

18.09.2019

Away with the dictator and his minions!

A piece, recently planted by the PFDJ Central Office and spread via social media by its agents and quislings, is a reply to a question raised in a seminar held in Frankfurt or Stuttgart, Germany, in 2002, edited, taken out of context and forged with a recent photo. Otherwise, my position on the issue has always been crystal clear. Internally, I pleaded that the G-11 be either formally charged and brought to a court of law or pardoned. Externally, I had, as ambassador at the time, the duty to represent and defend the view of the government (a view of which I later made a comprehensive objective assessment in Chapter 9 of my book, *Eritrea at a Crossroads: A Narrative of Triumph, Betrayal and Hope*, 2014).

My reply at the seminar in question, based on minutes (translated by the Eritrean Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the original Italian) of a meeting that members of the group held with Senator Rino Serri, EU Special Representative, at the Italian Embassy in Asmera which, as I later stated, had “adverse implications on state security” (*Eritrea at a Crossroads*, p. 305). It is only the tragedy of their burial alive that has restrained vigorous critique of a loss of compass and unwise approach at a moment of grave national crisis. One does not fell a fallen tree!

Their arrest without due process and indefinite detention without formal charge before a court of law is but one case of the general violation of the basic human and civil rights of the Eritrean people. I have consistently and publicly exposed the regime’s brutal abuses of the Eritrean people, including the political detainees, and no targeted attacks can malign my patriotic stance or commitment to justice. Nor can such desperate maneuvers dent my active advocacy for human rights, rule of law and democratic transition in Eritrea.

The UN Commission of Inquiry has documented substantial, compelling and irrefutable evidence of the PFDJ regime’s *gross, widespread and systematic violations of human rights with impunity*. Eritrea today is littered with arbitrary arrests, indefinite detention, solitary confinement, extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, unlimited active national service without due remuneration, willful suspension from work, etc. These violations constitute crimes against humanity. It cannot be denied that Isaias and his cronies have brought about the political paralysis, economic ruin, societal disintegration and cultural degradation of our beloved country. Away with the dictator and his minions!

- Andebrhan