ERITREA PROFILE

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PRESIDENT ISAIAS RECEIVES CREDENTIALS OF SIX AMBASSADORS



Design: Taezaz Abraha

Photo: Saleh Abdelkadir

President Isaias Afwerki on 19 November received the credentials of six ambassadors accredited to Eritrea at a ceremony at the Denden Guest House.

The ambassadors who presented their credentials were Mr. Phillip M. Modise of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Daniel Losada Millar of the Kingdom of Spain, Dr. Rita Viktoria Herencsar of Hungary, Mr. Park Sang-Tae of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Abdullah bin Nasser-Rahbi of the Sultanate of Oman, and Mr. Mirko Giulietti of Switzerland.

The Ambassadors conveyed messages of goodwill from their respective heads of state and government to President Isaias Afwerki. They also expressed their commitment to strengthening ties of friendship and cooperation between their countries and Eritrea.

Ambassador Phillip M. Modise of South Africa and Ambassador Abdullah bin Nasser-Rahbi of Oman expressed their countries' readiness to strengthen friendly relations with Eritrea and expand cooperation across various sectors.

Mr. Osman Saleh, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Amin Hassan, Director of the Office of the President, attended the occasion.

PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION CALLING FOR PEACE AND DENOUNCING WAR

A peaceful demonstration calling for peace and denouncing war in which peace loving peoples of the Horn of Africa participated was held in Washington DC on 16 November.

The peaceful demonstration that was participated by Eritrean, Ethiopian, Sudanese, Somali and other nationals that was held under the banner "Yes to Peace-No to War" was conducted in front of the office of the State Department.

Representing the Eritrean community, Mr. Tekie Seium said the Horn of Africa has abundant resources and the potential to prosper in conditions of peace and cooperation. He said the demonstration aimed to denounce the reckless actions by Ethiopia's Prosperity Party, which is becoming the main cause of turmoil and conflict within Ethiopia and undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of neighboring countries.

Mr. Tekie said a message had been submitted to the relevant authorities calling on external forces to stop fomenting wars to exploit and plunder the region's resources. He said the peoples of the Horn of Africa will continue their joint efforts to advance justice, good neighborliness, peace, friendship and security.

The demonstrators described the Prosperity Party as the main source of instability in the Horn of Africa. They said its rhetoric about war against Eritrea, Sudan and Somalia undermines the countries' independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and violates the fundamental principles of the UN Charter. They called for the matter to be taken seriously.

The participants signed a petition expressing their support for peace and opposition to war and submitted it to State Department officials.



PUBLIC SEMINARS FOR NATIONALS HELD IN NINE US CITIES

Public seminars for nationals were held in nine US cities on 14 and 15 November.

At the seminars in Dallas and Houston, Mr. Berhane Gebrehiwet, Chargé d'Affaires at the Eritrean Embassy, briefed nationals on the current situation in the homeland and on regional developments.

Mr. Berhane attributed the Eritrean people's victories to their unity and the strength of their public organizations. He said that the contributions nationals have made at every stage have strengthened national resilience and called on them to play a greater role in national affairs.

Ms. Hadinet Keleta, head of Public and Community Affairs, held seminars for nationals in Lewisville and Indianapolis. Mr. Al-Nur Humed, head of

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SpotLight

Ethiopia's Prosperity Party Theatrics to Disguise Aggression as 'Self-Defense': Too Little, Too Late!

Three years after publicly declaring its policy of aggression against Eritrea and other countries in the Horn of Africa under the banner of "securing sovereign access to the sea, by any means necessary," the Ethiopian Government seems to have belatedly realized that this illegal, anachronistic and destabilizing policy is internationally and legally indefensible. Abiy Ahmed and his ruling party have subsequently shifted gear to desperately revert to the manufacturing of a new pretext to mask the expansionist agenda under the spurious mantle of "self-defense".

The self-defense pretext was thus invoked, without any supporting evidence, in the letter of the Ethiopian Government to the UN Security Council, on 9 October last month, literally "notifying" the latter of Ethiopia's declaration of war against Eritrea.

This ominous and unlawful measure came exactly three years after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed publicly unveiled, on 13 October 2023, his strategy to secure "sovereign access to the sea by any means necessary – through negotiations if possible and by force if necessary". Senior political and military leaders of the Ethiopian Government have since repeated this policy ad nauseam.

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Beyond rhetoric, the Ethiopian Government has been spending billions of borrowed US dollars on its weapons shopping spree, and training hundreds of thousands of soldiers to serve as cannon fodders in its numerous misadventures; even while the Ethiopian people are suffering from extreme poverty.

The Ethiopian Government's policy of expansionism which continues to fuel conflict and destabilization across the Horn of Africa is formally documented in the "The Grand Strategy of the Two Waters." This Strategy was launched with significant media fanfare on 29 February 2024, by the Institute of Foreign Affairs (IFA), which operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. The full document was not disseminated publicly due to its subversive contents and related apprehension of potential and inevitable backlash.

We will now revert to dissect the historical narratives, legal analysis and policy options spelled out in the Strategy aimed at "securing sovereign access to the sea, by any means necessary".

• The Strategy Paper contradicts itself by admitting that no legal right exists for what it aspires for; and yet it avidly explores other unlawful options and avenues. Indeed, after exploring the provisions of international law on access to the sea, it concedes that it was wrong to argue for Ethiopia's quest for sovereign access to the sea based on international law, as there is no international law granting these rights. The document subsequently alludes to tenuous precedents by arguing that some countries who secured access to the sea by other means have used various arguments to legitimize their conquest. (Page 65).

• The Strategy Paper openly proposes tearing up binding international border treaties: In invoking the use of legal arguments to justify conquest, the Strategy Paper proposes that Ethiopia challenge and invalidate the Colonial Treaties of 1900, 1902 and 1908 that delimited the boundary between Eritrea and Ethiopia. This unlawful position would imply retroactive repudiation and annulment of the Algiers Agreement; rejection of the EEBC Arbitral Award and flagrant violations of international law, the UN Charter, the AU Constitutive Act and Africa's inviolable position on the sanctity of inherited colonial boundaries. (Page 66).

• The Strategy attempts to weaponize humanitarian principles to excuse raw aggression: The Strategy further explored applying equity, humanity and right to development as a non-political military alternative. The document concludes its exploration of historical precedents of using the aforementioned principles to secure sovereign access to sea, by openly admitting that there is indeed no legal provision that grants sovereign access to the sea to landlocked countries. Rather these principles can be used to defend acquisition of sea access by other means, i.e. aggression. (Page 67-69).

• The Strategy relies on revisionist historical myths that erase neighboring sovereign nations: The Strategy's historical justification for Ethiopia's quest for access to the sea not only misinterprets facts to push a narrative, but is completely dismissive of the existence, rights and aspirations of the Eritrean, Djiboutian and Somali people. (Page 80-117). However, even such self-serving narratives concede that it was only after the 1952 federation between Eritrea and Ethiopia, that Ethiopia secured direct access to the sea after several centuries. Surely, several centuries earlier, there were no coherent political entities congruous with present-day State configuration in the region, but various kingdoms and chiefdoms with shifting centers and modicum of control in these areas.

• The Strategy peddles fallacious revisionist history to claim that, Eritrean, Djiboutian and Somali ports historically belonged to Ethiopia, including Adulis, Zeila, Tadjoura and Berbera. (Page 124-126, 142). The Strategy, departing from this, advocates for Ethiopia to explore options to ensure reliable access through these ports and to focus on regaining ownership of these ports. (Page 143). The Strategy advises for caution to deter Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somalia from creating a common front for putting pressure on Ethiopia, and the need to prepare if the three countries ultimately stand against Ethiopia perceiving its quest for access to sea as a common threat. (Page 143).

• The Strategy seeks to justify expansionism by framing it as a "matter of national survival": In an effort to rationalize the Prosperity Party's expansionist agenda, the Strategy portrays the survival of Ethiopia as a nation, and the prospects and trajectory of its economic development, as dependent on securing sovereign access to the sea. (Page 129). The untenable argument callously ignores the devastating human and material costs that would ensue from unnecessary and avoidable wars if the Ethiopian regime pursues this delusional policy of expansionism and regional destabilization.

• The Strategy mandates building a massive military force to enforce its maritime ambitions: As a means of implementing this Strategy, the document underscores the importance of creating a strong defense force. It mentions the possibility of creating a Navy stationed on the high seas. (Page 135-136)

• The Strategy floats various coercive proposals to mask outright territorial conquest: It floats certain fanciful and unrealistic options to secure access to the sea, (Page 145-147).

• The Strategy advises exploiting global geopolitical rivalries to advance its agenda: The Strategy stipulates that Ethiopia should push its agenda to secure sovereign access to the sea by tactically exploiting the emerging multipolar world, being friendly to all sides, and not allying with any side. (Page 149).

• The Strategy explicitly advocates illegal acts of aggression under the cover of diplomatic maneuver: In conclusion, the Strategy advocates the use of irregular measures, i.e. aggression, to secure access to the sea if the latter objective cannot be achieved through some diplomatic tools or applicable precedents. It advises undertaking diplomatic, public relations and legal preparations to ensure that the irregular measures used do not create strong international opposition. It asserts that international law is elastic and that when Ethiopia increases its economic, political and diplomatic power; it can push for development of a legal perspective that aligns with its interest. It mentions how Kosovo became independent, Israel controlled Syrian Golan height for fifty years, and Russia annexed Crimea as useful precedents for emulation. (Page 149-150).

In a nutshell and when the diplomatic doubletalk or veil is removed, the Strategy is starkly exposed for what it is: a shameless blueprint for land-grabbing by leaders who know full well that their legal arguments are a total sham.

While the Prime Minister and his political and military officials continue to incessantly talk about Ethiopia's right to 'sovereign access to the sea', they are fully aware that there is no legal basis for it. Moreover, as Prime Minister Abiy admitted in his speech of 13 October 2023, Ethiopia's neighboring countries have made it abundantly clear that there are no barriers for Ethiopia's commercial access to the sea through bilateral negotiations, but their sovereignty is not negotiable under any conditions.

This is the backdrop behind the Ethiopian Government's current invocation of "self-defense" to camouflage and repackage its long-planned war of aggression against Eritrea. But for the same, nefarious, reasons that inhibited the Government from publicly disseminating its Grand Strategy on the two waters, the actual policy blueprints on its war of aggression on Eritrea remain discreet too. Be that as it may, the publicly declared policy of "securing sovereign access to the sea by any means necessary", the convoluted historical narrative peddled to justify it; and, the illegal and anachronistic options contained in the document remain indefensible. They constitute flagrant violation of the UN Charter, the AU Constitutive Act as well as cardinal principles of international law. The Government's policy of aggression is a criminal offense even under Ethiopian law. (Art 261 and 263 of the Criminal Code of FDRE).

The Government of Ethiopia may have felt relieved in its ability to hide (until today) the content of the Grand Strategy from the public, but its effort to give legitimacy to its policy of aggression by concocting a flimsy case of 'self-defense' is too little and too late to be taken seriously.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea
Research and Documentation Division
19 November 2026

SpotLight

A Foundation for Healthier Families and Stronger Communities

Bana Negusse

Reproductive health encompasses a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system, its functions, and processes. (This is rather than merely the absence of disease or infirmity.) Integral to this understanding are reproductive rights, which recognize the entitlement of individuals and couples to make informed decisions about their reproductive lives and access safe, effective, affordable, and acceptable methods of family planning. These rights include the freedom to determine the number, spacing, and timing of children; access to appropriate health-care services for safe pregnancy and childbirth; and the opportunity to attain the highest possible standard of sexual and reproductive health. Above all, they affirm that reproductive decisions must be exercised freely, without discrimination, coercion, or violence.

Although international recognition of these principles has been growing, their realization remains far from common. At present, while considerable progress has been made in advancing women's sexual and reproductive health, nearly 260 million women worldwide, particularly in rural and developing communities, still wish to avoid pregnancy but lack access to, or do not use, safe and effective contraceptive methods. This persistent unmet need reflects a combination of structural and social obstacles, including inadequate health services and supplies, socio-cultural and political constraints, gender inequality, concerns about side effects, and shortcomings in the quality and accessibility of care. Addressing these barriers demands an environment in which individuals can make informed choices and exercise their reproductive rights with dignity.

Importantly, the implications of unmet reproductive health needs extend well beyond individual and household well-being. Evidence from diverse countries demonstrates that improved access to contraception and sustained investment in family planning contribute significantly to better maternal and child health, fewer preventable deaths, and improved quality of life. The benefits also reach into wider social and economic spheres, supporting poverty reduction, educational advancement, women's empowerment, and inclusive development. Reproductive health and rights should therefore be understood not simply as components of the health sector, but as essential conditions for achieving sustainable development.

This broader significance is reflected in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015 as a shared framework for building a more equitable and sustainable future. Target 3.7 specifically calls for universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, information, and education, and for their integration into national strategies and programmes. This commitment built on the landmark International Conference on Population and Development, which established that reproductive health and rights, including voluntary family planning, are indispensable to human development. Together, these international frameworks underscore that reproductive autonomy is both a fundamental right and a prerequisite for meaningful development.

The connection between reproductive autonomy and economic progress is equally important. A growing body of evidence indicates that enabling women and young people to decide whether, when, and how many children to have can contribute to higher educational attainment, greater participation in the labour force, and sustained poverty reduction. When people can make informed reproductive choices, they are better able to pursue education, enter and remain in employment, and invest in their families and communities. These benefits are particularly significant in countries with predominantly young populations, where investments in reproductive health can help transform demographic potential into a development dividend rather than an additional pressure on limited resources.



Against this global backdrop, Eritrea provides an important example of how national policies and sustained public investment can advance reproductive health within a broader development agenda. The country's national health policy is guided by the objective of improving the health and well-being of all citizens throughout their lives, with particular emphasis on equity, accessibility, and the expansion of essential health services. Its priorities include strengthening health infrastructure, extending service coverage, developing human resources, and ensuring that reproductive health remains an integral part of the national health-care system.

Through sustained investment and coordinated national efforts, Eritrea has recorded meaningful improvements in several areas of reproductive and maternal health. The expansion of health facilities and community-based outreach services has contributed to increased antenatal care coverage and a substantial reduction in maternal mortality. Access to emergency obstetric care, reported to have risen from less than 20 percent in the early 1990s to well over 90 percent, illustrates the scale of progress in strengthening essential maternal health services. Eritrea has also made important strides in its response to HIV/AIDS, with prevalence declining to below 0.4 percent and incidence reportedly falling to approximately 0.06. Taken together, these achievements reflect the impact of sustained national health interventions and place Eritrea among the countries that have made notable progress in improving key health indicators despite resource constraints.

Progress has also been evident in efforts to eliminate female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and other harmful traditional practices. Once widely prevalent, FGM/C has declined considerably, particularly among younger generations, while an increasing number of communities have publicly declared themselves free from the practice. This progress demonstrates the importance of sustained social mobilization and changing attitudes at the community level. Eritrea's approach has combined legal prohibition and strong enforcement with community dialogue, public awareness campaigns, engagement of religious and traditional leaders, women's empowerment initiatives, and cooperation with international partners. Such an integrated response recognizes that protecting reproductive health and rights requires both accessible health services and a sustained effort to challenge practices that compromise the dignity, health, and autonomy of women and girls.



Another encouraging development is the relatively high and growing awareness of family planning and contraceptive methods among both women and men, across rural and urban communities and different income groups. Modern contraceptive methods are increasingly recognized, while findings from earlier surveys indicate that most couples using contraception reported making decisions jointly. This suggests a growing appreciation of family planning as a shared responsibility rather than an issue concerning women alone. Education is an important factor in this progress, with higher levels of female education generally associated with greater participation in household reproductive decisions and stronger reproductive autonomy. Continued investment in girls' education and public awareness can therefore reinforce the gains already made.

Looking ahead, consolidating Eritrea's achievements and addressing remaining gaps will require continued national commitment, effective implementation of existing policies, and building on constructive partnerships with development actors, including United Nations agencies and international health organizations. Greater investment in reproductive health services and voluntary family planning can strengthen women's autonomy, advance gender equality, prevent avoidable deaths, and contribute to economic productivity and social well-being. Equally important is ensuring that progress continues to reach historically underserved communities and that women and girls are not left behind. By building on its existing achievements while addressing remaining gaps, Eritrea can further advance reproductive health and rights as essential foundations for healthier families, stronger communities, and sustainable national development.

Culture & Arts

Alemuye: Eritrea's Iconic Love Song

By: Kidane Shimendi

In the fertile plains of Zoba Gash Barka—Eritrea's breadbasket, renowned for its vast farmlands and bountiful harvests—music is woven into the rhythm of daily life. From his earliest childhood, the traditional work songs echoing across the fields captivated young Arodi Tolli Kumella. Whether humming alone or singing beside his neighbors, those melodies sparked a lifelong dream: to become a celebrated singer whose voice would carry far beyond his home.

Driven by that dream, Arodi began performing at local cultural gatherings, where his natural gift quickly set him apart. He could absorb melodies effortlessly and play them back with striking fluency, and soon people across the area were talking about his warm, captivating voice. His reputation grew even further when he mastered the Abangala, a traditional stringed instrument whose soulful resonance became the signature companion to his singing.

Eventually, Arodi left his birth village of Binbina for Barentu, the capital of Gash Barka, eager to share his Kunama music with a wider audience. Life in Barentu carried a familiar, joyful rhythm until one ordinary evening changed the course of his life forever.

Out with two close friends to enjoy Daga, a popular traditional drink, Arodi stepped into a local bar and laid eyes on a young woman who instantly captured his heart. His friends teased her playfully, joking that they were going to marry her, and Arodi joined in the banter. Yet beneath the laughter, his feelings were entirely real. Her name was Alemuye, and from that moment on, she became the center of his world. Evening after evening, as the sun dipped below the horizon, Arodi returned to the bar just to catch a glimpse of her. Though he confided in his friends that she had stolen his heart, he could never muster the courage to confess his feelings directly, settling instead for telling jokes just to watch her smile and laugh.

Then, one evening, Arodi walked into the bar as usual and his heart sank. His eyes swept the room, but Alemuye was nowhere to be found. Overcome with longing, he set out on a tireless search across nearby villages, traveling to Shambqo, Binbina, and Bushuka without finding a single trace of her. Eventually, word reached him that she had moved to Sudan. He poured his hopes into a letter and sent it across the border, only to be met with silence. Months later, rumors of her return to Barentu rekindled his hope, sending him rushing back to the very bar where they had first met—yet every search ended in emptiness.

Without Alemuye, darkness seemed to swallow Arodi's world. Losing her felt like losing his sun, stripping away his joy, his hope, and his will to carry on. After one final, fruitless search at a neighborhood shop left him utterly broken, he walked outside in despair, ready to end his life with poison. Yet in that darkest hour, a quiet voice within urged him not to die in silence, but to build an eternal tribute to his love through the one gift he possessed: his music.

Picking up his Abangala, Arodi poured every ounce of his ache, devotion, and unspoken longing into a song titled "Alemuye." As he traveled from place to place performing it, something extraordinary happened. What began as one man's private heartbreak struck a national chord, crossing regional and linguistic boundaries to find a home in the hearts of people across Eritrea. By immortalizing Alemuye in melody, Arodi inadvertently carved a lasting place for himself in the soul of his nation. The song did not just bring him acclaim; it saved his life, replacing unbearable grief with enduring purpose and joy.

In the years that followed, Arodi found healing and a bright second chapter. He married, built a loving family, and joined a cultural troupe, continuing to farm the land by day and share his music by night in Barentu—where one of his children has now inherited his passion for the Abangala. Meanwhile, according to the latest word that has reached him, Alemuye lives in Sudan as a mother, entirely unaware that her name lives on in one of Eritrea's most cherished songs.

Though Arodi has composed many pieces over the years, none has ever eclipsed "Alemuye," which stands today as a timeless classic celebrated by generations as a pure expression of love. Ultimately, Arodi Tolli Kumella's journey is a testament to the redemptive power of art. While his silent yearning reminds us not to leave our deepest feelings unspoken, his refusal to surrender to despair proves that even the heaviest heartbreak can be transformed into something luminous, enduring, and life-giving.





Excerpt from the Song

My people, people of Biyara, lean in and hear my cry,
People of Barentu, of the radiant white land, listen to my words.
The heart of my message is love, so hear me closely now:
Alemuye! Alemuye!
I set out from Barentu, wandering as far as Binbina,
Yet Binbina held no trace of my Alem.
From Binbina I journeyed onward to Shambqo,
Still, my eyes could not find Alem.
Without Alem, the bread I eat holds no taste,
Without Alem, the water I drink brings no relief.
No word I speak, no tale I tell, can soothe this aching chest,
For I have not found Alem, and my love for her has grown too vast to bear.



SpotLight

The Red Sea Illusion: Confronting Expansionist Myth with Historical Facts

Part I

Habtom Tesfamichael

History can be described as the compass of human society. As a social science discipline, it preserves a people's collective memory, records their aspirations, and documents the evolution of their moral, political, and material values. As we navigate the complexities of the present and chart our path into the future, the past offers indispensable lessons, enabling nations to draw from earlier experiences, correct systemic mistakes, and foster genuine regional coexistence. Crucially, no society has ever existed in total isolation. Throughout the ages, communities across the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea basin have evolved through continuous interaction, mutual exchange, cultural borrowing, and economic complementarity with their neighbors. To understand this dynamic, an honest grasp of history is imperative. Ignorance of one's history leaves a society wandering aimlessly, blind to its origins, disoriented in the present, and utterly incapable of navigating the challenges of the future. In both the founding and preservation of any nation, history provides the essential bedrock for the shared consciousness and common understanding that binds a people together.

Yet, history is neither neutral nor immune to manipulation. Fundamental questions must always be asked: How is that history recorded? How authentic is it? Whom does it represent or serve, and under what specific political conditions was it written? When history is weaponized by expansionist elites to artificially inflate their standing beyond their rightful geographical and political borders, it ceases to be an instrument of truth and enlightenment, mutating instead into an ideological pretext for hegemonic aggression. Today, our region is once again confronted by this dangerous phenomenon: the resurfacing of reckless irredentist rhetoric from the political and academic establishments in Addis Ababa. By questioning Eritrean sovereignty, disputing its territorial integrity, and floating coercive rhetoric to secure "sovereign access to the sea," modern Ethiopian discourse has sought refuge in fabricated historical myths. To confront this revisionism, we must liberate our region's historiography from the distortions of feudal myth-making and colonial manipulation, bringing facts and fairytales face to face, and anchoring our collective consciousness firmly in verifiable archaeological, historical, and legal reality.

Northeast Africa and the Horn of Africa are globally recognized as the evolutionary cradle of humankind, possessing an archaeological record unmatched in its prehistoric antiquity and cultural depth. Extensive archaeological discoveries, including the one-million-year-old cranium of early hominids unearthed at Buya in the Eritrean Danakil depression, affirm that the geographic area comprising modern-day Eritrea was an essential theater in the origin and development of early human ancestors and the subsequent migrations of modern humans across the globe. As human societies transitioned from nomadic foraging to settled existence, the fertile plateaus and coastal plains of Eritrea gave birth to indigenous, self-sustaining civilizations. Archaeological excavations across the Asmara plateau have brought to light the sophisticated Ona civilization, flourishing between 800 BCE and 400 BCE at ancient sites such as Sembel, Mai Chihot, and Ona Gudo. The Ona culture represents one of the earliest urban, agro-pastoral communities in the Horn, characterized by developed stone architecture, indigenous ceramic technologies, and organized pastoral economies that developed long before any imperial centralized structures emerged in the northern highlands.

As urban polities developed further during the first millennium BCE, a constellation of flourishing highland settlements emerged across what is today sovereign Eritrean territory. Archaeological evidence demonstrates that sites such as Qohaito, Matara, Keskese, Ham, and Der'a developed as centers concurrently with, and in several instances well before, the rise of the Aksumite kingdom. Positioned strategically along fertile highland corridors overlooking the descent to the coast, these ancient settlements functioned as vital manufacturing hubs, religious centers, and bustling commercial nodes that facilitated the movement of goods, ideas, and technologies between the inland agricultural communities and the Red Sea coast. They developed their own distinct regional identities, architectural traditions, and socioeconomic networks, demonstrating that the northern plateaus possessed a dynamic civilizational life entirely independent of southern feudal control.

The primary anchor of ancient maritime civilization in the northern Horn was the renowned port city-state of Adulis, situated on the Gulf of Zula along the Eritrean coast. Known to classical antiquity and documented meticulously by Graeco-Roman geographers - most notably in the first-century Greek navigational guide, the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea - Adulis flourished from at least the second century BCE through the seventh century of the common era. Adulis was a vibrant, self-governing maritime metropolis that maintained its own autonomous political identity and maritime economy. It served as the preeminent commercial and cultural gateway linking the African interior with the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Mediterranean basin. Through Adulis flowed ivory, obsidian, tortoiseshell, and aromatics, balanced by imports of Roman glassware, Mediterranean olive oil and wine, Indian textiles, and Arabian metals. Furthermore, Adulis stood out as an international diplomatic crossroads, dispatching some of the earliest recorded diplomatic missions from the African coast to overseas empires.

The kingdom of Aksum, situated far inland in the rugged mountainous terrain of modern-day Tigray region, rose to political, commercial, and military prominence largely because of its access to the global trade routes anchored at Adulis. Because Aksum was landlocked and situated deep in the interior, it lacked the direct capacity to engage in maritime seafaring on its own. While Aksum eventually grew to become the political and administrative capital of an expansive inland realm, Adulis functioned as the indispensable economic conduit through which its foreign trade and diplomatic connections passed. To retrospectively project modern Ethiopian state ownership over the sovereign ancient soil of Adulis and the Eritrean coastline is a flagrant distortion of classical history. Commercial partnerships, mutual economic dependencies, and shifting spheres of influence in antiquity do not constitute a legal, hereditary deed for modern territorial conquest.

In stark contrast to this tangible archaeological and epigraphic reality, successive Ethiopian regimes have long cultivated the romanticized dogma of an unbroken, continuous three-thousand-year-old empire. For generations, this narrative was systematically inculcated through state-sponsored literature, religious chronicles, and imperial school curricula, gradually seeping into academic discourse and being uncritically recycled by domestic elites and foreign commentators alike. This monumental myth was designed to construct an ancient genealogical pedigree for modern state power, establishing an illusion of uninterrupted imperial longevity.

The primary ideological architecture behind this grand fabrication was the fourteenth-century Ge'ez text, the Kebra Nagast, composed more than two millennia after the events it claimed to describe. The Kebra Nagast concocted the foundational legend of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon of Jerusalem, asserting that their union produced Menelik I, the mythical founder of the Solomonic dynasty. This medieval narrative was created for an explicitly partisan political purpose: to legitimize the usurping monarch Yekuno Amlak, who overthrew the Zagwe dynasty in 1270, by inventing a divine biblical lineage that supposedly granted his descendants a perpetual right to rule. Rigorous modern historical and philological scholarship has long discarded the Solomonic genealogy as pure theological mythology and medieval court propaganda. Yet, contemporary Ethiopian expansionist rhetoric continues to rely on this romanticized fairytale, conflating biblical mythology with modern international statehood in an effort to present modern Ethiopia as the natural, divine heir to the entire geography of the Horn of Africa, including the Red Sea coast.

From this foundational myth emerges the contemporary Ethiopian political establishment's obsession with a historical claim to the Red Sea. Political actors and revisionist intellectuals in Addis Ababa routinely argue that Ethiopia was historically a maritime empire that was somehow artificially cut off from its natural coastline by colonial machinations and modern borders. However, an exhaustive examination of primary historical sources, archival documentation, and European, Ottoman, Arab, and indigenous chronicles yields an inescapable truth: the feudal monarchs and regional princes of the Abyssinian interior never exercised legitimate administrative sovereignty over the Red Sea littoral or its ports.

Throughout the centuries following the collapse of Aksum, the center of Abyssinian political power shifted inexorably southward, into the isolated, landlocked mountain strongholds of Lasta, Shewa, and Gondar. The medieval and early-modern Abyssinian state was quintessentially agrarian, insular, and terrestrial. Its feudal ruling class possessed neither maritime fleets, nor a merchant marine, nor naval traditions, nor any administrative apparatus capable of governing coastal environments. The rugged mountain escarpments served as a formidable geographic barrier, and Abyssinian feudal armies, accustomed to highland terrain and terrified of the arid coastal climate and lowland tropical diseases, rarely ventured toward the sea.

The chronicles of the most powerful Abyssinian medieval monarchs - such as Amda Seyon, Zara Yaqob, Bieda Maryam, and later the Gondarine emperors like Fasilides and Iyasu - demonstrate that these rulers never established a permanent presence on the Red Sea coast, nor did they ever set foot in the historic port of Massawa. The periodic military expeditions launched by highland monarchs into the northern periphery were predatory raids driven by the pursuit of livestock, tribute, and captives, rather than expressions of institutional governance. Once these seasonal incursions ended, the raiding armies retreated back to their highland redoubts, leaving the local populations to govern their own affairs. Transient plunder is not sovereignty, and tributary extortion does not establish a historical title of ownership under any standard of historiography or law.

From the early medieval era, the Red Sea coast was integrated into wider regional and maritime networks. Along the Dahlak Archipelago, the independent Muslim Sultanate of Dahlak flourished from the ninth century onward, minting its own coinage, conducting sophisticated maritime diplomacy, and commanding trade across the Red Sea basin long before Abyssinia had any meaningful awareness of the outer maritime world.

On the mainland, the highland territory north of the Mereb River - historically known as Medri Bahri, meaning the Land of the Sea - established its own distinctive autonomous political institutions under the leadership of the Bahri Negasi, the Ruler of the Sea. While

The Bahri Negasi occasionally forged tactical alliances or entered into tributary arrangements with highland neighbors when it served their immediate security interests, Medri Bahri maintained its own customary laws, decentralized democratic communal councils, and distinct political trajectory. Medri Bahri fiercely defended its territorial autonomy against encroaching feudal armies from the south, consistently asserting its independence as a distinct political entity.

Continued on page 6

Statement by Mr. Tesfai Gebreselasie, Minister of Land, Water and Environment – At COP 31

Hon. COP 31st President
Excellences heads of delegation
Esteemed COP 31st participants
Ladies and gentlemen;

First, allow me to thank the people and Government of Türkiye for their warm hospitality to my delegation and for hosting COP 31 in such excellent facilities.

I also congratulate you on your election to serve as COP 31 president.

COP 31 is convening at a very critical global climatic juncture. Global temperature rise and intensified El Nino effects experienced during the outgoing year are worse than what have been recorded in any of the past 11 consecutive years, which are known to have been the hottest years.

Unchecked reckless human activities are still driving our planet Earth into an irreversible climate crisis. Failure to correct past and present mistakes is unsettling and historically unpardonable

In this regard, my delegation representing Eritrea, a country in the Horn of Africa – a region hard hit by climate change, is among those better placed to give firsthand account on the menace that climate change can cascade on the livelihoods of tens of millions of people.

Mr. President,
Excellences heads of delegation,
Ladies and gentlemen!

In a bid to cope with the changing climate, my country has embarked on adaptation strategy. Under this non-optional strategy, programs that involve intensive nature-based solutions have been underway towards enhancing resilience of communities.

Soil and water conservation, including construction of medium and micro-dams, ((more than 800 built), development of potable water supply systems equipped with solar pumps in rural communities, expansion of marine and terrestrial protected areas and planting trees are some of our success stories worth mentioning.

Yet, we are fully aware that our fragile and dire environment requires more investment and tenacious generational commitment.

Energy shortage is another major problem that stands on our developmental endeavors. The recent war in the Middle East, an immediate neighbor of our region, has been consequential in aggravating the challenge.

In an attempt to alleviate the energy problem, we have been able to integrate this year, 30 MW of electric power generated in a recently installed mini solar power plant, to the existing grid.

From the very modest investment made in the stated solar power plant and other standalone mini solar plants, we have learned an important practical lesson on the immense potential available for us to turn the scorching Sun light into a blessing. Scaling up the benefits of the potential is, of course, a matter of financing and capacity building.

In compliance with requirements under the Convention and subsequent decisions passed in COPs, Eritrea has submitted its 3rd Generation of NDC that declares its ambitious climate action commitment.

My delegation reiterates Eritrea's unflinching commitment to UNFCCC. Its fundamental tenets make it an important platform around which all parties ought to rally to save planet Earth from the lurking climate menace. Indeed, the Convention as such is undoubtedly one of the great achievements of our generation. The hard work exerted in all COPs is indeed notable.

Nonetheless, the tragic absurdity of the prevalent world order, that allows billions of dollars to be squandered for conducting wars that inflict unbearable suffering on innocent people, but at the same time fails to give due and primary attention to the life-threatening climate crisis that we have been grappling with, is very unsettling.

The sluggish process of the whole climate negotiations, delays and sometimes backslidings from pledged commitments, most of which are not even commensurate with the gravity of the challenges and with the solutions recommended by science is hard to accept.

Unless one does not wish to be untruthful to their conscience, it is difficult to fathom what we have been witnessing. More than frustration, this is impelling us to raise fundamental questions of trust and hope in the whole process.

In the event and for the sake of the hundreds of millions who are already suffering from climate related plight; and, for the sake of future generations; my delegation urges all parties, and particularly the parties whose input can make a difference, to raise their commitment in order to make COP 31 in Antalya an event where dialogue translates into action.

I thank you all for your attention
Antalya, Turkiye
9-20 November 2026



PUBLIC SEMINARS FOR NATIONALS . . . .

Continued from page 1

Consular Affairs, held seminars in St. Louis and Des Moines. Dr. Gideon Abay and Mr. Mihreteab Andebrhan, heads of Eritrean national committees, held similar seminars in Grand Rapids, Nashville and Sioux Falls.

The participants said they were following developments closely and expressed their readiness to devote their time and skills to safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their homeland.



The Red Sea Illusion: Confrontin .....

Continued from page 5

Furthermore, in the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire established direct control over the Red Sea coast, transforming Massawa, the Dahlak Archipelago, and the surrounding littoral into the Ottoman province of Habesh. For centuries, the ports of the Red Sea were governed through Ottoman and local administrative arrangements. The hereditary local rulers of Hirgigo, drawing their authority from local coastal communities and Ottoman investiture, controlled maritime customs, security, and trade routes between the coast and the interior. To reach the Red Sea, Abyssinian travelers and merchants had to pay tolls and secure transit permissions from the sovereign coastal authorities. When Abyssinian monarchs faced existential threats during the sixteenth-century conflicts with regional powers, they did not dispatch their own navies to the sea; instead, they desperately pleaded for external maritime rescue from the Portuguese empire, explicitly acknowledging their own complete powerlessness upon the waters.

When European travelers, diplomats, and missionaries visited the region - from Francisco Alvares in the sixteenth century to James Bruce in the eighteenth century and Henry Salt in the nineteenth century - they uniformly documented that the authority of Abyssinian monarchs ended abruptly in the highlands of present-day Ethiopia.

The southern coastal plains and the Danakil depression were equally defined by independent pastoralist societies, predominantly the Afar and Saho people. The Afar people organized themselves into autonomous sultanates, such as the Sultanate of Rahayta and the Sultanate of Tadjoura, maintaining an unbroken tradition of sovereignty over the desert coast and the southern Red Sea gates.

During the nineteenth century, as the fragmented feudal polities of the Abyssinian plateau underwent violent centralization, the relationship between the interior lords and the peoples of the northern borderlands deteriorated into severe predatory warfare. During the era of Emperor Yohannes IV and his military commander Ras Alula, the feudal armies of Tigray launched devastating, recurrent raids across the Mereb River. These military incursions were characterized by the systematic plundering of highland farming villages, the burning of grain reserves, the looting of livestock, and widespread atrocities against the diverse populations of the region, including the plateau peasantry, the Afar, the Saho, the Kunama, and the Nara. These destructive campaigns were not acts of administrative state-building; they were predatory, extractive campaigns that alienated the local populations and deeply entrenched the consciousness of their distinct identity and political separation from the Abyssinian interior.

It was precisely within this historical context of regional autonomy and profound resistance to feudal Abyssinian incursions that the modern Eritrean state crystallized in the late nineteenth century. The entry of Italian colonialism into the Red Sea basin - beginning with the acquisition of the port of Assab in 1869 and the occupation of Massawa in 1885—did not dismember a unified, pre-existing Ethiopian state. Rather, Italy consolidated the diverse coastal entities, the domain of Medri Bahri, and the western lowlands into a unified geographic and political entity, officially proclaiming the Colony of Eritrea on January 1, 1890.

The formal demarcation of Eritrea's international borders was concluded through explicit, legally binding Treaty of Wuchale in 1889, followed by the border demarcation agreements of July 10, 1900, May 15, 1902, and May 16, 1908. Modern Ethiopia's legal foundations were, thus, built on the very treaties that recognized Eritrea's inviolable borders.

ADS

Euro film Festival Asmara 2026

23rd to 28th of November



CINEMA ROMA

OPENING TIME: 18:30PM

SCREENED WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

18TH EURO FILM FESTIVAL IN ASMARA 2026

European Union · Ambassade de France en Erythrée · Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany Asmara · Embassy of Italy Asmara · Office of the Embassy of Sweden in Asmara



NIEBEZPIECZNI ZENTELMENI (Dangerous Men), 2022
POLAND, Comedy/Crime
105 min

Joseph Conrad and three other notorious artists wake up after a crazy party with a dead man on their couch with no clue who he was, why he's dead, or why the gendarme is knocking at the door.

FREE ENTRANCE

Wednesday, 25th of November
Time: 18:30 pm



LA MOSSA DEL PINGUINO (The Move of the Penguin), 2013, ITALY, Comedy/Sport
94 min

Four friends discover the sport of curling, and, convinced of their potential, decide to form a team for the Winter Olympic Games of Turin 2006.

FREE ENTRANCE

Friday, 27th of November
Time: 18:30 pm



RIEN À DÉCLARER (Nothing to declare), 2010, FRANCE – BELGIUM, Comedy
103 min

A Belge-Francophone customs officer is forced to team up with a French counter part during the elimination of the Franco-Belge borders in the 90s.

FREE ENTRANCE

Monday, 23rd of November
Time: 18:30 pm



Mountain Miracle, 2017, GERMANY, Adventure,
97 min

A girl struggling with asthma is taken to a clinic in South Tyrol to be cured. After some time she decides to get out of this hell (that's how she feels about it) and soon she meets a new friend. Together they try to reach the peak of a mountain where, according to an old custom, she can be healed.

FREE ENTRANCE

Tuesday, 24th of November
Time: 18:30 pm



LUZZU, 2021, MALTA, Drama
95 min

A man risks everything to provide for his wife and newborn son by entering Malta's black-market fishing industry.

FREE ENTRANCE

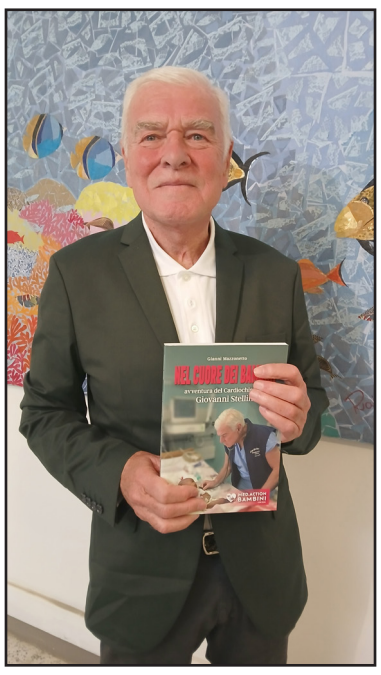
Saturday, 28th of November
Time: 18:30 pm

Q and A

Celebrating Professor Giovanni Stellin in Eritrea

By: Sabrina Solomon

An event was held in Asmara to celebrate Professor Giovanni Stellin following the publication of his new book, which recounts his medical career and his work around the world—particularly in Eritrea. Alongside his team from Italy, Prof. Stellin has traveled to Eritrea for more than two decades to help children living with heart conditions. Below are highlights from remarks made by speakers and attendees at the event.



Prof. Giovanni Stellin

Prof. Giovanni Stellin — MED. ACTION BAMBINI

Tell us about the event today.

This is a great event organized by Pietro Zambaiti. We started 22 years ago to help children with heart problems. As you know, out of every 100 children born around the world, at least one is born with a heart condition. In Europe, operating on these children is routine, but here, unfortunately, there was no such program for treating children with heart disease. Sharing this program with local medical professionals here has been fantastic so far.

We have already achieved our first goal: helping children with heart problems live healthy, normal lives. The second goal—which isn't achieved yet, but will be very soon—is establishing a completely independent Eritrean team. I am training two young doctors who are very skilled with their hands, so there will be a future for Eritrea to sustain a program that is very rare in this part of Africa. That is our push: to help you become completely independent.

I have been coming here for the last 22 years. Before I grow older and can no longer make the trip, I wanted to fulfill my dream of establishing an independent Eritrean team to treat children with heart conditions.

You have also inaugurated a book about your experience in heart surgery. Please tell us about that.

Yes, I have written a book that has just been published about my journey inside the cardiac surgery world. It is a book that also reflects a little on my life and my first heart transplant. In addition, it highlights the concluding chapter of my career alongside the program we are building in Eritrea. I am dedicated to this work because I want to see the goal of complete local independence fulfilled. Written in Italian—and soon to be translated into English—the book traces my career and how I developed such a deep affection for Eritrean children.

Regarding the section you wrote about Eritrea, How many lives have you touched, and how many more do you hope to reach?

As you know, together with our team we have operated on around 1,700 children with heart conditions. Beyond surgery, we are working with local colleagues and two of Italy's major, oldest universities to build a partnership with the University of Asmara in Eritrea. The aim is to create a structured teaching program—not only for surgeons, but also for cardiologists, nurses, and intensive care staff.

Professor, tell us about your team and its vision for the years ahead in Eritrea.

The team is very well structured. It is vital that the younger generation joins us in this mission. The young professionals working in our hospital are taking their institutional leave to come here. That commitment is hugely important, driven by a genuine desire to help children born with heart conditions. They feel a strong sense of responsibility, and that is what pushes us to keep going with the same enthusiasm. I am confident we will establish a fully independent Eritrean team. Once I reach an age where I can no longer travel here, young surgeons and nurses will be ready to carry the program forward. I can promise that the program will continue.

If you were to sum up Eritrea and your experience with Eritreans in a single paragraph, what would it be?

We feel an emotional connection to Eritrea, given the long historical ties between Italians and Eritrea over 60 years, and it is always meaningful to hear people and children speaking Italian. Beyond that, the gratitude we receive from these children and their families drives us forward time and again. The people here are wonderful, and I want to share that story with the rest of the world. I speak about the Eritrean pediatric heart program at many institutions internationally because it deserves to be known.

Thank you so much professor, Is there any message you would like to share?

My message is simple: let's continue. Europe is the closest continent to Africa, and Eritrea has a capable, dedicated workforce. We need to come together and join forces to make our world a little better. Thank you.

Pietro Zambaiti — ZaEr Plc.

Can you briefly tell us why we are gathered here today?

Sometimes, when timing and friendships align, I like to bring people together for a gathering of gratitude. Every so often, we need to pause in life and say thank you to those who trust and believe in us. Progress depends on trust between people—things change and move forward only when trust is there. That is how we have built lasting friendships. I have met and become like brothers with people such as Professor Giovanni and many Eritreans. We are here to honor and connect the history and friendship between Italy and Eritrea. As an Italian team, we want to keep building bridges between our two countries.



Mr. Pietro Zambaiti

Alfonso Di Riso — Ambassador of Italy to the State of Eritrea

Mr. Ambassador, why are we here today?

We are here because Pietro Zambaiti organized this event with Italian NGOs that have been operating in Eritrea for nearly two decades. They work in the healthcare sector under the ownership of the Eritrean Ministry of Health, helping train Eritrean doctors so they can become increasingly skilled and self-reliant.

Today we especially celebrate Prof. Giovanni Stellin and the book he has written about his experiences, including his work in Eritrea. What would you say about that?



Ambassador Alfonso Di Riso

Professor Giovanni has been one of the pioneers of heart transplantation in Italy and one of the leaders of the Italian cardiology community. He chose to dedicate this stage of his career to Eritrea, coming here twice a year to help train Eritrean doctors. He wrote a book about his journey around the world and especially here in Eritrea, and he is both a fantastic doctor and a wonderful person.

Professor Stellin has been coming here for almost two decades, Mr. Ambassador, playing a role in bilateral relations between Italy and Eritrea. How do you view that?

Italian civil society—which NGOs represent—has always had a presence in Eritrea and will continue to be present, so that in itself is no surprise. However, I am very honored to be here today, and I hope everyone recognizes that supporting this work is one of our core priorities in Eritrea.

Dr. Mary Stephen — WHO Representative to Eritrea

First, I would like to thank the Italian doctors for their support to the Eritrean health system. This is truly lifesaving work. Such interventions are vital for patients who once faced a very limited prognosis, giving them the chance at a long-term solution. Dialysis, for instance, keeps patients alive—and while it is prohibitively expensive in many countries, it is encouraging to see dialysis provided free of charge in Eritrea so patients can live normal lives like anyone else.

We also want to thank the cardiologists for providing lifesaving care to children born with heart conditions and for contributing to Eritrea's broader development. These children are the future of Eritrea, and ensuring they receive care is essential. This is a significant contribution to the health system as a whole—spanning from early detection to treatment—and we deeply appreciate it.

We also commend the Government of Eritrea for opening its doors to make these partnerships possible. Even when partners have the capacity to help, impact is limited without government collaboration, so we are grateful for the leadership and openness that allow these services to thrive. Most importantly, I was encouraged to hear about the commitment to building independent local capacity, and I hope this work continues to grow.



Dr. Mary Stephen