make it seem as if they have corrected their ways, the core attitude has not changed. In fact, a careful reading reveals hidden messages buried between the lines, all serving a specific purpose. This begs the question whether they are even willing to change; whether their culture even allows them to change.

No matter what one thinks of the Cold War era, it was a time of contentious competition between the Soviet bloc and one ruled by them, and it carried with it specific characteristics. Why did this competition need to change? Why did this change then give rise to a hostile and reckless unipolar world? What global challenges did this in turn cause over the past 30 years? What are their plans for the future? The same questions apply to the current situation with Russia.

To answer all of these questions and to understand the core characteristics that underpin this attitude one must examine their [American] history. It can all be traced back to the same mentality that saw no issue with settling in



a foreign land after having wiped out an entire native population. In fact, if you look at the geographical makeup of the Americas, you cannot help but wonder about the native populations. We hear of “discoveries” in Canada and other places. You then ask, what happened to the population that was there before? You find that they were wiped out. The few that were left were then controlled. This is documented history. That is what they did everywhere they went during that time. It is the source of their supremacy.

They then resorted to importing enslaved people from Africa to develop the land. If you subtract the enormous number that drowned in the Atlantic and those that perished due to illnesses, you find that the remaining Black people living in the US today are the offspring of enslaved Africans. That is how they developed the country. The actual number of slave owners was relatively small compared to those that they enslaved but that is how they ruled the country, and all of this was considered absolutely normal to them.

Whether one is looking at the 21st, the 20th, or the 19th century, slavery, indentured labor, greed, and hegemony is at the core of the mentality that has ruled and continues to rule that system. It is, however, important to differentiate between the handful in power that have denied the world peace and stability and America as a whole, which includes the American population that bears no responsibility for these actions.

The events surrounding the end of the Cold War and the issues on the Soviet bloc’s side, which

eventually led to the fragmentation of the Soviet Union, unfolded in a way that gave one side a false sense of triumph. Instead of ceasing the opportunity to work for global peace and security, however, this “triumph” led them to design a unipolar world and proclaim that the world was now under their full control; that there would be no contest in any sector (economically, technologically, militarily, etc); and that anyone who dared to rise or challenge this view, this “might”, would be dealt with and contained. In effect, all of

As it relates to our region, the end of TPLF’s war, for example, does not mean that they will not try to find other ways to create conflict. The trend of the past proves that this mentality that thrives on global chaos will never rest.

this was a continuation of the same political culture that they used for centuries, leading one to conclude that they have always remained at the root of all global upheaval and instability.

Nothing has changed with the new strategy – whether viewed in relation to the Cold War or the outlook that gave rise to a unipolar world, the pillars remain the same. Of course, misleading words such as “competition” may have been added but the fact remains that fair competition remains an alien concept to them as they have always aimed at a zero-sum outcome. This new document simply aims to revive a unipolar world that they spent 30 years perfecting and that is now slowly but surely crumbling.

In reality, one cannot speak of

the European Union at this time. Ukraine is used as a means to revive this idea. Similarly, NATO is a very weak entity that they are trying to revive using this manufactured situation. Blocking Russia from growth in key areas, especially technologically and militarily, was viewed as a mechanism to ensure global hegemony. As such, using and propping up Crimea, Ukraine, and other areas as pretext, Russia remained their key target for containment over the past 30 years in the post-Cold War era.

Ironically, and what can only be referred to as a blundered gamble, they assumed that China could be used to their advantage as the country offered a cheap source of energy, labor, and basic key industries. They swiftly moved their industries to China with the singular aim of global hegemony. What they could not foresee was China’s confident rise over the past 30 years and overtaking them in many key sectors.

Any observer can predict the next 20 years for China in relation to America and America’s partners. This in turn is giving rise to a change in tune declaring China as the new “threat” and calling to contain China. Of course, none of this is revealed in the new strategy document – a document that highlights “competition” as a key pillar when in reality, as mentioned above, fair competition remains

alien to them.

Whether by design or default, this unprovoked hostility aimed at both – Russia and China – has moved these two countries closer to each other. We remain aware of this reality.

Of course, Ukraine remains a pretext with which to revive a unipolar world and eliminating any chance of other powers challenging that hegemony. The “global order” that they seek to uphold is one where they have no competition and one where they control all resources and countries.

The question then becomes will this attempt succeed? Does the current global trend allow a regression back to a unipolar world?

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In my opinion, this remains a dream. In fact, the new strategy document, although it reveals their inner whims and desires, proves that they are unable to properly read global events. It is a reflection of yet another blundered gamble. Unfortunately, this has resulted in further misadventures and the resulting chaos we continue to witness at this time. This also proves that they are not interested in calmly analyzing global trends or contributing to global peace and stability. At the core of their political culture is the rule of the jungle where force is used regardless of the cost paid by humanity.

We can also point to the fact that the situation created in our region closely relates to these global developments. Recall that our Independence coincided with the end of the Cold War and the hope at the time was that perhaps the world would be in a better position to support change. Alas, the past 30 years proved the opposite. They continued to use proxies, such as the TPLF clique and others,

During Trump's administration, we chose to engage believing that perhaps there was room to clarify our historical position and the unprovoked hostility and aggression against Eritrea lasting 80 years.

to create chaos everywhere. Of course, proxies never take the time to think twice and always obey commands in exchange for a few pennies – this is something previously admitted by TPLF cadres. As such, one can easily conclude, whether in our region or other parts of the world, the source of instability and chaos is one and the same.

As their unipolar strategy of the past 30 years slowly crumbles, the next consideration is to try and understand what effects will the current developments have on our region. Some claim that Ukraine will once again lead to triumph, and that Russia will be defeated – this of course is illogical. Then comes the containment of China – one has to ask if that is at all feasible or logical? They are of course trying different angles to fuel chaos in the Pacific by pitting one country against the other, but this too is doomed to fail and can only be viewed as the work of a losing gambler. One must also wonder about the direction America is heading, amassing a massive debt in the ballpark of 32 trillion, printing dollars to keep its economy afloat. What of

the military exhibition in Ukraine and the enormous cost that it is entailing?

As it relates to our region, the end of TPLF's war, for example, does not mean that they will not try to find other ways to create conflict. The trend of the past proves that this mentality that thrives on global chaos will never rest. In the end, however, all we can do is remain aware of all of these developments and remain cognizant of the possible challenges they may pose and prepare for any eventuality.

As is listed in the new strategy document, there are many manufactured reasons that they will use to target other countries for "containment". Whether Iran or North Korea or others, they will continue to make up the necessary pretext to push through their agenda. This unfortunately will never change.

The use of proxies, the desire to dominate the world and its resources, the strategy of divide and rule – one cannot expect any change as long as these remain the pillars underpinning their interaction with the world.

As a society that has borne the brunt of their hostility for 80 years, our desire for peace and stability remains unmatched in this region. We want to live in a time when war is a thing of the past. We want to achieve our development goals. We are aware that none of the plans we have come through desire alone. We have always committed to work hard. But how do we do this while facing forces that trip us at every corner and how do we do this while facing proxies that are all too willing to serve external agendas? All of these challenges require careful considerations. This also requires us to work in solidarity within our region and with other regions that promote peace and stability. This of course does not mean that we can ignore them and their ways. We cannot afford to. In fact, we need to fully understand what it is that they are planning and how it affects us all. The peace and stability that we want to promote and build between us and Ethiopia and our region in general must take this context into consideration. As such, the events of the past two years should not be viewed in a vacuum but as part of global trends and within the larger



global context.

Q3. Your Excellency, you have already mentioned hostilities that have been waged against Eritrea by the US administration for the last 80 years. Is there any hope for substantial changes in rectifying misguided US policies toward Eritrea in light of the so-called New Foreign Security Strategy?

A. A thorough reflection of history leads one to conclude that there would be no change in their policy. In fact, it is striking to witness such repeated futile ploys that in the end do not benefit anyone. It is really difficult to understand why they would continue to engage in juvenile acts that do not reflect their global status and the expectation that comes with their strength.

During Trump's administration, we chose to engage believing that perhaps there was room to clarify our historical position and the unprovoked hostility and aggression against Eritrea lasting 80 years. We sent a factual memorandum detailing every wrongdoing since 1941 and up to this day. This initiative was anchored on the belief that perhaps they could learn from repeated misguided policies. Trump responded by saying "I may not agree with everything you have said but I willing to work with you in the future". Again, we did not do this expecting change but to have our version of history recorded in their files.

It is worth noting that some powers did reflect on their past misdeeds and have shown interest in adjusting their ways. Unfortunately, at the time of decision making, these powers take a back seat and the ones that

dominate the mediums are the same powers that have repeatedly been on the wrong side of history, caring only about their own fantasies and agendas.

It is also worth noting that when we speak of unprovoked hostilities and wrongdoing, we do so not only in our name because this is not unique to us alone. We always recognize that others in Africa and other parts of the world have also been victims of these misadventures. In fact, we recognize that we may be at the very end of their list of targeted countries. Having understood all of this, it becomes difficult to expect major change in their policy or that they would ever shift from this dangerous track record.

Nevertheless, we must commit to sustainable peace and stability – and we must commit to do so in spite of their aggressions. This is something that requires relentless work and cannot be achieved simply by wishing for it or by trying to work with and correct them.

The challenges experienced in different regions of West, South and North Africa, in our region, as well as in the Middle East, are all similar. To understand the whole jigsaw, one must put all the individual pieces together after studying each piece separately. This would help explained that all the issues in our region – in the Red Sea, in the Horn of Africa, the Nile basin, and in the Gulf region – are the result of interference and manipulative exploits. As such, the situation in the entire region affects us all, collectively.

The different blocs within this region are all interdependent and the economic, development, and security sectors in each

all complement and affect one another. One cannot analyze issues in one area separately and if one makes an effort to understand the situation as a whole, one finds that all challenges lead straight back to powers that have an interest in sowing conflict. They may do this directly or indirectly through small or large proxies.

Having said this, we must remain alert at all times, continuously analyze the situation unfolding around us, prioritize our efforts based on the reality, and in the end, we must commit to not only withstand these challenges but to move past them and march forward.

The experience of Eritreans and this society's ability to withstand all challenges over the past 80 years is worth studying. Eritreans were able to achieve all that they have relying on their own resources and through peerless martyrdom and perseverance. These past 80 years are characterized by a unique sense of resilience – something left for history to bare witness. We need to maintain this history of resistance and resilience, which is why it is important for us to remain alert to their conspiracies and strategies.

This of course leads to a new set of questions – what will be the end of the situation that has been witnessed in Ukraine? What would be the fate of fronts they have been creating in other locations? How are they planning to manage? How will their plans against rising powers pan out? What would they gain from such acts? All of this is assuming there would be no change in their strategic plans and ideologies.

Continued on page 6

INTERVIEW OF PRESIDENT ISAIAS AFWERKI WITH NATIONAL ...

Continued from page 5

It therefore comes as no surprise to now see last ditch efforts aimed at attracting Africa. Summits have been organized in Europe and America. Africa-America summits have been organized by the clique in Washington. All of this is a reaction to the rising levels of awareness and resistance. It is a last ditch effort to try and undo the tide of resistance. Such attempts have also been exercises to gain the hearts and minds of the people in the Gulf region. But this too is to no avail. Even parties that were previously allies during the Cold War have become increasingly fed up by such acts, saying enough is enough. Countries in the Global South will once and for all say “no hegemony.” Ironically, the powers of domination have begun to understand the trends, which is why they have been looking for alternatives and thus sending delegations to Africa. They are doing all this to appease people and to try and register some gains. But it is too late. No one is fooled by their ploys any more. No one is fooled by these attempts while people’s lives have been destroyed by these same powers.

NATO was haphazardly revived and restructured. It is important to note that this was not the result of a planned or orderly decision but rather in reaction to new and unforeseen events that they deemed as threats. Ukraine was used as the necessary pretext for this and is providing an excuse for their objectives. The issue of Sweden and Finland joining or not joining NATO is just part and parcel of the disorderly attempt to expand NATO’s size and to give life to the already dead organization. NATO’s existence is now being questioned. The European Union itself does not exist and it is no longer functional. What is being disseminated through media outlets is repeated ad nauseam with no new agenda.

The silver lining in all of this is that the unipolar world order that they have been preaching about and protecting for the past 30 years has been dismantled and this has paved the way for a better global situation. Of course, it would not be realistic to imagine drastic change overnight or even within a year or two but the trend is leading towards a better future.

This will cause spasms on their end, especially when they realize that the powers that they have tried to control and contain are now out of their reach. They may then try to design new plans but it would be too late. The path they are currently on is literally driving them to the edge of the cliff.

The ideology that kept the Cold War afloat has expired. They then spent the next 30 years destabilizing the world. These efforts may continue in the future. What matters at this point is what will we do in such circumstances? What will other partners who have also suffered from such hostilities do? What can we do collectively to deter such scenarios? Because, again, we cannot expect them to change their ways as it unfortunately seems to be a chronic illness that has no remedy.

Q4. Mr. President, you have repeatedly mentioned that the global order has been subjugated by powers guided by greed and dominance. But there has been a growing awareness in the countries of the Global South and demands for a new and balanced international order. What are the prospects of such developments and what is Eritrea’s stance toward such a scenario?

A. As mentioned earlier, the hostility and efforts to control, stifle and contain both Russia and China have resulted in these two powers moving towards one another and working closely together. This has not crystallized to assume meaningful institutional form, but still remains a reactive and natural response or trend than can grow with time. We then need to examine what the overall developments in China, Russia, India and other small countries of the world would look like. What is yet not clear, for example, is whether Japan is content or not with the policies of the clique in Washington. Would it benefit from continuous confrontation within that neighborhood? Would the confrontation between South and North Korea continue with the same momentum? The alliance that has been attempted to be fostered among Japan, South Korea, and India with Australia’s backing is not accepted by the region.

It is important to note that the demands for peace and stability among the people of the Global South is growing. It would be wrong to assume that ordinary people cannot read global trends and cannot understand larger geostrategic maneuverings. Unfortunately, the powers engaged in manufacturing chaos are not interested in paying attention to these demands and the fact that these developments have generated wider and increased awareness and people from all corners of the world are saying enough is enough.

After the end of the Cold War, the powers that promoted containment were actively engaged in promoting

It therefore comes as no surprise to now see last ditch efforts aimed at attracting Africa.

terrorism and supporting terrorist organizations. In fact, terrorist organizations that rose in the past 30 years are directly and indirectly linked to these powers of dominance and the proponents of the unipolar world order. The crisis and destruction that has been witnessed everywhere, including in our region, is the result of these antics. The so-called fight against terrorism was insincere and a tool for deception. Terrorism was created by them. Apart from the terrorist attack of 9/11, the Global South has been the victim of such intimidations. Hunger was another tool worsened

by endless crises created by such malicious policies. This part of the world has been greatly affected by the global strategy of the clique in Washington.

Africa has a population of 1.2 billion and the situation may become even more complicated with an increase in population and with ever intensifying interventions and turbulences created by these external forces. The situation in Latin America is similar.

In short, the Global South has been marginalized and the challenges made more complicated by

interference and misguided policies.

As a result of and in reaction to these developments, awareness is increasing and populations in the Global South are continuously questioning the reasons for their underdevelopment, worsening living standards and the numerous other challenges they have been facing. They have been demanding a new global order. It is a natural outcome of years of suffering. It is also expected that this awareness will give rise to growing resistance in the Global South in the coming decade or two. We are literally left with no other choice but to resist and to find ways and mechanisms of eliminating the obstacles that stand in our way to our development, peace and stability.

NEWS BRIEF

EYE SURGERY TO OVER 200 NATIONALS IN ADI-KEIH

Ms. Eden Tezare, head of eye treatment in Adi-Keih hospital, reported that from 1 to 8 February eye surgery has been conducted on 209 nationals.

According to Ms. Eden cataract and trachoma surgery has been carried out to patients from the sub-zones of Adi-Keih, Tserona, Senafe, Segeneity and Mai-Aini.

Dr. Tsegazeab Kiflezghi, Medical Director of the hospital, said the eye surgery campaign has been carried out by professionals from the non-communicable diseases control unit in the Southern Region and the sub-zone.

Dr. Tsegazeab noted that similar eye surgery campaign has been carried out in October and December of 2022 in Segeneity sub-zone.

EFFORT TO REDUCE NEW HIV/AIDS INFECTION

The Ministry of Health branch in the Central Region, reported that strong effort is being made to reduce new HIV/AIDS infection by 10%.

Mr. Saleh Mohammed, coordinator of the program, said that the plan includes reducing death due to HIV/AIDS by 15%, increasing the distribution of retroviral medicine by 95% as well as reducing new HIV/AIDS infection to zero level.

Mr. Saleh went on to say that out of the 24 thousand 438 citizens diagnosed for HIV/AIDS 98, that means 0.4%, of them have been found infected by the disease and that compared to that of 2021 has significantly been reduced.

Mr. Saleh further noted that out of the 13 thousand 613 pregnant women diagnosed 12, 0.09%, have been found infected by the disease and have begun taking the retroviral medicine.

Mr. Saleh also called on the public to visit health facilities to know their health condition.

TRAINING ON PREPARATION OF NATURAL FERTILIZERS

69 exemplary farmers in Segeneity sub-zone, Southern Region, received training on preparation of compost natural fertilizers and pesticides.

The theoretical and practical training included technique of preparation of liquid and solid natural fertilizer and pesticides as well as method of their application.

Calling for avoiding chemical fertilizers and pesticides that have negative consequence on soil productiveness and on human and vegetables health, Mr. Meharena Bereke, organizer of the training program, reminded the trainees to practice natural fertilizer that is available in their area.

The trainees on their part said that the training program will have significant contribution in the development of their agricultural activities.

SpotLight

Language: Vehicle of Communication and Repository of Heritage

Dr. Fikrejesus Amahazion

On February 21st, countries around the world will come together to observe International Mother Language Day (IMLD). IMLD was proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 1999, with the idea being the initiative of Bangladesh. Observed annually ever since, IMLD helps to promote linguistic and cultural diversity, celebrate multilingualism, and raise awareness of the critical importance of protecting languages.

The multidimensional importance of language

On a basic level, language is a vehicle for our active participation in the surrounding community and cultural life, and it is critical to our overall survival. Moreover, the freedom to communicate and express ourselves through language is recognized as a fundamental human right. United Nations Resolution A/RES/61/266, adopted by the General Assembly on 16 May 2007, called upon Member States, “to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world”, while linguistic rights are enshrined within a broad array of regional and international rights documents and instruments.

Although estimates vary, it is believed that there are approximately 6,700-7,000 languages spoken around the world. However, languages have been disappearing at an alarmingly rapid rate and a large number are threatened with extinction. (Generally, the most endangered languages are spoken by minority communities and marginalized peoples.) What is more, within the fast-changing, increasingly important digital world, it is estimated that less than a hundred languages are used.

Overall, these are troubling developments. In addition to the points outlined above, languages remain a key element of culture and they play a role in the formation of one’s identity. Languages allow people to keep hold of and pass on the memories, traditions, and ways of thinking that their languages represent. When a

language disappears, it takes with it unique modes of thinking or expression and an entire cultural and intellectual heritage.

Another important dimension of language is its close connection to education, development, and inclusive societies. According to the United Nations, globally 40 percent of the world’s population does not have access to an education in a language that they speak or understand, which can have profound implications for learning and achievement (especially for early childhood education). The Global Partnership for Education, a global multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform that aims to strengthen education systems in developing countries, states, “It’s an undisputable fact that children learn better if they understand the language of instruction.” Multilingual education based on one’s mother tongue helps facilitate access to and inclusion in learning for communities or population groups that speak non-dominant languages, languages of minority groups, and indigenous languages.

As a final point, protecting and preserving languages, along with promoting multilingualism, can also be powerfully effective tools for cultivating peace and fostering tolerance, understanding, and respect for others.

Considering language closer to home

Eritrea is blessed with a unique blend of beautiful cultures and rich cultural diversity. It is home to a colorful array of ethnolinguistic groups – nine in total – which speak a diverse range of languages. This great diversity is central to Eritrea’s national identity and is deeply cherished as one of its greatest assets and strengths.

Prior to Eritrea’s independence, a range of language policies were implemented by ruling powers. For example, at one point Amharic, the language of the occupying forces, was made the official language, while widely spoken local languages, such as Tigrigna, were banned. However, after achieving independence, and consistent with the EPLF’s long-standing principles and approach during the protracted armed struggle,



Eritrea has pursued a pluralistic language policy and approach, recognizing and embracing all languages as equal. There is no special status or distinction for any particular language, with all being appreciated for their substantive inherent value and contributions to the country’s rich, unique cultural tapestry.

Notwithstanding a range of challenges, this policy approach has been an important mechanism for protecting human rights and preserving Eritrea’s diversity, culture, values, and traditional or indigenous knowledge systems. Furthermore, it reflects the country’s strong commitment to social justice, prohibiting discrimination, and fostering peace, tolerance, and respect for others. This latter point is something of great significance and worth noting, especially within the context of a region and wider global community that historically has been – and continues to be – shrouded by the dark horrors of ethnic-related strife and conflict.

In addition to media and public life, one of the areas that most powerfully reflects some

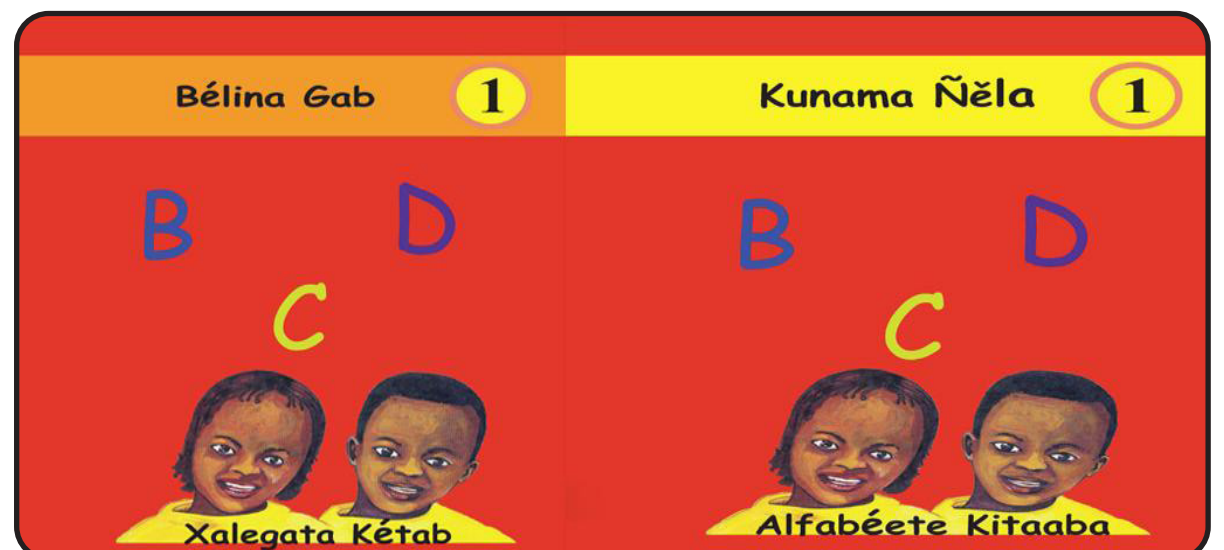
of the multilayered benefits of Eritrea’s pluralistic language policy approach is education. Since independence, Eritrea has made considerable strides within this sector, particularly in terms of expansion in enrolments and increases in literacy. (Enrolment at all levels was 619,180 in 2020/21, up from 346,266 in 1997/98, while youth literacy has risen to approximately 93 percent.) Although these improvements have been driven by a multitude of factors, one contributing element has been Eritrea’s mother language policy.

Recognizing the benefits of mother language instruction, Eritrea has remained committed to ensuring that all children receive their elementary education in their mother language. Developed and implemented by the Ministry of Education, the policy mandates multilingual education based on the mother language from pre-primary until the end of elementary level, when other languages are gradually introduced and integrated into the teaching-learning process. This approach enables learners whose mother tongue is different from

the language of instruction to bridge the gap between home and school, to discover and engage with the school environment in a familiar language, and thus, learn faster and better.

In recent years, in close cooperation with global partners, Eritrea has trained numerous teachers nationwide on mother language education to enhance their capacity and competencies, while also printing and distributing over one million textbooks and teachers’ guides in nine languages. Furthermore, a public language committee for the country’s various indigenous languages has been established, aiming to ensure the effective application of mother language instruction and raising public awareness about the importance of mother language learning.

Ultimately, the mother language policy has helped to increase access and ensure inclusive, quality education for all, particularly through reducing repetition and dropout rates, improving academic results, fluency, and literacy, and leading to greater family and community involvement.



OPINION

Respecting and appreciating Diversity: A guarantee for Shared Prosperity

Simon Weldemichael

ERi-TV has recently aired a Chinese couple's (members of a medial team) wedding ceremony performed according to an Eritrean tradition. During the event, the couple and their Chinese colleagues expressed their respect and appreciation for the culture of the Eritrean people.

Marriage, an occasion when a man and a woman make commitment to each other to establish a family, is one of the most highly

treasured social institutions in the Eritrean society. As the institutions of family and marriage are fundamental to the stability and survival of the society, the Eritrean society has developed well-established norms to govern the relationship between couples and their respective extended families. The nine ethnic groups of Eritrea practiced a diverse marriage ceremony but in all cases marriage marks a significant transition from one social category to another. Marriage is viewed as a community activity that involves all members of the community.

As part of the cooperation between Eritrea and China, many Chinese health professionals are coming to Eritrea to give healthcare services. China dispatched its first medical team to Eritrea in September 1997 and since then it has successively dispatched medical teams to Eritrea. This year, in addition to their usual contribution in the health sector by giving healthcare services and transferring knowledge to Eritrean medical staff, members of the Chinese medical team have been active in strengthening the cultural ties between Eritrean and Chinese people.

Two members of the Chinese medical team have had a wedding ceremony that was performed according to an Eritrean tradition

to express their deep respect and appreciation for the Eritrean culture. Ms. Jiao Jiangli, the bride who is working at Halibet Hospital as a specialist in anesthesia, said: "We've worked in Eritrea almost for a year. For us, Eritrea is our second home. We want a special memory here in Eritrea. We will return to China after one month. It's something special for us to celebrate our wedding with Eritreans." Dr. Jiao

Yaglong, the groom who works as a bone and muscle surgeon, on his part, said: "I've loved

Eritrea from the moment I arrived in the country because Eritrea is unique in many respects. I love the people and its culture. For the last one year I've worked with different colleagues and patients. As indicated by my wife, Eritrea is my second home. I have best memories through marriage ceremony. Before we came to Eritrea, we bought traditional Chinese clothes but later we bought Eritrea's traditional clothes and celebrated our marriage according to the tradition of Eritrea."

In terms of culture Eritreans and Chinese people have a lot in common. According to the marriage tradition in the Eritrean society, the groom's family would first visit the bride's family to officially announce their interest in marrying their daughter. But since Ms. Jiao Jiangli's (the bride) family are not in Eritrea, Dr. Jian Ligo, leader of the Chinese medical team in Eritrea, assumed the role of the father of the bride. Ms. Jiao Jiangli had Eritrean friends who became her maids of honour.

Dr. Mihreatab Yemane, bone and muscle surgeon at Halibet Hospital and Dr. Jiao Yaglong's best man, said he was happy because of the couple's decision to have their marriage in Eritrea, which is an expression of their appreciation for the Eritrean culture. The couple hosted their guests by preparing Eritrean food

and danced the Eritrean way to Eritrean wedding music.

Ms. Jiao Jiangli was adorned by the traditional Eritrean wedding dress, Zurya, and jewelry. When asked about the attire, she said it was very nice. Her message of friendship and appreciation has been sent through the wearing of the Eritrean traditional dress. The exchange of dress, language and other elements of culture among people of different nations is significant in fostering mutual understanding. It also helps to deal with ethnocentrism and stereotyping. Cultural appreciation paves the way to mutual exchange of culture and development of bilateral relations. Respect and appreciation for diversity is the requirement for shared prosperity.

The couple have elaborated their impressions of the wedding ceremony. Dr. Jiao said, "There

might be differences between the Chinese and Eritrean marriage. But I am impressed by the culture and tradition of Eritrea. I want to experience and be part of it. When we were dancing in the middle with many of my friends and colleagues, people were taking photos. In Eritrea the marriage day is a festive day full of ululation, dancing and other performances." Ms. Jiao said, "Many people accompanied us in the dancing. I was impressed. In China, there is no dancing on the wedding day. This makes me happy."

The Chinese are known for their adaptability to new situations and new cultures. Like their colleagues the newlywed didn't have any problem to adapt to life in Eritrea. The hospitality of the Eritrean people influences foreign citizens to have a positive attitude toward Eritrea. Dr. Jiao Yaglong had this to

say about Eritrea and Eritreans: "I've communicated with many friends and colleagues during my stay in Eritrea. I have developed a feeling of friendship with my Eritrean colleagues. I love their hospitality, honesty and generosity. I feel safe in this country. On my daily lives I talk about the culture of the Eritrean people. The love and peace of Eritrea comes into my heart frequently."

Respecting and appreciating cultural diversity is a demonstration of high level of awareness and a guarantee for mutual understanding and collective strength. Respecting and appreciating cultural diversity prevents cultural differences from separating human beings from one another. And the Chinese medical team, in addition to their role as medical workers, are in their own way serving as mediators for cross cultural understanding between the Eritrean and Chinese people.



Editorial:
The Follies of US
"Containment Policy"

International news has been dominated of late by a high-pitched acrimony between Washington and Beijing. The purported trigger-point was the rather massive unmanned airship or Balloon from China that floated over US airspace at over 60,000ft. for a number of days.

The Chinese side maintained from the outset that the airship was a "civilian aircraft with limited self-steering capability that entered US airspace unintentionally due to force majeure".

Beijing further underlined that the Balloon and its payload were exclusively "designed for meteorological data collection and research with no sinister military capability or threat" against the national security of any country.

However, the interpretations and perspectives of Washington – at least in terms of what was officially conveyed to the public – was widely at variance with these assertions. The US rejected China's diplomatic

demarche describing the huge civilian airship as a "Spy Balloon" and its intrusion into US airspace as "an affront to US sovereignty and international law".

And amid this row, the US upped the ante by shooting down the Balloon as it drifted to, and hovered over, the US Atlantic coast by an F-22 fighter equipped with AIM-six Sidewinder, Missiles. (Its debris fell six nautical miles off the US coast).

The critical discourse here is not about the almost routine, surreptitious, practices of major powers to deploy sophisticated equipment and/or cyber technology for the purposes of eavesdropping and intelligence gathering. It is not also about the provisions of international law on sovereignty of States in all its dimensions and manifestations.

The real discourse is on the precedence, and the spiral of chain reaction, that this saga may portend. In a nutshell, whether the encounter is an isolated and anomalous episode;

or whether it, in fact, constitutes the tip of the iceberg in a destabilizing climate of rivalry and confrontation that is essentially driven by US dogged policy of reviving the defunct uni-polar world order.

And that is the crux of the matter.

As explicitly expounded in the latest US National Security Strategic document, the US considers the current decade as the critical inflection point which will determine global dominance. The corollary of this position is the pursuit of its "containment policy", especially against China, with higher and confrontational vigour.

In this context, the "Spy Balloon" saga may be a harbinger of potentially more dangerous incidents with far-reaching consequences to global peace and security. In this sense, it transcends issues of controversy between two powers to draw the attention and moral voice of our global community.