



**Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations
New York**

**LEAKED ETHIOPIA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY MEMO
EXPOSES ITS DESTABILIZING POLICY AGAINST
ERITREA
(EXCERPTS)**

2 July 2014

LEAKED MEMO REVEALS ETHIOPIA'S DESTABILIZATION POLICY AGAINST ERITREA

The Ethiopian State Minister for Foreign Affairs **Ambassador Berhane Gebrekirostos** on 20 February 2014 (13 yekatit 2006) sent a **Memo in Amharic** to all Ethiopian Diplomatic Missions, with specific **Instructions and Action Plans** on how to Destabilize and Economically and Militarily weaken Eritrea. Read the full text of the Amharic leaked memo: <http://shabait.com/news/local-news/16454-misdemeanor-perpetrated-against-eritrea-through-unjust-un-sanctions-by-ethiopian-regime-and-co-conspirators-unraveled-causes-worries->

The Leaked Memo, among other things, clearly exposes:-

- a. Ethiopia's purported agenda of "weakening and destabilizing Eritrea" and its diversionary tactics to perpetuate its occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories including the town of Badme;
- b. Ethiopian government's fear over the increasing awareness of the international community about the positive and the true content of Eritrea's economic and regional integration policies;
- c. On how to present the sanction as an IGAD initiative so that it cannot be seen as an Ethiopian request; and to influence the intelligence agencies of the countries in the region so that they can echo Ethiopia's baseless assertions;
- d. On how Ethiopia's occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories, including the town of Badme, can be avoided from being considered as the root cause of instability in the Horn of Africa;
- e. On who in the US government has been playing a leading and crucial role on sanctioning and "marginalizing" Eritrea;
- f. On how the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group (SEMG) was fed false information by Ethiopian intelligence and military establishments and is being manipulated and used to disseminate baseless accusations and disinformation about Eritrea;
- g. On what actions and measures Ethiopian diplomats must take in order to defend the credibility of SEMG as well as to maintain and enhance their amicable relationship with SEMG;

Excerpts from the Leaked Memo:

I. On Eritrea's Diplomatic engagement and the need for a New Diplomatic Approach

Ethiopia was instrumental in the imposition of sanctions on Eritrea. We have cooperated with members of IGAD; and, have been at the forefront of the efforts at the African Union and the United Nations. However, after the sanctions were adopted, we did not take full ownership of the issue and relentlessly work to ensure its full implementation. In light of Eritrea's ongoing diplomatic activities to lift the

sanctions, **if we don't work vigorously and fail to ensure the strengthening and continuity of the sanctions, then all our past efforts to isolate and weaken Eritrea will be in vein. Therefore, there is a need to implement a "new approach" in our diplomatic activities.**

Eritrea is actively engaged with the international community. President Isaias visited Kenya and Sudan. During President Kenyatta's inauguration, he met with the Presidents of South Sudan, Tanzania and D.R. Congo. The Eritrean Presidential Advisor Mr. Yemane Gebrab met in Paris with the Chairman of the Sanctions Committee (Permanent Representative of Korea) and the Monitoring Group. The UN officials, OCHA and UNDP, visited Eritrea and in unprecedented manner the Organization is showing keenness to cooperate with Eritrea, including on political matters. **All these developments could harm and affect the sanctions imposed on Eritrea.**

Today, some are arguing that the Eritrean government is showing interest to engage the international community, and that the sanctions are hurting the population not the government. Such views have been expressed by the former US Assistant Secretary for Africa, Herman Cohen, and similar views are entertained in the U.S. Congress and the Council for Foreign Relations. **Many countries, especially the developing ones, are against imposing sanctions on developing countries.** Moreover, the support Eritrea received during the presentation of its national report under UPR in Geneva cannot be underestimated. **Uganda spoke in support of Eritrea during UPR presentation, which must be closely observed.**

The sanctions which have at the least helped marginalize Eritrea are being challenged. The success of Eritrea's ongoing diplomatic activities to lift the sanctions can have serious repercussions. However, as long as the US, the penholder, hasn't changed its position, there is no danger of the sanctions being lifted. The possibility that the sanctions can be further watered down and become tooth-less should not rule-out.

Therefore, we must approach Embassies and International Organizations in Addis Ababa; the UN Secretariat, and Ministries of Foreign Affairs in the relevant countries to expose/convince that Eritrea's current diplomatic activity is not a sign of real behavioural change but a deceptive charm offensive for the sanction to be lifted. We must actively lobby for the sanctions not to be lifted, and push for its full implementation and further strengthening.

II. On IGAD:

The imposition of sanctions on Eritrea materialised due to the unity that existed within IGAD. If the unity of IGAD is eroded, **the matter will be seen as an issue between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and the international community could lean towards accepting Eritrea's narrative that the root cause of all the problems is the Border Issue.** We have to strengthen our effort to prevent this from happening. **The challenge is portraying our activities against Eritrea as an IGAD initiative. This must be taken as a top priority.**

In this regard:

- a. we must work with Djibouti and Kenya to strengthen the unity within IGAD; and,
- b. we must constantly provide information to the security and intelligence agencies of the countries of the region so that they will understand and explain Eritrea's destabilizing role in the region.

III. On SEMG

The Reports of the SEMG has been key in ensuring the continuity as well as the strengthening of the sanctions against Eritrea. **But as of late the integrity of the SEMG and the credibility of its reports are being challenged by many countries.** Eritrea in particular has ridiculed the reports of the Group. **Some members of the Security Council such as Russia and Pakistan labelled the report 'unbalanced'. Italy, Norway, Kenya and Somalia who were mentioned in the report also criticized the Group. The Group's reports exposed the rampant corruption in the Somali Government and the involvement of the Kenyan soldiers in the charcoal trade in Kismayo.** The Somali Government wrote a letter to the UNSG requesting the chair of the group to be fired, while Kenya declared members of the Group *persona-non-grata* and denied frequent requests for an entry visa to one of the members. **These situations coupled with Eritrea's consistent assertion that the group lacks neutrality and is an instrument of Ethiopia and U.S. could hurt the credibility the Group.**

We must:-

- a. facilitate the resolution of the misunderstandings the group has with Kenya and Somalia,
- b. provide information to the SEMG on Eritrea's violations of the sanctions and make sure the information is included in the reports of the Group presented to the UNSC,
- c. lobby member states of the UNSC to accept the reports of the SEMG as credible,
- d. lobby members of the UNSC to accept the recommendations of the SEMG on strengthening the sanctions; and,
- e. obtain advance copies of the reports of the SEMG and the UN Secretary-General on the implementation of the sanctions;
- f. develop close relations with the relevant departments in the UN Secretariat in order to ensure that the reports are in line with our position, or at least don't hurt our position.

IV. On the Role of the UN Security Council Members, in particular the US:

The P3 Countries have been supportive of the sanctions against Eritrea. **The United States played a crucial role in the adoption of UNSC resolutions 1907 and 2023. The former U.S. Permanent Representative to UN, Ambassador Susan Rice, was instrumental in adopting the resolutions.** The current US Permanent Representative, **Ambassador Samantha Power, may not be as strong on Eritrea. But since Ambassador Susan Rice is serving as the National Security Advisor of**

President Obama, she will ensure the continuation of U.S's policy of sanctioning Eritrea.

United Kingdom has supported the sanctions in the past, and has taken positions similar to that of the U.S. Meetings with the UK Permanent Representative, has confirmed that the UK will not change its position regarding the sanctions against Eritrea or the SEMG.

France has supported the imposition of sanctions against Eritrea, primarily due to the conflict with Djibouti.

Russia while supporting the first resolution, in the second resolution not only abstained but has also worked with China and **South Africa** to water-down the resolution. The position Russia undertook with regards to the second resolution is not related to its relations with Ethiopia but the condition in the Council after Libya and Côte d'Ivoire. Our country has historical relations with Russia since the Soviet Union, and it is our view that Russia will not support the lifting of sanctions against Eritrea, but if Eritrea's efforts to lift sanction get the support of Russia in light of the existing confrontation with P3 in the Council then our diplomatic activities will face great danger.

China asserts that it opposes sanctions in principle, in reality it has economic and other interests with Eritrea, thus doesn't want to offend Eritrea. **China opposed the listing of Eritrea's military and political leaders by the Council as well as the measures to control the finances of the mining companies that are investing in Eritrea.** We must convince Chinese government that there is no linkage between the sanctions regime and the Ethiopia and Eritrea border issue. **If Eritrea's efforts at engaging the international community continues and its efforts to lift the sanctions receive the support of Russia and China, the permanent members of the UNSC could be divided and our past efforts will be in vein.**

Nigeria will support our efforts to ensure the implementation and strengthening of the sanctions. Even though the Eritrean president has participated in its Independence Day celebration in 2011, we don't believe **Chad** will be supportive of Eritrea's effort to lift the sanctions. **Rwanda** hasn't been forthcoming in providing information regarding Eritrea. However, **if Eritrea gets the support of one African member in the UNSC, it could cause serious damage to the sanctions.**

Lithuania has a good relationship with the **US** and as a member of the **European Union** it tends to implement the common position of the Union. We believe that this could be helpful in our effort to implement and strengthen the sanctions on Eritrea. We do not believe it will have a strong role in supporting our activities to maintain and strengthen the sanctions imposed on Eritrea, but it won't take actions that damage Ethiopia's position.

Argentina and **Luxemburg** have no meaningful participation or contribution in the UNSC.

Australia and **South Korea** tends take positions similar to that of the **US**.

Jordan has assigned non-resident Ambassador to Eritrea. It is important to approach Jordan and explain the need to maintain and implement the sanctions imposed on Eritrea.

Chile, during its previous membership of UNSC, had expressed its opinion concerning the border issue between Eritrea and Ethiopia. It has stated that in accordance to international law Eritrea has a legitimate demand and legal case. We have to work closely with Chile to make the country understand our position and provide support for the maintenance and implementations of the sanctions imposed on Eritrea.

In this context, we must:-

- a. *actively work to convince members of the Council that there is no real change of behaviour from Eritrea and that they must expedite the implementation of the "due diligence" guidelines to control Eritrea's revenues from the mining,*
- b. *work with the SEMG, to convince members states of the UNSC to expedite the adoption of due diligence guidelines to control the money Eritrea gets from the mining sector,*
- c. *check the status on the listing of Eritrean officials by the UNSC and provide ideas on the way forward,*
- d. *request countries to enact laws and take administrative measures to tighten their control on Eritrea's use of the Diaspora tax; and*
- e. *urge member states to submit reports on the implementation of the sanctions*

Eritrea's Conclusion and Observations on the Leaked Document

The Leaked Document from the State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia illustrates without a shred of doubt that Ethiopia remains wedded to a dangerous and myopic strategy of perpetual destabilisation and demonization of Eritrea. Ethiopia is not, apparently, interested in respecting its treaty obligations and international law as well as cultivating good neighbourly ties with Eritrea for the benefits of both peoples and for the enhancement of peace and security in the wider Horn of Africa region.

Ethiopia's politics is indeed dominated by a zero-sum game and by subterfuges and subtle tools of disinformation and manipulation to advance its policy of destabilisation and confrontation. Indeed, Ethiopia has gone to extreme lengths and employed unorthodox methods in pursuit of these objectives. In this vein, for the last seven years Ethiopia has shown reluctance to relinquish its chairmanship of IGAD in order to abuse its position to block Eritrea's reactivation of its lawful membership and participation in this regional organisation. In Ethiopia's short-sighted view, this would imbue it with added leverage to railroad unwarranted resolutions against Eritrea.

Ethiopia's manoeuvrings, however malicious, would not have amounted to anything without the vigorous support and collusion of the United States Government. The fact is Ethiopia has neither a regional or global clout to defy international law or ram through unwarranted sanctions against Eritrea without the financial, diplomatic, and political support of the United States. To blame or give credit to Ethiopia would be to miss the point.

Therefore, it is about time that the unjust and illegal sanction against Eritrea is lifted unconditionally and without any delay. Ethiopia must also be urged to respect its treaty obligations and to withdraw from the sovereign Eritrean territories, including the town of Badme.

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