



ERITREAN GLOBAL ACTION FOR JUSTICE

## Press Release

17 June 2016

### **Peaceful Mass Demonstration 21 June 2016 Geneva –Denouncing COI Report**

Eritreans and friends of Eritrea in Europe and the rest of the globe will hold a mass rally in Geneva, Switzerland on Tuesday, June 21, 2016, to protest against the latest sickening report of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea, a three-man panel that has never set foot in the country and has little direct knowledge of its people and culture.

The Peaceful Rally will congregate from 8:00 AM in Parc des Croppettes, Rue de Montbrillant 20, 1201 Geneva and will march to UN Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva at 12:00 AM and will complete the rally at 4:30 PM. The protest is expected to draw thousands of Eritrean Europeans, friends of Eritrea, as well as Eritreans from outside of the continent.

Eritreans and Friends of Eritrea are united in their outrage against the sickening set of charges by the Commission of Inquiry--charges that range from enslavement to rape, from killings to crimes since 1991. This is part of an insidious “regime change” well-funded agenda the COI has been pushing under the veil of human rights. For example, the “enslavement” charge is a futile attempt the Commission and its enablers to delegitimize Eritrean’s organs of defense to help the Ethiopian minority regime change the balance of forces in the Horn of Africa.

The Eritrean people categorically and unequivocally reject the politically motivated Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea (COIE) and the Special Rapporteur (SR) on the Human Rights Situation in Eritrea.

We also condemn the recent military attack by the regime in Ethiopia against sovereign Eritrean nation and call upon the UNSC to take the necessary and immediate steps to condemn the unwarranted military attack and to request Ethiopia to abide by the final and binding agreement signed by the government of Eritrea and Ethiopia.

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## **Back Ground Information**

The resolution and the appointment of the special rapporteur and establishment of the COIE are a continuation of an orchestrated 16-year long political campaign that seeks to demonize and delegitimize Eritrea in the international arena and erode the final and binding Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commissions delimitation and demarcation decisions.

We believe the resolution on Eritrea is discriminatory from start to finish towards the people and the nation of Eritrea. The report is prompted, co-authored and sponsored by Eritrea's arch enemy Ethiopia and makes it inherently unfair and partial. The mandate of the report had the support of individuals who have a long record of making anti-Eritrea statements in the past, undermines the credibility, impartiality and integrity of reports produced. The mandate, therefore, is inherently discriminatory, and must be annulled.

As reflected in reports to the UN Human Right Council, the discriminatory acts include political bias in the mandate and the appointment of commissioners, the secrecy that surrounds the investigation, the lack of information on the backgrounds and professional capabilities of the researchers and consultants, an apparent absence of expertise on Eritrea, its history and reality, and reliance on unqualified and highly politicized sources. These acts indicates a high probability of unverifiable allegations, distortions of fact and international law, and selective omissions, producing documents that are exploited in political, academic, media and legal frameworks, including submissions to the UN Human Rights Council

The SR and COIE reports ignored central dimensions such as Ethiopia's 16-year long occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories, the illegal and unjust sanctions imposed against the State of Eritrea, also engineered by Ethiopia and its handlers. Due to this and other blatant omissions, it was impossible for the SR and COIE to produce accurate and credible description and analysis of events in Eritrea. These fundamental failures characterized the Reports which were based on false premises and allegations by dubious individuals and groups, and asylum seekers and refugees.

Also the three person panel COI have blatantly chose to ignore written submission of more than 42,000 personal testimonies of Eritreans and non-Eritrean nationals based on the invitation for submission it put forward and chose to base its report on eight hundred anonymous asylum seekers who are mainly currently residing in refugee camps in Ethiopia.



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Sadly and predictably the regime in Ethiopia has started a fresh military attack on sovereign nation of Eritrea on 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 where sever casualties and loss of life has occurred. We call the world community and especially the UNSC to condemn the unwarranted attack immediately.

Eritreans across the world are demonstrating on 21 June 2016 to urge the UN Human Rights Council to reject the findings and terminate its politically motivated mandate immediately. It is to be remembered that similar demonstration took place in Geneva by more than seven thousand people against the report of Commission of Inquiry last year on 22nd of June 2016.

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