



Liberty



English – Language Organ of the
Eritrean People 's Democratic Party - EPDP

FIRST EPF CONFERENCE CASTS LIGHT IN THE DIMNESS OF ERITREAN DIASPORA POLITICS

This issue's primary message to the international community today is that there is as of now very little doubt that the moment for creating an all-encompassing political umbrella for Eritrean pro-democracy and change forces has finally come. What remains is the challenge of seiz-

ing the opportunity to consummate the required unity to face the home-grown enemy while the newly revived momentum for joint action is alive and well in the political landscape. This definitely requires the encouragement and sincere support of all peace and justice seekers in the world.



Prep. Committee Chair, Adiam Tefera

The August 2024 conference in Wiesbaden, Germany, that brought much closer the Eritrean People's Democratic Party (**EPDP**), the Eritrean United National Front (**EUNF**), and the Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization (**RSADO**) is, therefore, a significant development that opens a promising political insight in the darkness of Eritrean diaspora politics. The new formation of **Eritrean Political Forces (EPF)** is hoped to be joined by the Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change (**ENCDC**), which initially was an integral partner in drafting the basic EPF documents, and big efforts are underway to include in this platform the Eritrean Coalition for Democratic Change (**ECDC**) as spear-headed by the global Yiakil/Kefa/Enough Movement. The Blue Revolution of young Eritreans is of course expected to be part of the process - one day.



**EPF leaders at Conference cite:
Kahsai Gufla, Gherezghiher
Tewelde & Yassin Abdalla**



**Conference Secretariat: Omar Ali, Neguse
Tseggai, Kibreab Teklegiorghis and bilingual
translator Ghirmai Zemichael.**

And if traditional Eritrean wisdom is to prevail, at least this time round, then the newborn EPF shall soon become a powerful national umbrella composed of the diverse forces in Eritrean Opposition and help reawaken the slackened Eritrean heroism by giving hope to every soul at home and abroad. Not to be minimized is that the simple step of unifying the said forces under a minimum program and can easily lead to ending the tyranny and its untold suffering in Eritrea.

EPF Conference and its Outcome

For the benefit of the readers of *Liberty* magazine, that includes a long list of diplomatic and civil society circles, the paragraphs and sections below shall attempt to summarize the processes of the EPF conference and its outcome. >> p.3

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EPDP CC HOLDS ITS 2ND ANNUAL MEETING



On 23 August 2024, the EPDP Central Council held its second annual conference since its last 4th party congress in 2023. In his opening remarks, Party Chairman Gherezghiher Tewelde expressed the party's full commitment to do all what is possible to see the efforts of building a viable national umbrella being achieved within the shortest time possible. He also outlined EPDP's performances during the year under review as well as the general status of the Eritrean opposition camp. Likewise, he saluted all those who made their utmost to promote party programs during the past 12 months.

Based on the day's agenda items, the meeting discussed reports of the various party organs and adopted them after making necessary corrections and recommendations for future improvements. It also took decisions on certain internal issues that were submitted to its attention by the outgoing Executive Committee while recommending further action on some of them by the new leadership.

As is known, the EPDP Central Council can, per party constitution, change all or some of the members of the Executive Committee at every annual meeting. Accordingly, the 3 CC elected and re-elected nine persons to head the existing offices. In inclusion, the meeting reiterated its commendations to all party members and others in sister organizations for past efforts and urged them to redouble the struggle to promote the objectives for change and for establishing a democratic state in post-dictatorship Eritrea. The EPDP Executive Committee members mandated to lead the party for the next 12 months are listed in first name alphabetical order below:



From upper left **1. Adiam Tefera**, head of EPDP Women's Affairs; **2. Aklilu Ghirmai/Dr.**, head of International Relations; **3. Debessai Beyene**, head of Information Office; **4. Eritrea Alazar**, head of Youth Affairs Office; **5. Fessehaye Hagos**, head of Social Affairs; **6. Gherezghiher Tewelde**, EPDP Chairman; **7. Goitom Mebrahtu**, head of Organizational Affairs; **8. Idris Ismail**, Party Secretary, and **9. Negasi Hamde**, head of Financial Affairs.

FIRST EPF CONFERENCE CASTS LIGHT

(Continued from p. 1)..Widely covered for Eritrean audiences via eight media channels in Tigrigna and Arabic, the 5-8 August conference of the EPF at Wiesbaden was attended by 60 delegates most of which were taking part in person while the rest were participating online in the deliberations from various localities in USA, Canada, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Australia.

As mentioned in the opening statements of Ms Adiam Tefera, chairperson of the Conference Preparatory committee, and Mr. Gherezghiher Tewelde, the head of the Higher Provisional Body, the



now officially launched EPF was initiated on the bases of the 2019 Minnesota conference of Eritrean organizations plus the initiative of the late patriot Berhane Weldegebriel (Sudan Now) in early 2020. Since then, five political bodies that included the above mentioned ENCDC and the Eritrean Unity Organization, worked hard towards forming an inclusive national umbrella and contributed in drafting the basic documents upon which the EPF built itself during the past one year of prepara-

tions for the final conference. Consensus and huge compromises were used as guiding principles in all agreements reached.

Thus, what the Wiesbaden conference did was to review those prepared documents, enrich them as much as possible and adopt them as the guiding documents of the new EPF for the next two years. The necessary details are included the Final Statement of the Conference and Political Resolutions, both of which are reprinted below.

FINAL STATEMENT OF 1ST CONFERENCE OF THE ERITREAN POLITICAL FORCES (EPF)

The process for joint work of the Eritrean Political Forces (EPF), started in February 2020 as initiated by the late patriot Berhane Weldegebriel, has successfully attained the intended objectives through holding its First Conference between 5 and 8 August 2024 in Wiesbaden, Germany. Launching this umbrella are: the Eritrean United National Front (EUNF); the Eritrean People's Democratic Party (EPDP) and the Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization (RSADO). Attended by delegates coming from many parts of the globe and other delegates who could not make it to the conference fully participating in the deliberations via modern electronic media, the conference discussed in great depth:

- > **All ways and means in facing the ongoing acts of fear, terror and killings of Eritreans by their own totalitarian regime;**
- .> **Handling the multiple problems being created in the region; and**
- > **Playing its part in the confronting the disturbing new regional and international developments that have direct bearing to the safety of our people.**

In addition, the conference adopted political principles, objectives and the necessary organs for the short and long terms.

Despite the challenges, this promising stage reached now shall help in redoubling the struggle to remove the repressive regime and pay all the necessary price to bring together the fragmented pro-change Eritrean forces. The holding and outcome of this conference does already show light at the end of the tunnel. Being culmination of a long-awaited promising process for unified action, it is expected to be strengthened by the participation of sister organizations and lead the path towards realizing the long deferred victory of the Eritrean people. >>



EPF Executive Committee members present at the Conference in person were, from left to right: Gherezghiher Tewelde; Kahsai Gufla; Yassin Abdalla; Adiam Teferra; Ismail Gabayta; Goitom Kufлом and Tesfai Woldemichael (Degiga). Attending the Conference were Yohannes aAsmelash and Hilal Taha.



After attentively digesting and adopting the reports and studied documents, the conference members commended the preparatory committee and other working teams of the three partner organizations for their dedicated work to make the conference a resounding success.

Likewise, the first EPF conference warmly saluted the Eritrea media channels that played a crucial part in adequately conveying the important messages of the congress to the Eritrean people. The media channels were **1.Erisat, 2. Eripm, 3. Radio Erena; 4.Meskerem 61 TV, 5.Snitna network, 6.Assena TV; 7.Hagerey**

TV 8. and Mela Media that kindly volunteered to record all events of the Conference.

Also at its first congress, the EPF adopted and committed itself to fully promote the fundamental principles listed below as they were submitted by the outgoing Higher Provisional Body. These fundamental principles are:

- > **Removing the regime of the so-called Popular Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ);**
- > **Establishing a constitutional and democratic system of governance;**
- > **Securing the people’s unity while defending the independence and sovereignty of Eritrea, and**
- > **Guaranteeing liberties and democratic rights to our people.**

Reiterating its admiration of the hard work accomplished by the Higher Provisional Body with all working teams, the First EPF Congress called on the Eritrean people in general and all fraternal political forces and civic organizations in particular to join in promoting this critical pathway for unity in order to put an end to all the untold suffering, displacement and other challenges being faced by Eritreans.



The conference, among other actions, adopted work plans of critical importance and mandated the new leadership to implement them within for the upcoming two years. It also adopted Political Resolutions in relation to the following burning issues:

- > Eritrean sovereignty;
- > Unity of action of the Eritrean opposition camp; >>>

In picture are some of the 24 EPF CC members attending the conference in person. Each of the three EPF partners are represented by 8 CC members. They are, from EPDP: Gherezghiher Tewelde; Tesfai W/Michael (Degiga); Adiam Tefera; Negasi Hamde; Neguse Tseggai; Menghesteab Asmerom; Dr. Akililu Ghirmai and Yassin Osman. From EUNF: Yohannes Asmelash; Kiflehans W/Gerghis; Osman Ahmed Nur; Kahsai Gufla; Berhane Yemane (Hanjema); Kibreab Mesghina; Goitom Kiflom and Mekonnen Tekle. From RSADO: Yassin Abdalla; Ismail Gabayta; Hilal Taha; Omar Ali; Mohammed Sheik Mahmoud; Nour Gumhid; Abdu Ali Yisihaqq and Abdu Amin. Three of the 24 will be reserve members.

- > Eritrean refugees;
- > The wave of the current youth movement and its nature;
- > Foreign relations in the region and the world at large;
- > Potential challenges from the outside, and
- > The situation of human rights in Eritrea.

The conference urged the EPF to effectively put into force these resolutions in close cooperation with concerned sister political formations by putting aside all petty differences of the past in order first remove the repressive regime in Asmara.

To lead the hard work, the conference formed a 24-member EPF Council of whom three are alternative members for a two-year term. It also confirmed the commitment to make the joint 2024 Eritrea Festival in Frankfurt a success.

Finally, the EPF conference saluted members of the international community for their past support to the Eritrean people and renewed a strong appeal to the redoubt their help by fully grasping the extent of the sad situation in Eritrea.

Liberty through Unity!

Glory and Eternal Memory to Eritrean Martyrs!

First EPF Conference,

Wiesbaden, Germany.

7 August 2024

POLITICAL RESOLUTIONS OF THE FIRST EPF CONFERENCE

(Free translation from the Tigrigna version for Liberty readers).

This First Conference of Eritrean Political Forces (EPF) was held at a time when: Our country Eritrea is still going from bad to worse situation under the tyrannical regime of the so-called People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ);

- > When a new wave of Eritrean youth is growing to uplift the country from the abyss it is in;
- > When Eritrean political forces are coalescing to create platforms for joint struggle;
- > At a time when armed hostilities and internecine killings are going on in neighboring Sudan and Ethiopia, while a ray of peace was seen in our immediate neighboring state of Tigray under the Pretoria Agreement;
- > When a new alignment of political forces emerged in the region and the world, and
- > While the Red Sea basin is still in turmoil and in a state of emergency because of the ongoing conflict between Palestine and Israel as well as between Ukraine and Russia.

Following the approval the draft of Political Charter and the By-Laws for EPF, the conference continued in-depth discussions on various current issues and passed the following political resolutions.

ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN ERITREA

The PFDJ regime has betrayed not only the people and the country of Eritrea, but also the institutions it has established - so much so that people-government relationship has come far apart to the extent that it is irreconcilable. In this regard, the EPF Conference called on the people of Eritrea to struggle and pave the way for their freedom and prosperity. The conference also called on the people of Eritrea to stand by their political forces in the process of liberation struggle to remove the dictatorial regime and in its place establish a democratic system of governance. >>

ON ERITREAN SOVEREIGNTY

Encouraged by the language and self-serving policies of the unpredictable PFDJ regime in Asmara, which is disloyal and untrustworthy to defend Eritrean sovereignty, a number of Ethiopian organizations and individuals, who failed to recognize Eritrean independence in past, have also of late come up with wild claims to the Red Sea threatening the unity of our people and the Eritrean sovereignty itself. However, we in the EPF once more affirm that the sovereignty and unity of the people, land, sea and air of Eritrea will never be compromised. Hence, this First EPF Conference calls upon Ethiopians to refrain from provoking and undermining the dignity and sovereignty of Eritrea verbally or otherwise for various reasons and avoid instigating conflict but, instead, work for peaceful neighborliness and mutual development.

ON THE URGENCY FOR A NATIONAL UMBRELLA

This platform of the Eritrean Political Forces (EPF) that we declare at this conference does not only fully appreciated the urgency of working together with existing partners in it, but has been holding serious discussions with various sister political organizations and movements prior to convening this First Conference. Believing that this stage is only the beginning and not the end, the EPF will continue its struggle to rally all political forces in Eritrea around the unifying four principles of common understanding. EPF leadership is mandated to open a new table of dialogue with those who are willing to engaged in joint work and encourages organizations with a common political charter to merge.

ON POPULAR WAVES

Needless to say, the EPF wishes to work with all Popular Waves like the new Brigade Nhamedu (the Blue Revolution) and Yiaki/Kefa/Enough movement before it, in which many EPF members and others participate. While encouraging them to be wage more effective struggle by avoiding certain shortcomings and to rise to the highest level of struggle, we continue recommending legal and non-exploitable methods of struggle in further isolating the PFDJ regime and drying up its economic sources. In particular, the conference strongly calls upon our compatriots to refrain from violent measures among themselves which can only benefit the repressive regime at home that has been the source of all such antagonisms.

ON ERITREAN REFUGEES

The Conference recognized that under the rule of PFDJ, Eritrean people in general and the youth in particular have been prone to displacements and even those who have been in exile for decades since 1967 due to colonialism have never been able to return back to their country. Our conference once again calls on our people to unite their forces and fight for the abolition of oppression in order to get rid of this terrible situation. Conference thanked the countries and peoples who have been receiving and caring for the Eritrean refugees as much as they can out of humanitarian compassion. We urge governments to stop forcibly deporting refugees to Eritrea in violation of international law.

ON ERITREAN HUMAN RIGHTS

The dictatorial regime has been detaining Eritrean religious leaders, politicians, journalists and ordinary citizens without trial in violation of UN Human Rights Council laws and rejecting requests for changes from time to time. We condemn such atrocities and we call upon all regional and international actors to increase their pressure on the repressive regime. >>>

ON ETHIO-ERITREAN RELATIONSHIP

The Conference reaffirms its principled belief that the relations between the peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia should be based on the policy of mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs guaranteed by institutional arrangements and transparent agreements rather than the wishes of individual leaders. Our Conference expresses its concern that the issue of "having a stake in Eritrea" or claiming for a sea port, which is being re-promoted by various Ethiopian entities would not lead to unnecessary war. Conference rejects the dangerous steps taken by the PFDJ to interfere in the internal affairs and relations of Ethiopian forces. Such a divisive move doesn't represent the Eritrean people but the regime itself. The Conference called upon Ethiopian government's policy in regard to Eritrea to be based on the interests and sovereignty of the people of Eritrea. Conference also urges that the atrocities inflicted in Tigray are independently investigated and that the perpetrators brought before the court of law and that the victims are compensated accordingly. The Conference calls for the implementation of Algiers Agreement once and for all - after all, one recall that The Hague international boarder decision was final and binding. The Conference urges the United Nations and other relevant international institutions to address the issue of border demarcation as a matter of urgency, especially after the Pretoria Agreement.

ON ERITREA-SUDAN RELATIONSHIP

The First EPF Conference of the political forces also confirms that it stands on the Sudanese people's side in their struggle to change their situation and return to a better peaceful life. Conference also calls upon the Sudanese military leaders engaged in the battlefield to return to round table of discussion and fulfill the aspirations of their people.

We also urge the international community to pay due attention to the issue of Sudan, which is a threat even to our region, and to help the Sudanese people who are suffering from various social problems due to the war. The Conference calls on our people to strongly oppose the Eritrean regime's military and security interference in the internal affairs of Sudan.



Victory to the just struggle of the Eritrean people!!

Down with the tyrannical regime!!

Long live the joint work of the Eritrean Political Forces!!

Together for freedom!!

Wiesbaden, Germany,

August 7, 2024

EPF HOLDS 'ERITREA FESTIVAL 2024' IN FRANKFURT AFTER ITS 1ST CONFERENCE IN WIESBADEN

Following its First Conference at Wiesbaden, Germany, the nascent national umbrella of Eritrean Political Forces (EPF) held its 2024 Eritrea Festival in the European financial capital of Frankfurt between 8 and 10 August. This was an important assembly of life-time freedom fighters at which the outcome of the Wiesbaden conference were made public.



Organized by members of the three coalescing organizations, namely the Eritrean People's Democratic Party (EPDP); the Eritrean United National



Front (EUNF), and the Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization (RSADO), the first major event of the EPF festival was a seminar held Friday evening for members and sympathizers of the coalition.

With EPF Chairman Gherezghiher Tewelde and EPF Finance Office head Kahsai Gufla as panelists, the seminar delved into lengthy discussions following explanatory statements by the two. Being a prelude to the Saturday events, the seminar briefly touched upon the process that preceded the conference and how the new leadership intends to expand and promote the long-awaited aim of joint work in the Eritrean opposition. The main Eritrea Festival 2024 activities took place on Saturday. Led by the able Moderators in Tigrigna and Arabic, Adiam Tefera and Ghirmai Zemichael, the major festival included speeches delivered by a good number of speakers, each expounding aspects of the current Eritrean situation and the status of the much prolonged struggle for democratic change in Eritrea.

After warmly saluting festival participants, the Moderators presented this year's main event speakers one by one. First to take the podium was Dr. Aklilu Ghirmai, festival



host as head of a non-profit Eritrean charity registered in Frankfurt, who welcomed festival participants and expressed everyone's hopes and aspirations for the birth of a just and democratic Eritrea within the foreseeable future.

The second speaker appearing at the stage was Zehaie Keleta, the chairman of the preparatory committee of Eritrea Festival 2024 organized by members of the partners coalescing in EPF. His speech affectionately commended all the untiring colleagues in Eritrea's prolonged struggle and focused on the importance of unity in order to quicken the downfall of the repressive regime in Eritrea. >>>



The message from the Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change (ENCDC) was presented by the veteran freedom fighter Bahta Hailemariam, who confirmed that the formation and official announcement of the EPF was the product of almost all Eritrean political organizations and that the ENCDC is committed to do all what is needed to strengthen a unified voice of all Eritreans opposed to the tyranny in the homeland.



Veteran pro-democracy activist Berhane Redda spoke on behalf of an Eritrean group mediating for unity among political actors for the eventual creation of a national umbrella.. Among the media channels covering events of the festival online was Meskerem 61 TV whose representative, Abdu Salam, spoke expressing his admiration of what he observed both at the EPF Conference in Wiesbaden and the EPF Festival in Frankfurt.

Representatives of the Eritrean Coalition for Democratic Change (ECDC), who could not make it to the festival cite due to a technical hiccup, conveyed their message through the stage moderators in which ECDC's determined will to join opposition forces for effective action was strongly manifested.



Also presented at the festival podium was a message of good wishes from the founder-chairman of RSADO, **Ibrahim Haroon**, who could not attend the EPF conference and festival from his location in the Horn of Africa. Delivering his message at the festival on his behalf was Yassin Abdalla, the Vice Chairman of the new EPF, a nascent Eritrean national umbrella of political forces still expecting to join other sister

organizations to become a more viable force in the struggle for change in Eritrea.

Festival Keynote Address:

Following the various presentations, EPF keynote address was presented by its Chairman



Gherezghiher Tewelde. In his well presented and richly studies keynote speech, Gherezghiher Tewelde explained the long but arduous process that culminated in the formation of the EPF and strongly called upon all Eritrean patriots, old and young, to rally for a unified and strong national umbrella that will speed up the fall of the repressive regime in Eritrea and in its place create an all-inclusive, just and democratic system of governance.

Going back and touching upon all the untold abuses and suffering of our people in post-independence Eritrea, the EPF Chairman repeatedly urged Eritreans not to accept abnormal acts of cruelty as “normal” and, instead, rise up to resist and reject the tyranny in Eritrea which we, as a people, shamefully let it go its own way for over three decades.>>>



His moving speech was followed by a reading of the EPF Conference final statement presented by Mekonnen Tekle, a member of the 24-person EPF Council. This was followed by a long but lively Question-and-Answer session, again moderated by Adiam Tefera.

The panelists were three EPF top leadership members: i.e Gherezghiher Tewelde as well as Yassin Abdalla, the EPF Vice-Chairman and Kahsai Gufla, the EPF head of Finance Office.

Questions raised at the session included people's fears of repeated failures in the past of such unity agreements; deep concerns about certain Ethiopian elements and forces that do



Festival panelists Yassin Abdalla, Gherezghiher Tewelde; Kahsai Gufla with moderator Adiam Tefera

wish to harm Eritrean unity and sovereignty, and EPF's determination to promote Eritrean



popular movements like Brigade-Nhamedu (the Blue Revolution) and Yiakil/Kefa/Enough movement.

The panelists, themselves life-time freedom fighters, did respond to all questions to the satisfaction of



a vast majority of the audience that expressed its feelings by applause.

Haregu Berhe, an indomitable veteran freedom fighter, and Feven Gideon, a younger pro-change activist, were among the discussants who raised important questions and comments at the Q&A session.



The rest of the evening and night time up to the early hours of Sunday morning was spent in folkloric dances, warm exchange of chats and debates among long-separated colleagues in the



Eritrean struggle.

