

WORKSHOP ON MASSAWA HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE REVITALIZATION PLAN



The Commission of Culture and Sports today organized a workshop at the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers Hall on the revitalization plan for Massawa's historical architecture.

Ambassador Zemed Tekle, Commissioner of Culture and Sports, highlighted the research being conducted in the cultural sector, particularly on tangible heritage, with the aim of preservation and raising public awareness. He noted that the workshop will make a significant contribution in sharing information and ideas for the conservation of

historical buildings in the port city of Massawa.

At the workshop, research papers were presented on topics including: Background and Historiography of Buildings; High-level Digitalization Models; Asmara's Heritage Experience During the Nomination and Post-nomination Process; Conservation and Management Principles of Built Heritage; and the Inventory and Documentation of Historical Architecture in Massawa, as well as in Akordat and Keren.

Professor Solomon Tesfamariam,

Lecturer in Civil, Environmental, and Engineering Studies at the University of Waterloo in Canada, delivered a presentation on samples of Massawa's historical buildings, supported by a digital demonstration.

The participants, recognizing the significance of the workshop, adopted several recommendations. These included giving due consideration to both past and future aspects during renovation, ensuring conservation efforts account for natural calamities, and strengthening integrated management and coordination among partners.

EFFORT TO ADDRESS DEMANDS OF HEALTH FACILITIES

Mr. Mateos Gebrezgiabier, Acting Manager of the Pharmaceutical and Medical Supplies Corporation of Eritrea (PHARMECOR), reported that the corporation is working to meet the medical and pharmaceutical needs of health facilities.

Mr. Mateos explained that PHARMECOR distributes imported medicines and medical equipment to health facilities under the Ministry of Health, as well as to private pharmacies, at fair prices. He added that the corporation also distributes 35 types of medicines produced by Azel Pharmaceutical Share Company.

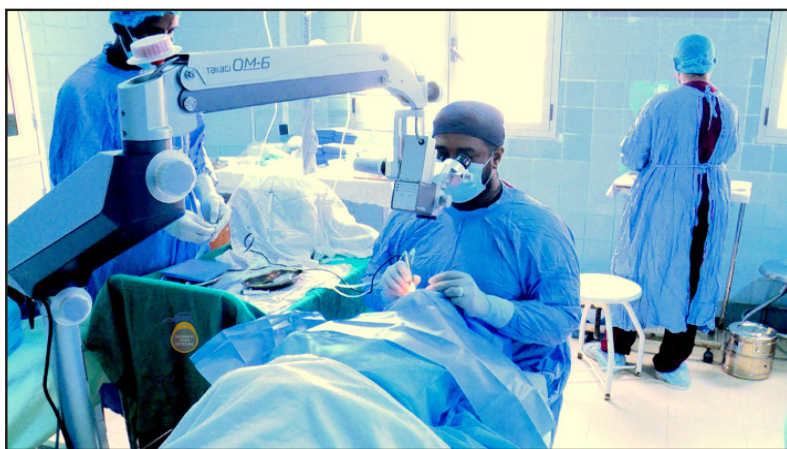
He further noted that strict technical, quality, and financial inspections are conducted in collaboration with the National Food and Medicine Safety Control,

both before procurement and before the items are put into service. He went on to state that in the first half of 2025, medicines and medical equipment worth over \$ 8 million were imported, while drugs valued at over \$ 42 million Nakfa were produced by Azel Pharmaceutical Share Company and the Orotta Oxygen Producing Plant.

Indicating that medicines and medical equipment worth 351 million Nakfa were distributed to health facilities nationwide during the same period, Mr. Mateos stated that 85% of the distribution went to facilities under the Ministry of Health, while the remaining 15% was allocated to other government institutions and private pharmacies. He also noted that more than 23,000 cubic meters of oxygen were distributed to health facilities across the country.



SUCCESSFUL CATARACT SURGERY IN KEREN HOSPITAL



In collaboration with the Sudanese Albeser Ophthalmologists team, successful cataract surgeries were conducted on more than 400 patients at Keren Hospital between 21 and 26 August.

Mr. Alem Zekarias, Director of National Blindness Control at the Ministry of Health, said that diagnostic services were provided to 2,500 patients, of whom 427 underwent cataract surgery, while the others received medication and eyeglasses.

Mr. Alem explained that although cataract surgeries are carried out with internal capacity, the cooperation with the Sudanese Albeser Ophthalmologists team helps reduce the burden on hospitals while promoting knowledge sharing and technology transfer. He also called on those with eye problems to seek early treatment and to regularly follow up on their condition.

The beneficiaries expressed gratitude for the surgical opportunity that restored their vision.

Similar eye surgeries, in collaboration with the Sudanese Albeser Ophthalmologists team, were also conducted last week at Adi-Keih Hospital.

MEETING TO BOOST AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN GASH BARKA REGION

Ambassador Mahmud Ali Hirui, Governor of the Gash Barka Region, conducted meetings from August 21 to 26 in the sub-zones of Barentu, Teseney, Tokombia, Akordat, and Shambuko, discussing the role of agricultural experts in expanding farmland and enhancing production in both quantity and quality.

The meetings, which brought together over 450 agricultural heads, experts, and sub-zone administrators, focused on increasing agricultural output, enhancing livestock resources, and strengthening the role

of institutions engaged in agricultural development.

Ambassador Mahmud called for the implementation of measurable agricultural activities led by experts, supported by sustainable follow-up and assessment. He noted that delays in preparation by agricultural experts, weak performance in water and soil conservation, and limited information on land usage are among the factors hindering productivity. He also stressed the importance of land distribution based on productivity and revising water and soil conservation

activities.

Ambassador Mahmud further underlined that in 2025, strong efforts are being exerted to cultivate 290,000 hectares of rain-fed land and more than 10,000 hectares of irrigated land. He called for the active participation of agricultural experts and administrators at all levels to ensure the effective implementation of the program.

The participants conducted extensive discussions on the issues raised and adopted several recommendations and resolutions.



Workshop on Massawa Historical Architectural Revitalization Plan

Mussie Efriem

Cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible materials, represents the accumulated knowledge, traditions, and creations of human societies throughout history, which serve as a direct link to the past, providing insights into the values, beliefs, and way of life of the ancestors. Among these, architectural legacies hold a particularly significant place as tangible manifestations of a civilization's technological prowess, artistic expression, and social structure. They stand as silent witnesses to historical events and serve as powerful reminders of a people's journey through time.

Eritrea possesses a wealth of tangible architectural heritage that has endured for millennia, showcasing the creativity and ingenuity of its ancient societies. This rich legacy includes a diverse array of impressive structures and artifacts that tell the story of the nation's past. One notable example is the stone steles in the country. These massive, carved monoliths are believed to have served as funerary monuments or commemorative markers, representing a remarkable feat of engineering and artistic skill.

Their intricate designs and sheer size speak volumes about the sophistication and organizational abilities of the societies that created them.

Another significant site is Adulis, an ancient port city that was once a central hub for trade on the Red Sea. The archaeological remains at Adulis reveal a unique blend of architectural styles, reflecting its role as a crossroads of civilizations. The city's structures and artifacts, including its unique architectural works, provide valuable insights into the trade networks, cultural exchanges, and daily life of its

drawing visitors who contribute to local economies through tourism-related spending. This can stimulate the creation of jobs in hospitality, retail, and heritage management. These sites also act as invaluable educational resources, offering a hands-on learning experience for students of history, art, architecture, and urban planning.

As part of the efforts to preserve these cultural heritages, the Commission of Culture and Sports organized a workshop on 28 August, which was held at the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers Hall in Asmara,



Ambassador Zemed Tekle

local Eritrean styles, each layer telling a story of the empires and cultures that have shaped the city. The Ottoman influence is visible in the old port area, while the Italian influence is seen in the distinct style of art deco and rationalist architecture built during the Italian colonial period.

Whether they are known or still remain anonymous, the architects of Massawa worked in harmony with the local environment, utilizing materials such as coral and limestone to create structures that are not only aesthetically unique but also well-adapted to the hot, humid climate. Unfortunately, Massawa's architectural heritage has faced significant challenges, including damage from wars and the natural effects of time and weather. That's why the ongoing efforts to restore and preserve these buildings are crucial. These efforts are not merely about preserving physical structures but also about protecting the city's unique identity, its historical narrative, and its potential as a

cultural and economic hub for Eritrea and the wider region. By restoring its architectural legacies, Massawa can reclaim its status as a historical and cultural gem, leveraging its past to build a sustainable and prosperous future.

Ambassador Zemed Tekle, Commissioner of Culture and Sports, underlined the research being conducted in the cultural sector, particularly on tangible heritage, in order to preserve them and raise public awareness. He noted that the workshop will make a significant contribution in sharing information and ideas for the preservation of historical buildings in the port city of Massawa. Dr. Tsegay Medhin, Director of Archaeological Research at the Commission of Culture and Sports and coordinator of the workshop, said that it is a key component of a broader national initiative to preserve Eritrea's rich cultural heritage. The primary goal of the workshop, he added, was to create a collaborative platform for discussion and to enhance the research plans for the revitalization of Massawa's historical architecture. This was achieved by bringing together a diverse group of experts from various sectors and academic fields. The strategic collaboration aims to ensure that the revitalization plan is not only historically accurate and culturally sensitive but also structurally sound and sustainable for the future. The integration of

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inhabitants. Collectively, the architectural works of these old Eritrean societies represent a defining feature of the country's cultural identity. They are not merely historical relics but tangible proof of the advanced skills and artistic expression of ancient Eritreans.

The preservation of architectural legacies is of paramount importance for several reasons. Firstly, it safeguards historical memory. These buildings and structures are not merely bricks and mortar; they are historical evidence that tell the story of a place and its people. By preserving them, we ensure that future generations can physically connect with their history and understand the context from which they emerged. This is crucial for fostering a sense of identity and continuity.

Furthermore, architectural preservation plays a vital role in economic development. Historic buildings and districts often become major tourist attractions,

to discuss the revitalization plan for Massawa's historical architecture. Massawa is one of Eritrea's oldest cities, rich in tangible cultural legacies. Massawa's unique architectural legacy is a testament to its long and complex history as a significant trading hub. The city's buildings reflect a blend of different influences, including Ottoman, Egyptian, Italian, and



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OPINION & ANALYSIS

Eritrea Miscast: Setting the Record Straight

Bana Negusse

In recent months, Eritrea has increasingly found itself the subject of organized campaigns of vilification. Detractors, often driven by political zealotry or hidden agendas, have sought to portray the country as an outlier bent on undermining its neighbours. Among the most persistent accusations is the claim that Eritrea harbours “perennial ill will” toward Ethiopia and is determined to disrupt its economic progress.

Notwithstanding their vitriol, reach, and intensity, however, such narratives collapse under scrutiny. They disregard Eritrea’s historical experience and national principles, while distorting its vision for regional cooperation and prosperity.

First off, Eritrea’s outlook toward the Horn of Africa has never been framed in terms of rivalry. On the contrary, the country’s development strategy is rooted in the conviction that peace and progress anywhere in the region strengthen stability everywhere. This principle is not new; it has been articulated repeatedly by GOE officials and policymakers and is clearly enshrined in the National Charter. The document outlines Eritrea’s vision, affirming that its foreign policy must serve “peace and stability in our region and in the world,” and enhance cooperation with all governments and peoples. It further states that “economic and cultural development have positive correlations with and cannot be optimized in isolation from the surrounding and other countries”. It stresses the importance of building “active and comprehensive cooperation with our neighbours and throughout the world.”

For Eritrea, prosperity is not a finite resource to be hoarded, but something that is multiplied when neighbors advance together. The suggestion that Eritrea would seek to stifle Ethiopia’s growth – or that of any other country – runs entirely counter to both logic and established policy.

Understanding Eritrea’s posture requires recalling its history. For centuries, the country has been on the receiving end of external

aggression, from colonial conquest to modern, illegal territorial claims. Through these struggles, it has learned that sovereignty must be guarded with vigilance. Eritrea’s position has remained consistent: it seeks no quarrel, no foreign territory, and no external resources. As its leadership has long affirmed, Eritrea will not relinquish what belongs to it, nor will it covet what belongs to others. This principle of legitimate sovereignty is often miscast as belligerence, yet Eritrea’s military and political posture is defined by defence and resilience against impositions, not by adventurism.

Notably, having been the victim of repeated external aggression and interference over the centuries, Eritrea also deeply understands how destructive and unjust such practices are. It draws on this painful experience not only as a lesson in vigilance but also as a principle of conduct: never to inflict on others what it has endured itself. This is why its regional outlook is anchored in mutual respect and non-interference, rejecting domination or destabilization as tools of practice or policy.

Beyond the shrill noise of defamation, Eritrea possesses the resources and capacity for steady, sustainable growth. Its mineral wealth, fertile land, and strategic location provide a strong economic foundation. Combined with an industrious population and a tradition of self-reliance, these assets equip the country to advance without dependence on external patrons. Contrary to the dark portrayals circulated by some, Eritrea has much in its favour and absolutely no need or desire to pull others down to move forward. Its outlook is one of confidence and opportunity. This vision of progress, however, can only flourish in an environment of regional stability. Eritrea’s commitment to peace is therefore not abstract idealism but a practical necessity. Durable stability in the Horn of Africa opens the way for constructive engagement, shared infrastructure, and cooperative growth that benefits all.

It is essential to recognize that the efforts to discredit Eritrea are not merely misunderstandings; they serve a distinct political

purpose. As political theorists have long observed, scapegoating is a tried-and-tested means of deflecting responsibility for internal failures by projecting them onto an external enemy. The diversionary theory of war, in particular, highlights how unpopular leaders manufacture crises abroad or demonize others to distract from discontent at home and rally support through a “rally round the flag” effect. Casting Eritrea as the source of regional instability fits neatly into this pattern: it masks failures in governance, development, or social cohesion within its own borders. In this light, the

repetition of falsehoods becomes less about Eritrea itself than about sustaining a convenient narrative that shields others from accountability.

Moreover, the finger-pointing itself is steeped in hypocrisy. Many of those most eager to vilify Eritrea are themselves beset by troubling records – from human rights abuses and governance failures in perpetual ethnic/religious strife to destabilizing interventions in the region. Their accusations serve less as genuine critique than as projection, masking their own shortcomings behind a façade of moral outrage.

Looking ahead, it is likely that the campaigns of vilification will persist, fueled by repetition rather than evidence. Yet no amount of distortion can erase the basic facts: that Eritrea is committed to peaceful coexistence, that it has historically defended rather than violated sovereignty, and that its future rests on harnessing its own resources in an atmosphere of regional stability. The task for observers – within the region and beyond – is to drown out the noise, separate malicious caricature from fact, and recognize the enduring principles that continue to guide Eritrea’s conduct and approach.

Workshop on Massawa Historical . . .

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knowledge from these varied fields is crucial for developing a comprehensive and effective strategy to restore and protect Massawa’s invaluable historical sites. At the workshop, the following research papers were presented: Background and Historiography of Buildings; High-level Digitalization models; Asmara’s Heritage Experience during the Nomination and Post-Nomination Process of Asmara City; Conservation and Management Principles of Built Heritage; and the Inventory and Documentation of Historical Architecture in the port city of Massawa, as well as in Akordat and Keren.

Professor Solomon Tesfamariam, a lecturer in Civil, Environmental, and Engineering studies at the University of Waterloo in Canada, provided an insightful presentation at the workshop, focusing on the historical architectural elements of Massawa.

Professor Solomon presented a paper at the International Conference on Eritrean Studies

(ICES), held from January 4 to 6. His paper focused on the architectural significance of Mashrabiya. Mashrabiya, the hallmark of Middle Eastern and North African architecture, are commonly found in Massawa’s Old City. These are traditional projecting balconies, enclosed with intricate latticework carved from wood. Professor Tesfamariam’s research delved into the multifaceted functions of these beautiful structures. He explained that their primary role is one of passive environmental control, providing natural cooling, and regulating the flow of air and light into the interior of a building.

Beyond their practical applications, Mashrabiya also serve crucial social and aesthetic purposes. They offer privacy by allowing residents to observe the street without being seen from the outside, a key feature in traditional social norms. At the same time, they add a layer of decorative beauty and cultural expression to the building’s facade, with each intricate pattern telling a story.

Recognizing the importance of the work, the workshop

participants adopted several key recommendations for revitalizing Massawa’s historical architecture. These included taking a balanced approach that considers both the past and the future. This means that in preserving the original character of the buildings, which is crucial, renovation efforts should also use modern techniques to ensure the buildings are durable and functional for years to come. Second, the participants stressed the importance of preparing for natural calamities. Given Massawa’s location, they recommended that conservation efforts account for risks such as floods and earthquakes by reinforcing buildings as necessary. This will ensure that the restored heritage can withstand future disasters. Finally, the workshop emphasized the importance of integrated management and coordination among all partners, including government agencies, academic institutions, and local communities, to share resources and prevent duplicated efforts. This collaborative approach is vital for the project’s success and for preserving Massawa’s unique identity.

OPINION & ANALYSIS

Ethiopia's Expansionist Ideology: The Quintessential Allegory of the Cave

By Sultan Mohammedsied Omer (English Translation and Contribution: Debesai Tesfu)

(Part II & Final)

Deja Vu of the Give-and-Take Ideology

(Editor's Note: This is the second and final part of a two-part series whose first part was published in our previous edition.)

Federation Decision: Pre-annexation of Eritrea

Emperor Haile Selassie had worked hard on the diplomatic front to convince the vital importance of Eritrean ports for Ethiopia's economic sustainability. Ironically, Ethiopia and the UK also promoted the false narrative that Eritrea was not viable economically as an independent nation. But how is a non-viable Eritrea supposed to ensure the survival of Ethiopia? The Pakistani representative at the UN Political Committee, annoyed by this bold lie, retorted "if, as the British delegation was claiming, Eritrea was poor, destitute and a hopeless ruin, would Britain be justified in asking Ethiopia to carry such a heavy burden" (Alemseged Tesfai, *An African People's Quest for Freedom and Justice*, p. 128). The UK, of course, systematically dismantled the Eritrean economy to create facts on the ground for non-viability. Overall, the UN system's failure to duly consider Eritrea's inalienable right of decolonization and the prevailing Eritrean nationalism ended up costing both Eritrea and Ethiopia immeasurable destruction of lives and property.

During the federation period, Ethiopia's gradual abrogation of the federation and the failure of the United Nations to handle the matter properly fueled Eritrean protests. To contain these protests, the Emperor began to take brutal measures, leading the Eritrean youth to conclude that overcoming the harsh repression through peaceful means was futile. As a result, they launched an armed struggle on September 1, 1961, one year before Ethiopia officially annexed Eritrea on November 14, 1962.

In 1910, when Menelik invaded and conquered vast areas, Abyssinia (modern-day Ethiopia) took its present-day geopolitical structure and international borders. Eritrea was already a country, founded in 1890, some 20 years ahead of Abyssinia. Exactly 10 years after Menelik's conquests, on September 28th, the Kingdom of Abyssinia became the first African state to join the League of Nations upon its establishment in 1920. Later, the name of the country

was changed to Ethiopia.

Mengistu Hailemariam's escape

As the Eritrean revolution gained momentum, various Western and Ethiopian intellectuals, in their efforts to secure their geostrategic interests and portray the struggle as an isolationist movement, worked diligently to promote the Eritrean struggle as a question of "secession" rather than self-determination. To this day, many continue to promote this false narrative. As a result, the Eritrean struggle was misrepresented in the collective memory of many segments of the Ethiopian population as a separatist movement. It was portrayed in such a way as to be stigmatized by Africans and made to appear more complicated. Because the struggle was against the Ethiopia that's adorned with the "symbol of ancient civilization and free Africa" image.

Privately, however, even American diplomats acknowledged the Eritrean struggle as being for self-determination and decolonization. For instance, Ambassador Keith Wauchope, who served as Deputy Principal Officer at the US Consulate in Asmara from 1975-1977, lamented that "we had forgotten some of our basic values. After all, the Eritreans were fighting for self-determination, it was their country, and the West had betrayed them... We saw American-made aircraft dropping American bombs on the Eritreans."⁵

US support of successive Ethiopian regimes, however, never changed. Ambassador Larry Williamson, who served as Acting Director of East African Affairs from 1980 to 1982, brought up Irv Hicks to underscore the degree of attention and care the United States extended to Ethiopian regimes, not the people. When Irvin "Irv" Hicks Jr was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (1989 to 1991), the defeat of Mengistu Hailemariam became certain. At that point, on behalf of the US government, Hicks brokered asylum for Mengistu Hailemariam with the government of Zimbabwe. Despite the strained relations, Hicks flew to Addis Ababa and told Mengistu "we can get you and your family and anybody else

you want to take out of here, but you've got to get out now before the fighting starts because we can't stop that."⁶

Williamson, underscoring Mengistu's quick acceptance of the escape plan, recalls that "Mengistu gave it about the same consideration that I gave the assignment to London, and we got some unknown aircraft into the airport, packed that whole bunch in, sent them south." Colonel Mengistu Hailemariam faced no consequences despite deceiving the Ethiopian people and committing gross war crimes against the Eritrean people. Indeed, Ethiopian leaders have caused their country and people to pay a heavy price in pursuit of unattainable dreams—and when approaching total failure, they prioritize themselves over the people.

Ethiopian writer Laureate Tsegaye Gebremedhin, in the "The Language of Tears and the Deception of History" chapter of his "Ethiopia: History or Myth?" book, states that the country's leaders, starting from emperor Haile Selassie up to the present times, feigned concern for the nation while in truth, they cared only about preserving their own power. When Haile Selassie was overthrown, as he was taken to prison accompanied by escorts, he is known to have lamented, "Oh, Ethiopia, did we really harm you? Did we not truly toil for you?" Similarly, Mengistu recounts in his memoir how, upon seeing his army scatter in the final hours, he "curled up on a rock and washed my face with tears." If they had indeed learned from the results of their wild dreams, it would have been a profound confession and a valuable lesson for future leaders. Alas, Ethiopian leaders only realize it when they're overwhelmed and scattered like bees.

After the Derg army was routed and pushed out of Eritrea, Joseph P. O'Neill observed the 1993 referendum as he was the Chargé d'Affaires at the US Embassy in Asmara from 1992 to 1993. Recounting his observation, he affirmed "the referendum went off flawlessly. I was involved, the United Nations, everybody was involved. Flawless. No cheating, no nothing. It just went well". Some weeks after this, not very far after, the United Nations ascertained the referendum was "Completely clean. We believe the referendum was free

and fair."⁷

Fallacy of the Dream

Talk of "Ethiopia is not a distant country from the Red Sea. It is a country of the Red Sea, perhaps it is 30, 40, 50, 60 kilometers away from the sea" has become a familiar refrain, adding flavor to official statements and media headlines. It is claimed that Ethiopia was separated from the coastline by only a few kilometers due to the actions of powerful countries. It concludes that "the root cause of the multitude of problems in Ethiopia is that the country is detached from the Red Sea". This statement needs to be corrected. Ethiopia was not separated from the coastline by a few kilometers due to the actions of superpowers. Still, it temporarily occupied and exploited the Eritrean sea coast for nearly 39 years through an unjust decision conspiratorially orchestrated by its powerful allies.

The rhetoric that some Ethiopian intellectuals are currently repeating originate from the 2024 IFA guidelines document on expansionist and invasion plans. Totally failing to reflect the country's real circumstances, it advised that, in the pursuit of sovereign sea outlet, the only viable path is to create a new point of contention. For there is no provision in international law supporting the existing argument⁸ where coastal countries have never denied Ethiopia transit rights. Ethiopia utilized Eritrean ports until 1998 on the basis of bilateral arrangements but itself shifted to Djibouti after the 1998-2000 conflict, a "strategic choice" made by Ethiopia and not due to an obstruction by Eritrea.

Undeniably, access to the sea is of economic importance to any landlocked country. But portraying it as an "existential threat" is recipe for perpetual war as it is untrue. Moreover, when a recognized legal framework for transit exists, their howl of "existential threat" is code for territorial ambitions. The real threat to Ethiopia's existence lies in its policies of internal ethnic discordance and violent expansionist aspirations. Unless Ethiopian politicians abandon the unattainable dream of owning the Eritrean coastline, clearly the threats to Ethiopia's existence and survival as a nation will only grow and bear dangerous consequences.

It is not difficult to see the uncanny similarity between the recent "give-and-take" proposal and the 2004 "give-and-take" proposal put forward by the then EPRDF government. They amount to an invitation for war while professing a desire for peace. They resemble a political theater where diplomacy becomes the continuation of war by other means. But who can this deceive or convince? Certainly not the people of Eritrea, whose long political experience makes them immune to such childish rhetoric.

Much like the current narrative, the 2004 "give-and-take" peace proposal was issued as a public relations drama and to confound its non-acceptance of the EEBC decision. At the time, the newspaper "Weyin" interviewed the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in connection with the "peace proposal". Referring to the peace bill presented by the PM and approved by parliament, the journalist noted it "has caused confusion. Some interpret it as giving up Badme to gain Assab. Others argue that this give-and-take approach is flawed and should be rejected". Hence, the journalist asked, "what exactly does 'give-and-take' mean anyway?"

Prime Minister Meles replied, "Regarding the border issue, we accept the Boundary Commission's decision in principle and aim to resolve it through the framework of give-and-take. In terms of negotiations for good neighborliness, it involves addressing the root causes of the conflict separately, within the same give-and-take principle... We have put forth that these should be resolved and implemented through negotiated give and take in a way that ensures mutual benefit, which I believe is a right choice."

Setting aside former PM Meles Zenawi's convoluted response, the "give-and-take" proposal revolves around Eritrea's sovereign territories. Despite the final and binding EEBC ruling, the so-called peace proposal offered Eritrean territories under forceful Ethiopian occupation but legally awarded to Eritrea as a bargaining chip in exchange for other Eritrean sovereign territories. Besides supporting Ethiopian leaders' agenda, the parallel undue pressure from some guarantor

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SpotLight

From Resistance to Independence

Bana Negusse

Sixty-four years ago, on September 1, 1961, the course of Eritrea's history changed forever. On that day, Hamid Idris Awate and a small band of determined fighters, armed with little more than outdated rifles and immense courage, fired the first shots of what would become one of Africa's longest and most arduous wars of liberation. Their action marked a decisive break from decades of peaceful protest, civil resistance, and diplomatic appeals that had been systematically ignored, silenced, and brutally crushed.

Remembering this historical moment is not only about honouring the past but also about recognizing its enduring significance for the present. Eritrea's armed struggle stands as a testament to the power of resilience, unity, and determination in the face of overwhelming odds. Yet commemoration today carries added weight, as recent years have seen frenzied attempts to revise, distort, or downplay Eritrea's history for ulterior political motives. These efforts are not simply academic exercises in interpretation – they are part of a deliberate strategy to cast doubt on the very foundations of Eritrea's independence and to delegitimize its hard-won sovereignty. Preserving the truth of how independence was achieved is therefore vital, not only for safeguarding Eritrea's identity and nationhood, but also for affirming the principle that peoples' rights to self-determination cannot be erased by propaganda or political expediency.

To fully grasp why September 1, 1961, matters, one must return to the post-World War II period, when the fate of Eritrea became entangled in the calculations of global powers navigating the Cold War.

On 20 September 1949, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) dispatched a second commission of inquiry to study a potential "solution [to] the problem of Eritrea." After listening to representatives of Eritrean society, it became clear that the majority of Eritreans favoured independence. Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, the Pakistani delegate, issued a prophetic warning in the commission's report:

"An independent Eritrea would obviously be better able to contribute to the maintenance of peace (and security) than an Eritrea



federated with Ethiopia against the true wishes of the people. To deny the people of Eritrea their elementary right to independence would be to sow the seeds of discord and create a threat in that sensitive area of the Middle East."

Despite this recognition, Eritrean aspirations were sidelined. On 2 December 1950, UN Resolution 390 (V) instead federated Eritrea with Ethiopia, designating it as "an autonomous unit ... under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown." The resolution passed 46–10, largely driven by US sponsorship. Within the Cold War's strategic framework, Washington judged its interests in the Red Sea basin and its alliance with Ethiopia more valuable than Eritrea's right to self-determination. This cold calculus was made explicit by US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who bluntly told the UN Security Council in 1952:

"From the point of justice, the opinions of the Eritrean people must receive consideration. Nevertheless, the strategic interest of the United States in the Red Sea basin and considerations of security and world peace make it necessary that the country be linked with our ally, Ethiopia."

For Eritreans, these words – granting primacy to power politics over inalienable rights and justice – became seared into memory as a symbol of betrayal.

Although Resolution 390 (V) guaranteed Eritrea legislative, executive, and judicial autonomy in domestic affairs, Emperor Haile Selassie's regime immediately

set about dismantling the federation. Barely weeks after its implementation, Ethiopia violated its terms by subordinating Eritrea's judiciary to Addis Ababa. Over the next decade, the regime steadily eroded Eritrea's constitutional framework: the Eritrean flag was replaced with Ethiopia's tricolor, Amharic was imposed as the official language, political parties and trade unions were banned, press freedoms abolished, and industries stripped from Asmara to enrich Addis Ababa. Eritrean leaders were forced to resign, while revenues from Eritrea's prosperous industries were siphoned to Ethiopia.

Unsurprisingly, this repression bred resistance. Student demonstrations in 1957 and 1962, and a nationwide strike in 1958, were violently crushed by Ethiopian troops. Peaceful protestors were shot, imprisoned, or driven into exile. Nationalist leaders such as Woldeab Woldemariam, Ibrahim Sultan, and Idris Mohammed Adem were relentlessly targeted, forcing them to continue their struggle from abroad.

Eritrean appeals to the UN, citing Ethiopia's violations, were met with total silence. Faith in international institutions evaporated as it became clear that the world would not defend Eritrea's rights. Finally, in November 1962, Emperor Haile Selassie unilaterally dissolved the Eritrean parliament at gunpoint and annexed Eritrea as his empire's "14th province." Western officials that witnessed the abolition of the federation called it a "putsch" and described the imperial regime's role in it as "a brutal and arbitrary

act." Eritreans were shocked and dismayed, refusing to participate in staged celebrations organized by the Ethiopian regime.

It was against this backdrop of repression, betrayal, and annexation that Hamid Idris Awate and his small band of fighters launched the armed resistance in the rugged hills of Gash Barka on 1 September 1961. A decorated soldier and skilled marksman, Awate had long resisted domination – first under Italians, then the British, and finally Ethiopia. His decision to take up arms was not born of choice but of necessity, an inevitable response to the systematic denial of Eritrea's rights.

A few months later, the movement's first martyr, Abdu Mohamed Fayed, fell in battle near Adal, becoming a symbol of sacrifice for a cause larger than himself. Though Awate himself died within a year, the struggle he ignited spread like wildfire, growing from skirmishes to a full-scale national liberation war that would last three decades. For the peace-loving Eritrean people, the armed struggle was nothing less than "the expression of the indignation of a people whose rights [were] flagrantly and ruthlessly suppressed."

Even before the annexation, some observers foresaw the dangers. British official G.K.N. Trevaskis, in his 1960 book *Eritrea: A Colony in Transition, 1941–1952*, cautioned Ethiopia that undermining the federation risked "Eritrean discontent and eventual revolt, which, with foreign sympathy and

support, might well disrupt both Eritrea and Ethiopia herself." His words proved prophetic.

Eritrea's independence struggle endured for thirty years, waged against overwhelming odds. Ethiopia received vast military, political, and economic backing from both Cold War superpowers – the US and the Soviet Union – as well as from allies including Israel, East Germany, Cuba, and Yemen. Eritrea, by contrast, fought largely in isolation, with little external support. Despite this, the movement grew into one of Africa's most formidable liberation struggles. After immense sacrifice – tens of thousands of lives lost, countless wounded, and widespread devastation – Eritrea finally achieved victory in 1991, securing its independence after one of the longest wars for liberation in modern history.

Eritrea's victory, achieved against overwhelming odds, carries with it lessons that remain vital today. The long struggle demonstrated the power of resilience – that persistence and determination, even when the balance of forces appears impossible, can ultimately deliver freedom. It also underscored the centrality of unity: Eritrea's diverse fighters and communities, with the EPLF in the lead and bound together by a shared purpose, overcame the efforts of external forces to divide them. Finally, the struggle instilled a deep sense of confidence. Having triumphed against the odds once before, Eritrea knows it has the capacity to withstand and overcome challenges in the present and future. The sacrifices of the independence movement were immense, but its legacy is more than sovereignty – it is a living reminder of what can be achieved when a people remain steadfast, united, and guided by justice.

The Eritrean armed struggle was not an impulsive act of violence but the inevitable outcome of betrayal, denial, and repression. It was the last recourse for a people whose peaceful appeals for justice were ignored, whose rights were trampled, and whose future was bartered away on the chessboard of global geopolitics. Today, as Eritreans remember 1 September 1961, they honour not only Hamid Idris Awate and the countless martyrs who followed, but also the enduring spirit of resistance that transformed a small spark into a flame powerful enough to secure national independence.



ASMARA MINING SHARE COMPANY

Abo Street, No. 178, House No. 16
Gejeret, P.O. Box 10688

Tel. ++291-1-153986
Asmara, Eritrea

VACANCY
ANNOUNCEMENT

Asmara Mining Share Company is inviting applicants for the following position;

Mechanic Supervisor Powerhouse

Number required – (2)

Type of contract – Indefinite

Major Duties and responsibilities

- The Mechanical Supervisor at Powerhouse is responsible for maintaining, repairing, and ensuring the optimal performance of HFO/diesel engines and auxiliary mechanical systems within the power plant.
- This role involves performing routine maintenance, troubleshooting mechanical issues, and collaborating with the operations team to support efficient plant operations.
- This person will report to the Senior Supervisor Power House and assist with various administrative and supervisory functions.

TASK DESCRIPTION EXPANDED TO CORE PERFORMANCE AREA

- Ensures compliance with quality, health and safety rules, guidelines, and regulations.
- Ensures that subordinate colleagues work safely, assist the supervisor to accomplish inspection of work areas and lead daily Toolbox meetings.
- Leads a team of mechanics ensuring effective planning, assigning and scheduling tasks while supervising installation, maintenance, and repair of mechanical systems within the Powerhouse.
- Conducts risk assessments and hazard identification before carrying out any task.
- Supervises and oversees preventive and corrective maintenance activities for HFO/diesel engines and auxiliary power plant systems.
- Follows preventive maintenance schedules to minimize downtime and extend the lifespan of equipment.
- Conducts regular inspections and oversees troubleshooting of mechanical issues, ensuring timely resolution.
- Maintains detailed records of maintenance activities, repairs, and inspections as per CMMS system.
- Manages inventory of spare parts and maintenance supplies, ensuring availability and proper usage.
- Diagnoses and troubleshoots mechanical problems, determining the cause of issues and implementing effective solutions.
- Identify and communicate opportunities to improve preventive and predictive maintenance procedures and methods
- Manages, motivates, develops, and provides direct leadership to maintenance staff
- Provides training and development opportunities for the mechanical team to enhance their skills and knowledge maintenance and safety procedures.
- Responsibly handles emergency situations or after-hours calls for repair and maintenance.

Profile: Qualifications and Experience

Formal Education, Certifications or Equivalents

- Minimum Technical College Mechanical Diploma (preferably 4 years)
- Internationally recognized trade certificate as a Mechanical Fitter/Technician.

Working Experience – Nature & Length

- Min 7 years’ experience in a Power station environment, heavy diesel equipment workshop or other heavy industries as a mechanic/mechanical technician.
- In-depth knowledge of medium speed diesel engine operations, mechanical systems, and maintenance techniques
- Sound knowledge of preventive maintenance programs
- Functional communication in English is mandatory.
- Experience working in Africa

Technical Skills

- In-depth mechanical knowledge of HFO/Diesel power plant gensets and related auxiliary equipment.
- Ability to read and interpret equipment manuals.
- Proficiency in using and maintaining a variety of mechanical special tools and equipment.
- Train and develop local staff.
- Analytical skills and Attention to detail.
- Decision making and Problem-solving skills
- Plan, organize and execution skills.
- Valid Driver’s License.

Behavioral Skills

- Safety leadership by example
- Good interpersonal skills
- Ability to work under pressure with challenging targets
- High level of initiative
- Demonstrated training and people development skills.
- Strong interpersonal relationship-building skills and adaptability to work with people of different cultures.

General Information and other requirements:

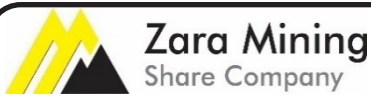
- ☐ **Place of Work:** AMSC Site
- ☐ **Type of contract:** Indefinite Period
- ☐ **Salary:** As per the Company salary scale

Additional requirements for Nationals:

- Having fulfilled his/her National Service obligation and provide evidence of release paper from the Ministry of Defense.
- Present clearance paper from current/last employer.
- Testimonial documents to be attached (CV, work experience credentials, a copy of your National Identity Card, etc.).
- Only shortlisted applicants would be considered as potential candidates for an interview.
- Application documents will not be returned to the sender.
- All applications should be sent through the post office.
- Deadline for application: 7 days from the day of publication in the Newspaper.

- ☐ **Address: Please mail your applications to;**
Asmara Mining Share Company,
P. O. Box 10688 Asmara, Eritrea
- ☐ **Applicants shall be required to send a copy to:**
Mineral Resources Management
P.O. Box – 272
Asmara

- ☐ **Note to Eritrean applicants:**
Please send a copy of your application to
Aliens Employment Permit Affairs,
P. O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea



Vacancy
Announcement

Position:	Workshop Maintenance Supervisor
Number required	1
Location:	Koka Gold Mine (Site)
Reporting to:	Mine Maintenance Superintendent
Position Overview:	Maintenance Supervisor oversees maintenance activities in facilities, ensuring smooth operations and safety.
Duties/ functions:	
➤ Inspect facilities periodically to identify maintenance needs. ➤ Prepare weekly maintenance schedules and allocate tasks. ➤ Train, supervise, and assist maintenance mechanics and auto-electricians. ➤ Oversee mechanics during installations, repairs, or maintenance (auto-electricians, mechanics) ➤ Take lead in any recovery of machines that are on breakdown. ➤ Monitor inventory of materials and equipment. ➤ Participate in project coordination (e.g. renovations). ➤ Enforce and ensure adherence to quality standards and health and safety regulations. ➤ Repair machinery as needed. ➤ Ensure the workshop is cleaned daily.	
Formal Education and Experience:	➤ Graduate ➤ Proven experience as a maintenance supervisor. ➤ Strong technical knowledge of repairing machines (electrical, mechanical, etc.)
Other skills and abilities	➤ Computer literacy- word processing, spreadsheets, stores, and maintenance planning software. ➤ English literacy to a conversational level ➤ Excellent interdepartmental communication skills, ➤ Excellent working knowledge of all aspects of mining operation. ➤ A “Can do” attitude ➤ Ability to work unsupervised and make decisions when required.
Working experience – nature and length	➤ At least 5 years of work experience as a Maintenance Supervisor.
Leadership Experience – nature and length of time	➤ 5 years of leadership experience required and must have ability to work unsupervised and make decisions when required.
Salary	Company scale
Room Accommodation	Free accommodation
Please mail your applications to the ZARA MINING SHARE CO P. O. Box 2393. Asmara, Eritrea	
Note to Eritrean applicants: - Please send a copy of your application to Aliens Employment Permit Affairs P.O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea. and Eritrea. Mineral Resources Management P. O. Box 272	
Deadline for application: Seven days from the day of announcement.	

LAND ENERGY GROUP (CHINA)
LIMITED ERITREA

Add: No. 42 kushet shewit, Asmara, Eritrea

Email: land energy group@gmail.com

Position: Chief Geologist

Place of Work: Augaro

Salary: As per company scale

Contract Type: Indefinite Period

Number Required: One(1)

Main Functions:

- Supervising & coordinating geological exploration activities to identify and evaluate potential mineral deposits;
- Follow all the health and safety procedures, participate in daily pre-start safety meetings and monthly meetings;
- Managing the process of resource estimation to assess the size, grade and economic viability of mineral deposits;
- Ensuring proper collection, storage and analysis of geological data to support decision-making processes;
- Contributing to the development of exploration strategies and targets based on geological interpretation s and geological knowledge;
- Preparing technical reports, including geological survey reports, resource estimation reports and geological interpretations for internal use and regulatory compliance;
- Providing guidance, mentoring and training to junior geologists and technical staff to enhance their skills and knowledge in geological exploration and resource estimation;
- Ensuring compliance with relevant laws, regulations and environment standards related geological exploration and resource development.

Knowledge experience and skills

Qualifications:

- BSc Geology and GIS
- Organic Gold deposit exploration
- Nonferrous metal mineral exploration

Skills:

- 8-10 years experience as a Geologist
- Exposure to mining area would be an advantage
- Physically fit to work
- Good command of written & spoken English
- Must have experience of exploration & evaluation of mineral resources with latest techniques and software.

Additional Requirement for Nationals:

- Having fulfilled his/her National Service Obligation and provide evidence of release paper from Ministry of Defense
- Present clearance paper from current/last employer
- Testimonial documents to be attached (CV, experience credentials, copy of your National ID card, etc.)
- Only shortlisted applicants would be considered as potential candidates for an interview.
- Application documents will not be returned to sender.
- All applications should be sent through the post office.
- Deadline for applications: 5 days from the day of publication in the Newspaper.

Note to non-Eritrea applicants: Please send a copy of your application to Aliens Employment Permit Affairs, P.O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea.

NOTICE

The shareholders of green park pastry plc. In the extra – ordinary meeting then held on August 15, 2025 have resolved that out of the 30 shares late Zewdi Ghebremicahel Tessema owned in the company 30 shared to be transferred to Ato Semere Ghebreyesus Habtu and the remaining 30 shares to be transferred to her 4 heirs.

Accordingly, Article I of the Memorandum of Association of the Company is amended as follows:

	Name of shareholder	Nationality	Address	shares	Capital
1	Semere Ghebreyesus Habtu	Eritrean	Asmara	90	90,000.00
2	Debesay Semere Ghebreyesus	Eritrean	Dubai	27	27,000.00
3	Yordanos Semere Ghebreyesus	Eritrean	Asmara	8	8,000.00
4	Manna Semere Ghebreyesus	Eritrean	South Africa	7	7,000.00
5	Habtu Semere Ghebreyesus	Eritrean	U.S.A	8	8,000.00
	Total			140	140,000.00



An Interview with Selam Mulgheta: The Power of Women in Art and Life

Luwam Kahsay H

You are widely known as “Danyom.” Where does that name come from?

“Danyom” is my son’s name.

How did your journey in the arts begin?

My love for art started in my early childhood. I had the opportunity to participate in a children’s television program called Mesob Hxanat. Later, I became part of Meadi Snetbeb, a platform where artists could express themselves in various creative ways. That’s where I truly began to explore my artistic identity.

Your work often focuses on social life and everyday experiences. What message do you aim to convey through your art?

I want to highlight the inner strength of women. My work encourages women to embrace their natural gifts and beauty and to recognize that even our fragility can be a source of power. I always strive to create content that entertains and educates every member of the household. At the end of the day, it’s about the life lived by society itself.

You took a break from the screen for a few years. What happened during that time?

After I got married and had children, I stepped back to focus on being a mom. Honestly, I loved it. Motherhood is a profession in its own right, one that is self-sufficient.

But even then, my love for art didn’t fade—I continued writing scripts whenever I could.

One of your works, Hesda, has garnered a great deal of attention. What is it about?

Hesda expresses that a woman is not a burden to her husband or her community. It shows that, regardless of the circumstances, she is self-reliant and capable of facing challenges. Another piece, Xlaley, shows that marriage is not the end for a woman. We need to understand that getting married doesn’t mean we stop growing or lose our worth.

You often direct your own screenplays. Why is that?

I have a deep understanding of the narrative and characters, so I prefer to direct them myself. I’m always involved in the editing process as well—giving feedback and learning as I go.

Tell us about your first major directorial project.

My first significant work was Msli Brhan (“Profile of Light”). I asked Abrar Abdelwehab, a well-known director, to mentor me and take full responsibility for the project while teaching me every step. When he had to leave due to personal reasons, I finished the film myself. It was a bold move, but it ultimately turned out well and taught me a great deal.

What is the film Msli Brhan about?

The title means “Profile of



Selam Mulgheta is a passionate and well-known Eritrean director whose work highlights the inner strength and resilience of women. From her beginnings as a child actor to her current role as a dedicated mother and artist, she has used her unique perspective to craft stories that both entertain and educate. In this interview, she shares insights into her artistic vision, her journey through motherhood, and her commitment to empowering women through film.

Light,” symbolizing the role of a mother. Mothers are the light of our homes—they sacrifice everything for their children. I wrote it after having my eldest son, so I have a deep understanding of the emotions. The story follows a mother who, unable to raise her daughter, places her in a good family and joins them as a maid to stay close to her. She supports her daughter secretly, never revealing her true

identity.

Based on your experience, do you think stereotypes about women have changed?

Honestly, things have changed dramatically. There are still some outdated views, but I’ve learned that if I can pursue my career while fulfilling my responsibilities as a wife and mother, then criticism only fuels me. I’m grateful to my husband and children for their

support—I wouldn’t be where I am today without them.

What message would you like to share with other women?

Every woman can work and thrive, even after marriage. The key is to reach an understanding with your family and recognize that every kind of work requires some form of sacrifice. It’s all about adjusting our mindset.

Ethiopia’s Expansionist Ideology . . .

Continued from page 4

countries to “create a platform for dialogue and talk to each other” was intended to take measures that challenged Eritrea’s sovereignty and to prolong further and complicate the crisis.

Today, it is much the same. The Prosperity Party-led government has plunged the country into heightened ethnic tensions, severe economic problems, growing instability and a deep socio-political crisis. While lawlessness prevails across the country and public confidence in the federal government continues to evaporate, it has become common to throw around naïve remarks such as “we have no intention of invading what isn’t ours; we’re simply saying, give us access to the sea and we’ll share our resources with you”. But sovereignty is not a commodity that can be sold or exchanged, however. It is the worst absurdity to justify this ridiculous “proposal” of exchanging sovereignty for commercial businesses by arguing, “What’s wrong with us dreaming of the sea right in our noses while people dream of reaching Mars?”

The purpose of all this hallucination is clear. Rather than addressing the pressing internal crises in Ethiopia that urgently demand solutions, it seeks to externalize the issue and redirect the Ethiopian people’s attention toward an unattainable fantasy. However, the Ethiopian people see right through these bogus tactics as they recognize that the

main objective of the campaign was to divert their attention in an attempt to prolong the Prosperity Party’s grip in power and exploitation.

Conclusion

Once again, there are calls for “dialogue”. But dialogue about what exactly? There is no need to establish a “dialogue” forum regarding “sovereign sea access”. Indeed, Ethiopia’s quest for sovereign ownership of Eritrea’s sea coast cannot be entertained by Eritrea. Statements such as “it is no longer blasphemy to raise the question of sovereign maritime ownership” are aimed at legitimizing expansionist ambitions and inflaming the emotions of the Ethiopian people. Fundamentally, any party that sets aside acceptable international law and issues statements that violate and sidestep the sovereignty of another country does not have a right to then issue calls for “dialogue”.

Analysts predicting “tensions are rising, the cloud of war looms over the Horn...If the inevitable war breaks out, history shows the region will face an unprecedented crisis...Intervene now and avert war while it’s still possible” are currently getting media attention. The goal is to create fear and ultimately pressure the Eritrean side to unfair negotiation terms. It lacks serious understanding of the Eritrean psyche. On the other hand, ploys grounded on purported historical and cultural connections, beyond challenging Eritrea’s sovereignty, are also attempts to redraw Africa’s

colonial boundaries. These tactics will only have detrimental outcomes to the whole Ethiopian population.

Questions abound about the saber-rattling. Who is driving Ethiopia’s push to the Red Sea? Whose ultimate opportunistic benefits are served by external forces rushing to create various alignments to destabilize the Red Sea? Where will this port imperialism project of certain Gulf nations lead and how is it further entangling the situation in our region? Where is the constant scapegoating of Eritrea for its principled stance and positions headed? Only time will reveal the outcome. We shall see who will be intimidated, terrorized or even be forced to abandon foundational principles through these constant drumbeats of “come to the negotiating table or else” shrills.

In conclusion, ever since Eritrea and Ethiopia established relations at state level, the cause for strained relations has been the violation of Eritrea’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. There can be no dialogue on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Eritrea! Besides, who will talk to whom, and what will the talks cover? Before talks can take place, there are the preconditions of respect for sovereignty and officially rescinding and apologizing for earlier irresponsible statements and wild claims. This is a critical factor not only for talks, but also for normalizing relations that would herald mutual trust, peace and collective prosperity in our region.

