

Roadmap

**Creating a Unified Eritrean National Democratic Force
to Defeat the Dictatorial Regime in Eritrea**



**Group #2 Post-Conference Revised Final
Report**

August 2019

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
1. Introduction.....	5
2. The Current Situation	7
3. The Need for Political Transition	8
4. Cause of Disunity and Disharmony in the Justice-Seeking Movement.....	9
5. Unity of Justice-Seeking Eritreans	10
6. Transparency and Accountability of Justice-Seeking Eritrean Groups.....	10
7. Transparency and Accountability Minimum Standards	12
a. Documentation and Transparency	12
b. Political Programs.....	12
c. Leadership Accountability.....	12
d. Compliance and Reconciliation Process	13
8. The Creation of a Unified Eritrean National Democratic Force	13
A Multi-Level Approach to Alliance Formation.....	15
a. Top-Level of the Alliance.....	15
b. Middle-Level of the Alliance	22
c. Bottom-Level of the Alliance	23
10. Conclusion	23

Executive Summary

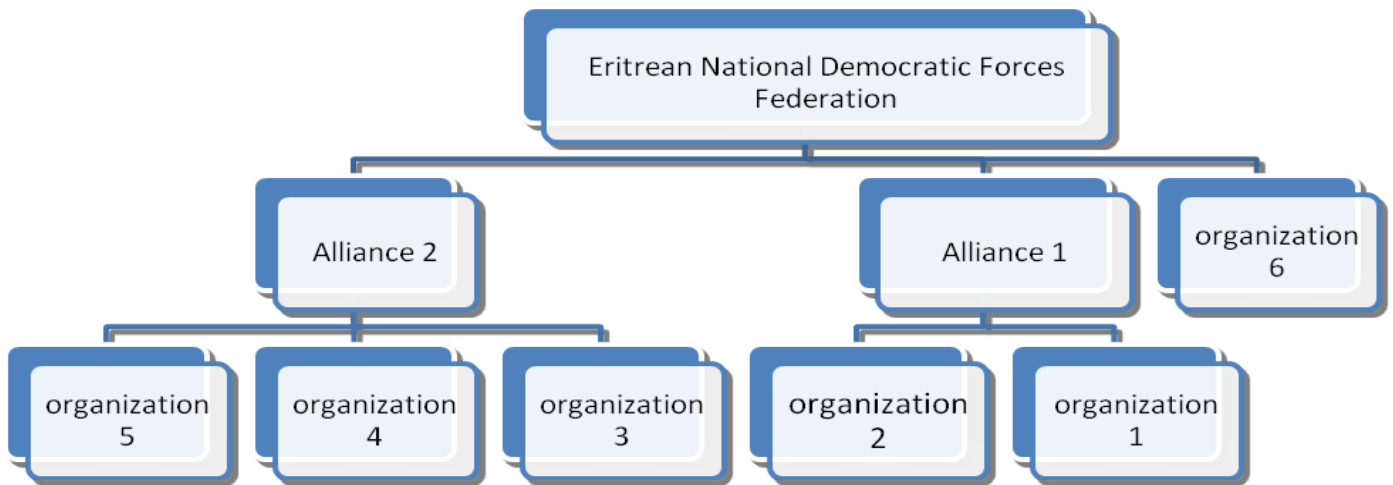
The brutal dictator Isaias Afwerki has ruled Eritrea since its *de facto* independence from Ethiopia in 1991. To end the suffering of the Eritrean people and bring democratic change to the country, the Eritrean Sinit Study Group (ESSG) has been conducting studies to chart an actionable strategy to harmonize and unify the justice-seeking (or opposition) movements and transition Eritrea to a county with justice and rule of law, and where its citizens' human rights and dignity is respected and honored.

The Roadmap Study Group (Group 2), one of the three groups of ESSG, is charged with “identifying issues and methodologies needed to ensure national harmony and unity, creating an organized opposition force, and work towards obliterating the dictatorial system in Eritrea.” To that effect, the group has concluded its studies and its findings are detailed in this report. The core findings and recommendations of the study are summarized below:

- The people of Eritrea have endured over 100 years of operation under colonial powers, including the most recent history under Ethiopia.
- Eritreans collectively had conducted a 30-year armed struggle and paid tremendous human cost to win their independence from Ethiopia in 1993.
- Since independence, Eritreans have been under greater suffering at the hands of the Eritrean dictator, Issias Afwerki.
- The top priority of the current regime in Eritrea has been to destroy the great cultures and traditions of Eritrea, bring new cultures that are subservient to it, and create mistrust among the Eritrean people so that it can jail, kill, and force its youth to flee the country.
- There are many reasons, including the divisive policies of the government, why effective resistance and harmonized opposition groups against the Eritrean dictator could not be formed, and that this ineffectiveness and disharmony has prolonged the life of the dictatorial regime in Asmara and the suffering of the Eritrean people.
- The cause of some of the **divisiveness and disharmony** within the opposition groups could be attributed, among other things, to: (1) the lack of trust and confidence on each other and in democracy, (2) lack of participation of women and youth, (3) power hungry, autocratic, and selfcentered leaders, (4) bringing party before country, and not been able to distinguish between your friends and foes, and (5) use of similar divisive tactics that the government uses (religious, regional, ethnic, etc.).

- Unity and **harmony** among the justice-seeking Eritreans, political parties, civic organization, humanitarian groups and community organizations are a must in order to effectively carry out their unwavering struggle to completely uproot the authoritarian regime in Eritrea and work together to destroy the evil philosophies of the PFDJ.
- Some of the key components of this **unity of the justice-seeking groups** is to: (1) narrow down their differences and focus in saving the country, (2) believe that country comes first than the party, (3) have trust on each other, support each other, and listen to one another, (4) bring harmony among the diverse groups of Eritreans, and (5) create conditions for greater participation of women and youth.
- It is believed that there shall be some **transparency and accountability** requirements that these groups must meet in order to: (1) create trust and confidence among Eritreans, bringing together groups of common programs and goals, and create opportunity to narrow down differences between groups through dialog, (2) identify bad actors and correct bad behavior within the groups, and identify programs or strategies that are contradictory to or deny the human rights and the desire for democratic changes of Eritreans, (3) bring more women and youth participation, (4) attract strong leaders, bring greater financial support to the movements, and allow effective and strong diplomatic approaches.
- Key components of the **Minimum Transparency and Accountability Standards** that each of the group must adhere to deals with documentation and full transparency of their political programs, strategic plans, bylaws, annual financial reports, and governance structures.
- To meet the **minimum transparency standards**, political program shall include full articulation of: (1) Eritrean sovereignty; (2) the constitution, human rights, justice and rule of law, in Eritrea; (3) national service and national security; (4) Eritrean refugees and their repatriations; (5) land ownership and rights; (6) economic and international relations policies; and (7) PFDJ dictatorship.
- To meet **minimum leadership accountability standards**, all groups – political parties, civic organizations, and humanitarian groups – shall be ready to provide information and verifications on: (1) executive body and their terms, (2) financial support and leadership salaries, (3) leadership elections and their results, and (4) number of their constituencies.
- It is essential that a team, “**Reconciliation and Unity Committee**,” be established within the justice-seeking camp to monitor and support their compliance with the Minimum Transparency and Accountability Standards, as well as, to facilitate dialog and reconciliation among the various groups with the goal of bring unity among the groups.

- To affect democratic transition in Eritrea it will require the active participation of the Eritrean people in unison, and thus there is an urgent need for creating **broad coalitions and alliances** among the justice-seeking groups.
- A multi-level alliance formation approach is proposed to form a national alliance, **Eritrean National Democratic Forces Federation (ENDFF)**, of the justice-seeking groups.



1. Introduction

The history of modern Eritrea is the history of a long and arduous struggle in search of statehood and national identity. Successive generations of Eritreans waged both peaceful and armed struggle collectively against their common colonial powers (Turks, Egyptians, Italians, British, and Ethiopians). Particularly, organized Eritrean national resistance against colonial rules got momentum during the 1940's and the 1950's, which overtime got transformed into an armed national liberation movement in 1961 with the creation of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) under Hamid Idris Awate, and subsequently, the creation of four splinter groups in 1970 that eventually lead to the establishment of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) in 1977 under Ramadan Mohammed Nur and Isaias Afwerki.

After struggling against successive colonial powers for almost 100 years that includes thirty years of bloody armed nationalistic struggle against the last colonial power, Ethiopia, Eritrea's de facto independence was realized in May 1991 and the birth of the nation was formally legalized, de jure independence, through the April 1993 United Nations monitored referendum. Hence, Eritrean is a shared identity that has been shaped by a common long history of social, economic, and political struggle of the people, who today constitute the State of Eritrea. This shared identity has been particularly forged and solidified during the war of liberation where Eritreans of all ethnicities, nationalities, and social groups coalesced into one entity in search of freedom, liberty and national sovereignty. During the 30 years of armed struggle for independence, all Eritreans suffered loss and paid heavy sacrifices. Therefore, attaining a sovereign Eritrea is an expression of the shared Eritrean Identity. Not only the prices Eritreans paid during the 30 years active armed struggle was high, but also the loss and suffering that successive Eritrean generations incurred both before the liberation era and after our independence in search of their nationhood was unparalleled by any account. Sovereign Eritrea is not just a country to an Eritrean, but rather it is the result of the sacrifices of each and every Eritrean family. Each Eritrean family knows how many sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces... etc. were paid in realizing a sovereign and independent Eritrea. Eritrea is a precious gift to every living Eritrean family from its martyrs.

However, as we know, independence was not an aim in itself but a means to an end- to have an all-inclusive and democratic political, economic, and social system in Eritrea. That is, independence was a necessary condition not a sufficient condition for establishing a democratic and prosperous Eritrea. Indeed, the core objectives and aims of the Eritrean war of liberation were freedom, justice, democracy and economic and social emancipation. It is well-evidenced that throughout our struggle, leading Eritrean figures of the armed struggle constantly made solemn pledges and vows of the importance of the establishment of democracy; rule of law, and a society governed by democratic principles and institution anchored on a constitutional governance that is accountable to the people in post-independence Eritrea. The pursuit of these noble objectives - the birth/creation of free, democratic and prosperous Eritrea with a constitutional political system that upholds the rule of law and respects the fundamental principles of freedom and human rights - were the *raison d'être* for the Eritrean liberation struggle where generations of Eritreans paid untold sacrifices. Hence, the ultimate legacy of the Eritrean liberation struggle would have been the creation of a constitutional and democratic Eritrean State, which would recognize the legitimacy of a government that derives from the consent of the governed (the people) and that would become sustainable by an active citizenry engagement and participation in the governance of the country. Unfortunately, it did not happen.

2. The Current Situation

Not long after independence, the process of nation building and the democratization of Eritrea was hijacked by a group of ruthless predatory dictators and subsequently the noble objectives of the liberation struggle were subverted for personal power and aggrandizements of these few unscrupulous predators - antithetical to what Eritrean martyrs and Eritrean people had all along struggled and envisioned for their country, meaning the establishment of popular governance and not a dictatorship. But, what we have now in Eritrea is the latter, which is the rule of dictatorship under one man with unlimited power that rules by decrees. With this, all the pledges and the concrete promises that were made during and after the liberation struggle were betrayed to the core by none other than Isaias and his henchmen elites who are anti democracy, anti-diverse views, and anti-Eritrean citizens' sovereignty.

Hence, in a reversal of fortune, as if the Eritrean history is not replete with betrayals, the Eritrean people have been betrayed once again by a homegrown predatory dictator. Because of this, almost 28 years after independence, Eritrea does not have a constitution, has had no elections and no contract between the governed and the government. The Isaias regime has failed Eritrea in all its political, educational, cultural and socio-economic policies. Instead, Isaias all along engaged in looting the country's resources and distributing it to the ruling class and other selective minority groups as a means to maximize the power of his dictatorial regime. The use of the country's resources as a form of patronage and favoritism is used to placate supporters and punish those who oppose the regime.

From the get go, Isaias tried to create absolutist and extractive political and economic institutions. Instead of calling for national reconciliation and inclusion, he declared "... from now onwards, there is no space for political pluralism in Eritrea" in his first address to the Eritrean people in 1991. The process of suffocating the political space in Eritrea has been continuing to date and Isaias has eliminated many political figures, including internal dissents, such as the group dubbed "G15", who called for political pluralism in Eritrea. He has declared the 1997 Constitution as dead before it was promulgated in his 2015 New Year speech and has denied the Eritrean people its right to have a constitutional government, rule of law, and economic prosperity.

This is contrary to the expectations of the Eritrean people. After independence, Eritrean political leaders were expected to engage all sections of the Eritrean society in a national debate on nation building and state construction in the newly liberated Eritrea. At minimum, they were expected to

create more efficient governance structure and resource allocation system that could guarantee individuals the right to economic freedom --- to freely engage in exchange and contract. Instead, post---1997 PFDJ under the leadership of Isaias abandoned the process of proper constitution---making and state construction and primarily engaged in political opportunism that significantly increased its monopoly of political and economic power. What emerged from this process was a rapacious state ruled by a ruthless rapacious dictator. Consequently, post---independence Eritrea has been ruled by an extreme autocratic dictator that lacks any vision or commitment to promote long---run economic growth or sustainable development, or any provision of public goods. Isaias is famously known for his use of extreme brutality and exclusion as a means for punishing opponents and competitors. He tries to gain and stay in power through the application of ruthless coercion and repression at any cost. Over the years, he has accumulated a high degree of concentrated political power and tries to use it to control vital economic resources and power. Furthermore, instead of using this economic power for any socio---economic growth and development purposes, he uses it to buy loyalty of his supporters and followers through the use of a mixture of fear and reward.

The brute fact is instead of establishing governance structures and resources allocation system that allows popular participation, the regime from the outset adopted extractive and exclusionary laws that allow it to capture all the benefits of our independence. As a consequence, many population groups in our country were and are marginalized politically, socially and economically. Ever since its inception, the regime has centralized the production and distribution of resources, established patronage and privileges at the expense of all other elements of the nation’s economy. We know, using this political power, the few in PFDJ have accumulated enormous wealth and resources of the state for themselves. In addition, the state power arrangement does not constrain the powers of the government: it does not guarantee economic freedom; it does not provide mechanisms for peaceful resolution of conflicting interests of various groups within Eritrea; it does not advocate for peaceful coexistence in Eritrea. What we have in Eritrea is a “failed state phenomenon” where the regime neither cares for the majority of the people or for the public good, nor for the people’s right.

3. The Need for Political Transition

To transform the rapacious rule into a more transparent, participatory and accountable political and economic system in Eritrea, all Eritreans should actively engage in the reconstruction of the state through a proper constitution making. A properly designed Eritrean constitution will determine the kind of incentive structure to be faced by participants in both the economic and political markets.

It will provide the foundations for the establishment and the sustenance of post- constitutional Eritrea's institutions. Since such a constitution can only be constructed from a process in which no one entity, person or group dominates and controls the deliberations, the current PFDJ controlled approach to constitution making should first be dismantled. Hence, the first order of business for all Eritreans must be effecting political change by dismantling the current governance arrangements of the rapacious rule. When and if only this happens, will it be possible to establish a development-oriented constitutional structure. Sustainable economic growth and development in Eritrea will depend on the existence of an efficient and self-enforcing constitution. Such a new Eritrean constitution shall enshrine the protection of the rights and dignity of Eritreans consistent with the thirty-five basic principles outlined in the Denver Manifesto. This will include key provisions that guarantee economic freedoms, enhance entrepreneurship, create jobs and wealth, promote the peaceful coexistence of the different groups (ethnic, religious, linguistic, regional, etc.), recognition of land rights, repatriation of refugees, and improve the abilities of all Eritreans to fully and effectively participate in nation building.

4. Cause of Disunity and Disharmony in the Justice Seeking Movement

Starting from the inception of the self-determination period in the mid-1940s and establishing the Eritrean liberation front, internal conflicts of Eritreans have not subsided. That been the case, it has been reflected and will continue to be reflected within the justice-seeking Eritrean groups. Internal conflicts are not only manifested by internal wars. However, if people or individuals could not sit down and have an understanding, you can't say they have exited from the internal wars.

Though the source is the misunderstandings, the core reason for the misunderstandings are:

- Lack of trust on one another
- Lack of confidence on others
- Lack of women in leadership positions
- Lack of youth in leadership positions
- Lack of ability to put democracy into practice
- Lack of recognition of the power of diversity and ideas from many
- Power hungry leaders
- Giving priority to party more than country
- Demagogues and autocratic leaders

- My ideas are better, and I should be heard only, self-centered
- Not listening to others' opinions
- Acting like you are smarter than others
- Lack of respect to others and their opinions
- Not been able to distinguish between your friends and foes
- Using similar divisive tactics that the government uses (religious, regional, ethnic, etc.)

5. Unity of Justice-Seeking Eritreans

The top priority of the current regime in Eritrea has been to destroy the great cultures and traditions of Eritrea, bring new cultures that are subservient to it, and create mistrust among the Eritrean people so that it can jail, kill, and force its youth to flee the country. That is why the justice-seeking Eritreans must continue its unwavering struggle to completely uproot the authoritarian regime that is bent on destroying Eritrea.

When we say unwavering struggle, first, all justice-seeking Eritrean in Eritrea and outside Eritrea, must redirect their struggles by narrowing their differences and focusing in saving the country. For justice-seeking people, country must come first. To do this, justice-seeking groups must have trust on each other, support each other, listen to one another, avoid selfishness, understand their capabilities, believe in the democratic principles, and avoid biases.

To bring unity, we must strive to bring harmony among the diverse groups of Eritreans, especially, by creating conditions for greater participation of women, through seminars and strong campaign. Unity requires bringing harmony among all justice-seeking Eritrean political groups, civic societies, as well as individuals, so that they work together for the common goal of destroying the PFDJ and bringing democratic change in Eritrea.

6. Transparency and Accountability of Justice-Seeking Eritrean Groups

The desire and aspiration of all the justice-seeking Eritrean political movements, as well as civic and humanitarian organizations, big or small, is to play a part in bringing an end to the dictatorial regime in Eritrea. It is also believed and expected that these movements are committed to bringing and supporting democratic changes in Eritrea. Though some of these groups may have a long-standing and well-documented political programs and strategic plans that stipulate these goals, many of them either lack such documentations or have no transparency to their programs and strategies that it is hard to know what their agendas are or what their constituents are fighting for.

To complicate matters further, the governance and organizational structure under which many of these groups operate is hardly a public knowledge or is not in line to the democratic principles that they allege to support.

This is the political and organizational condition under which the current justice-seeking Eritrean groups and their constituents are expected to conduct their struggle for justice and civil liberties in Eritrea. It is believed that this atmosphere of non-transparency and non-accountability is the central cause of the mistrust and disharmony among the many justice-seeking Eritrean groups. As a result, we have few dozen political movements, few more dozen civic organizations, and a dozen or more humanitarian groups conceivably all working for the same political goal. Hidden in these is that there is no knowledge on how each of these groups differ from each other or what their similarities are, what constituencies they serve, what their finances are? So on and so forth.

Imploring national harmony and creating a united front of the justice-seeking Eritreans to the common-goal of bringing democratic changing in Eritrea, not only is “the right thing to do,” but it is the national obligation of all Eritreans at this moment in time. One important step in this is for each and every political movement, civic organization, and humanitarian group that is engaged in the straggle for democratic change in Eritrea shall work towards bringing full and complete transparence and accountability in their affairs – political, organizational, financial, and governance.

Application of basic democratic principles demands that there shall be some minimum transparency and accountability standard that these groups must meet in order for the groups’ efforts to be considered a positive contribution to the national straggle for democracy in Eritrea. Some of the central goals of the minimum transparency and accountability standards are to:

- Create trust and confidence among Eritreans
- Create opportunity for bringing together groups of common programs and goals
- Create opportunity to narrow down differences between groups through dialog
- Identify bad actors and correct bad behavior within the groups
- Identify programs or strategies that deny human rights of Eritreans
- Identify programs or strategies that are contradictory to democratic principles
- Bring more women and youth participation
- Attract strong leaders
- Bring greater financial support to the movements
- Allow effective and strong diplomatic approaches

7. Transparency and Accountability Minimum Standards

Some of the key Transparency and Accountability Standards that each of the group need to adhere to is outlined below:

a. Documentation and Transparency

Each group shall have the following documentation and the documentation should be made available to the Eritrean public at large:

1. Political Program (political movements) or Strategic Plan (civic and humanitarian groups)
2. Bylaws or Charter
3. Annual financial reports
4. Governance structure and organizational chart

b. Political Programs

Having a clear and concise political program is critical factor for the success of any political movement. Taking the historical, political, social, and economic perspectives of Eritrea, it believes that to meet the minimum transparency standard the political programs shall include full discussions of the following items:

1. Human rights in Eritrea
2. Eritrean Constitution (and social contract)
3. PFDJ Dictatorship
4. National Service and National Security in Eritrea
5. Sovereignty of Eritrea
6. Justice and Rule of Law in Eritrea
7. International Relations Policy of Eritrea
8. Eritrean Refugee and their Repatriation
9. Land ownership and rights of Eritreans
10. Economic Policy of Eritrea

c. Leadership Accountability

Each of the groups – political parties, civic organizations, and humanitarian groups – shall be ready to provide information and verifications on the following:

1. The group’s executive body and their terms
2. Financial support and leadership salaries
3. Leadership elections and their results
4. Number of their constituencies

d. Compliance and Reconciliation Process

Sinit Study Group encourages the establishment of a team of professionals, “Reconciliation and Unity Committee,” to monitor and support the justice-seeking groups’ compliance with the Minimum Transparency and Accountability Standards, as well as, to facilitate dialog and reconciliation among the various groups with the goal of bring unity among the groups. This team should be an independent group established within the justice-seeking camp potentially as part of the Eritrean National Democratic Forces Federation (ENDFF), that is described in Section 8 of this report. The team will establish the necessary authority and develop the appropriate procedures that allows it to provide the needed compliance monitoring and documentation process, as well as, have the capacity to perform its task of reconciliations.

8. The Creation of a Unified Eritrean National Democratic Force

History attest to the fact that if any movement for democratic transition in Eritrea is to succeed, it will require the active participation of the people (mass of people) struggling in unison. However, people join a movement only when they perceive the movement reflects the aspirations of the people and when they view the leadership as being capable of leading the movement to victory. This is what is missing in the Eritrean struggle for democratic change. Instead, what we have is “disunity” which in turn has led to a loss of trust and confidence in the ability of the movement to achieve the stated goal of democratic transition. Furthermore, this loss of trust has resulted in the further division (atomization) of the Eritrean society. Consequently, a deep sense of hopelessness and defeatism has been becoming the new normal in the Eritrean political landscape. Hence, there is an urgent need for a revolution by a broad coalition to reverse this unfortunate phenomenon. To be successful, the broad coalition has to be a coalition of commitment and not just a coalition of convenience. This all depends on the central features such as how and why the coalition is to be formed, and the nature and characteristics of the coalition partners (member organizations).

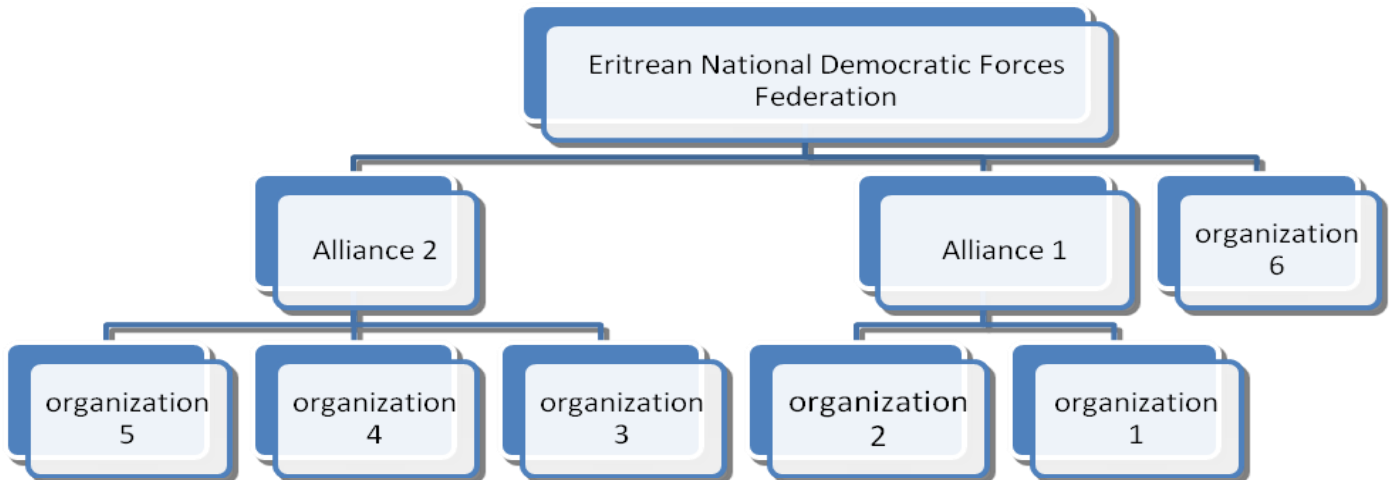
Alliance formation should follow a scientific approach. Forces with divergent strategic views cannot form a dynamic and growing alliance. Partners in an alliance need to have the same or

similar views on the fundamental and principal issues. Depending on the degree of similarities concerning their political programs, political orientations and political perspectives on national issues, alliances can be formed at different levels – the continuum could go from complete union at one end to a federation of democratic forces at the other end. In the context of Eritrea, for instance, forces that want to form an alliance at the national level need to have the same or similar views at least on the following issues and such an umbrella could be named as ‘Eritrean National Democratic Forces Federation (ENDFF)’:

1. *“Universal Declaration of Human Rights”*: The partners shall accept the 35 Principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as amended and stipulated in the Denver Manifesto.
2. *Common Understanding on PFDJ Dictatorship*: the partners shall have a common understanding and position that PFDJ oppresses and indiscriminately violates the rights of all Eritreans regardless of religion, sex, ethnic or regional affiliations.
3. *Sovereignty*- they (the partners) shall have unflinching belief in the national sovereignty of Eritrea and be ready to defend it without buts and ifs in the event of foreign aggression. Partners shall have respect to the unity of its people and to the territorial integrity of the nation of Eritrea. These commitments should be clearly spelled out in the political programs of these partners.
4. *Justice*- the partners shall commit themselves to justice, democracy, rule of law and respect as well as uphold human rights. Partners should be evaluated on these issues from their daily particles and these elements of a democratic society should be spelled out in their respective programs.
5. *External Policy*- partners should have similar views on the role of foreign cooperation and help. The role of changing its government should be the sole responsibility of the Eritrean people and partners should uphold and respect this basic principle.
6. *Method of Changing Government*- partners should have the same stand on the issue of how the Eritrean people change the current government and any future governments if need be.
7. *Who is the Enemy*- Partners should have similar view on who is the enemy of the Eritrean people. This should be clearly spelled out in the political programs of the partners. Dictatorial intent and practices are the enemies of the Eritrean people and the partners should fight these enemies wherever they might be. And since justice starts at home, partners should be ready to start the fight against dictatorial practices and intents within themselves.
8. *Problem and Solution Identification*- Partners should have similar views on the ultimate (main source) of the Eritrean problem and its solution. The ultimate source of the Eritrean problem is lack of justice in all of its aspects and the solution lies in bringing justice through a just means and methods.

9. *Commitment to Self-reliant Financing* -An alliance which is not financed mainly from internal sources is always weak and liable to foreign interference. Thus, an alliance should have a public support, be transparent, and accountable to the people. In the event of conflict, the ultimate arbitral should be the people through its denial of its support to the culprit and vice versa.

A Multi-Level Approach to Alliance Formation



a. Top-Level of the Alliance

The entities that form the Eritrean National Democratic Forces Federation should have complete and perfect agreements on the nine preconditions given above. These are the core national policies that form the common minimum program of the Federation. Such entities could include alliances of organizations, or entities such as youth organizations, student groups, religious groups, women’s groups, professional associations, and civic organizations. The ENDFF as an umbrella organization of diverse autonomous grassroots movements should adopt decentralized organizational structure and provide the coordination and direction necessary to promote strategic struggle for justice, rule of law, democracy and socio-economic prosperity in Eritrea. These diverse groups should be democratic and have leaders who are accountable to and have mandates from their members.

Founding Conference:

ENDFF should be launched at a founding conference between 6-12 months after the adoption of this roadmap. All participating entities should send representatives to the conference and the conference elects a council of leaders. The council will have a president, a secretary and staff who

are representatives from the different regions of the world. Thus, the president's office coordinates and gives direction to the day-to-day global activities of ENDDFF.

Council of Leaders:

- Shall establish regional and local councils who will oversee, coordinate and give direction to activities of the federation in their respective jurisdictions.
- Shall make a critical assessment of the overall political, socio-economic, cultural and religious sensitivities as well as demographic and population dynamics and their impacts to the conduct of strategic struggle in Eritrea. The first step in this endeavor is problem identification. To name but few of the problems at the national and global levels that can be identified are:
 - Toxic political environment of some opposition groups;
 - PFDJ and its public support mobilization strategies – border issue and sovereignty
Lack of a viable and better alternative to PFDJ;
 - Neighboring countries' (Ethiopia's) recent actions, attitudes, policies and strategies towards Eritrea help PFDJ;
 - Unfavorable politics of the unstable Horn of Africa; ○ Covert or overt intervention of the big powers in the Horn of Africa – protection their strategic national interests;
 - Lack of strong opposition and alliances and the issue of overcoming mistrust within the opposition;
 - Lack of proper understanding of ethnic, religious and regional means of organizing and its effectiveness in removing the PFDJ dictatorship;
 - Lack of conflict resolution capacity; and
 - Lack of recognition of an aging opposition in a country whose populations is becoming increasingly young (the median age of Eritrea is 18 years).
- Shall prepare a realistic “strategic estimate” – identifying the relative strengths and weaknesses of the dictatorial regime and the democratic forces. Identifications of the sources of power of both sides and the institutions that serve as their pillars of support are key elements of this exercise.
- Shall identify which of the sources of power or pillars of support of the regime can best be targeted to be attacked or removed – *identifying the Achilles' heel*.

- Shall identify the potential roles and attitudes of the silent majority – the population- at- large.
- Shall identify the role of foreign forces, mainly from, but not limited to, neighboring countries and the dynamics of the geopolitics, hydro-politics, and other political issues in the Horn of Africa to course of actions of the strategic struggle in Eritrea.
- Shall develop an overall or grand strategy for the federation. The key elements of the strategy include: identifications of the long-term and short-term objectives of the federation in clear and specific terms; and calculations in some general terms how the federation or the struggle should operate in order to achieve these objectives. Note that the overall strategy is useful because it serves to coordinate and direct all appropriate and available resources such as political, organizational, economic, human and moral to achieve the objectives of the struggle. Besides, the framework for the selection of more limited strategies for conducting the struggle is provided by a well-articulated overall strategy. Tactics and methods of action to implement the specific and limited strategy as part of the wider strategy are selected based on the conception of how best to utilize the available means and resources of the movement.
- Shall engage in capacity building through training, workshops and seminars on the use of strategic struggle to oppose the dictatorial regime. Topics for seminars and training may include the following among others:
 - The psychology of fear and techniques for overcoming its effects; ○ The pluralistic nature of power, its sources and how that power is expressed in the pillars of support (institutions and organizations);
 - Exposure to the vast arsenal of tools and methods of struggle; ○ The importance of selecting an intermediate and final objective for the strategic struggle; and
 - The role of media and propaganda.

ENDFF shall be mindful of the history that shaped the evolution of Eritrea as a nation-state in the very violent and volatile region of the world - Horn of Africa. In the past several decades, the Horn of Africa has provided both the motivation and the opportunity for foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the countries in the region. Although proximity plays a role, immediate neighboring countries involved in each other's political conflict in order to exercise realpolitik aimed at suppressing domestic dissidence. It is also important to note that the Horn of Africa has been considered as a natural extension of the battleground for the Middle East conflict, where the struggle could be fought by proxy. Besides, since the Red Sea is one of the world's most important sea lanes, the international big powers have become involved in this region. Thus, the border issue with

Ethiopia should be handled properly and any solution should be framed in term of the long-run national interest of Eritrea. In this regard, ENDDFF:

- Shall promote an Eritrea that lives in peace with itself, with neighboring countries and with the world at large;
 - Shall accept the decisions of the Ethiopian-Eritrean Boundary Commission as final and binding and will work hard to implement it;
 - Shall institute a peaceful conflict resolution regime; ○ Shall defend the national interest of Eritrea, including safeguarding and protecting the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity, through appropriate methods; and
 - Shall work to mobilize Eritrean resources to protect Eritrea from any foreign aggression.
- ENDDFF shall believe that what is lacking in Eritrea is “justice” in all of its dimensions – political, economic, socio-cultural and environmental. What we have in Eritrea is a dictatorial regime imposing national authoritarian domination that controls all aspects of life. The right alternative to this kind of regime is a constitutional democratic government that upholds rule of law, respects human rights and the right to life, and a government that promotes socio-economic prosperity and societal harmony. Instituting an institutional mechanism that safeguards and promotes the peaceful transfer of power (change of government) is an integral part of the struggle for justice in Eritrea. In this respect, ENDDFF:
 - Shall consider “change of government” in Eritrea is the inalienable rights and duties of the Eritrean people;
 - Shall conduct an ‘*appropriate method of struggle*’ to change the current dictatorial regime in Eritrea; and ○ Shall consider empowering the people through “People Power Movements” and by exposing them to the vast arsenal of nonviolent weapons not only could help change the current dictatorial regime but also could promote, protect and sustain democratic governance in Eritrea;
 - The relationship between nation states is power relationship and in a world governed by “*winner-takes-all*”, the victor (the powerful) cherishes and the weak perishes. Since nations don’t promote permanent friendship but permanent interest, any Eritrean entity that seeks a foreign military intervention to defeat the dictatorial regime needs to understand that a foreign country will militarily intervene in Eritrea if and only if the intervention promotes its permanent national interest. In this respect, the foreign intervention could destroy Eritrean national interest. Thus, if this were to happen, ENDDFF:
 - Shall treat such an act as treason; and

- Shall work to create awareness among the Eritrean public, both at home and in the Diaspora, about the crippling effects of a foreign military intervention in Eritrea to the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and national interest of Eritrea.
- It is important to identify the source of power or the pillars of support of the regime. Generally, the source of power for the regime resides among the people throughout the Eritrean society where the dictatorial regime is able to exercise only that power that its supporters permit. It should be clear that the dictatorial regime is ruling Eritrea with the consent and cooperation of many of the Eritrean people, irrespective of whether the consent and cooperation is willingly given or coerced through fear and terror. Identifying why the people give their consent and cooperation to obey and be ruled by the dictatorial regime should be crucial first step of any strategic struggle. Fear of sanction, self-interest, habit, indifference, and absence of self- confidence are some of the possible reasons for obedience to the dictatorial regime. Thus, ENDDFF:
 - Shall make sure that apart from those few who committed crimes, all the people in the police, military, civil servants, business community, workers, youth, media, etc. will have stakes in the new government;
 - Shall institute mechanisms of fair compensation schemes for anyone who had served Eritrea under the current regime, or during the liberation era;
 - Shall institute a system that protects individual and business property rights provided the property is acquired legally irrespective of past political affiliations of the owner(s); and
 - Shall work to help the people overcome the effects of fear by promoting knowledge, discipline, and collective action on the part of the people, as well through proper planning of strategic struggle.
- Generally, with the successful creation of ENDDFF, the Eritrean political landscape will be dominated by three distinct forces with distinct orientations on national issues and distinct democratic credentials – a national democratic force (ENDDFF), a dictatorial regime (PFDJ), and non-ENDDFF affiliated Opposition Entities. But, it is important to note that neither PFDJ nor the non- ENDDFF affiliated Opposition Entities is/will be cohesive or uniform force. ENDDFF shall work to design policies and approaches to determine its relationship with the other two forces. Some of the activities that ENDDFF shall take in this regard include the following:
 - Determining the rules of engagement by specifying the areas of cooperation and confrontation;
 - Engage more constructively with the more nationalistic and more democratic elements within these forces in order for them to be able to embrace the strategic struggle;

- Work and cooperate with forces in the non-ENDFF affiliated Opposition Entities camp on specific common issues of national interest such as conducting general demonstrations against the regime, protection of Eritrean refugees, etc.;
 - Preparing a peace plan for Eritrea which involves the determination of the nature and conditions of any ultimate peace negotiations with the regime, if conditions on the ground is to dictate such a necessity; and
 - Promote independent bilateral or multilateral negotiated settlements of any differences involving ENDF and any other Eritrean entity or entities.
- The lowest stratum of the organizational hierarchy in the strategic struggle is the population in its entirety. Organizing the masses is a key task and a critical element for the conduct as well as for the success of the strategic struggle. Thus, ENDF:
 - Shall prepare and disseminate periodic appeals to the public to organize and exercise civil disobedience and political defiance;
 - Needs to think thoroughly and creatively about its relationships to the Eritrean social environment, and the degree to which it is likely to garner popular support; and
 - Needs to plan to utilize and extend existing social groups and institutions such as Churches and Mosques, trade unions, student unions, and professional groups to engage in the widest possible participation. Preexisting networks and organizations can be activated and harnessed to successfully conduct people power movement.
 - There is a fundamental difference between “regime change” and “democratic change”. Regime change does not necessarily entail democratic change. In a democratic change, not the “change” per se as final outcome but the process of change on and itself is important. Democratic change requires the building of democratic institutions and the empowerment of the public through a process of societal democratic progression and evolution. Short of this, the disintegration of the current dictatorship may give an opportunity for some groups to step in as the new masters.

Tyranny can change to tyranny and the new dictatorship may even be crueler. Thus, ENDF

 - Shall develop a public awareness module on the differences between “Regime Change” and “Democratic Change”; and
 - Shall conduct periodic public awareness seminars on otherwise confusing concepts, terms and misconceptions of strategic struggle.
 - There are two fundamental issues that should be considered when evaluating the merits and relevance of a political organization in the Eritrean context. First, Eritrea is a country of

heterogeneous population with respect to ethno- linguistic, religious and cultural traits. Second, Eritrea as a nation is the outcome of the historical evolution of the concept of “nation- state” as applied to Africa. Nation-state in Africa is the result of the continuous struggle of the colonized people against the respective colonial powers. Thus, Eritrea is the outcome of the collective struggle of the Eritrean people against successive colonial powers and as such its political map and its geographic boundaries were curved during this long anti-colonial struggle. Any process that tries to change the boundaries of Eritrea violates the fundamental concept of nation- state and leads to the disappearance of the Eritrean entity as a nation-sate or as a sovereign country.

Hence, ENDDFF; ○ Shall lay down the foundations for institutional transformation whereby political institutions are created to accommodate and promote the peaceful coexistence of the diverse population of Eritrea; and

- Shall defend the Eritrean people from the atomization scheme of the dictatorial regime. Atomization of a society promotes a sense of hopelessness and defeatism which are favorable conditions for a tyranny to flourish and persist.
- ENDDFF shall work hard to be reckoned as a peace maker force or organization not only in Eritrea but also in the Horn of Africa and beyond. To this end, ENDDFF:
 - Shall open diplomatic channels with nations and non-nation actors in the Horn of Africa, Middle East, and in countries of the Western World which have national interests in the region;
 - Shall institute a research department or unit that engages itself in the creation of knowledge-base in international relations in general and in the geopolitics of the Horn of Africa in particular;
 - Shall enter itself into bilateral and multilateral relationships with organizations that work for peace and stability in the Greater Horn of Africa; and
 - Shall engage in serous diplomatic efforts to promote the national interest of Eritrea in international forums sponsored by UN Organizations, Regional Organizations, as well as by State and Non-State Actors.
- ENDDFF shall work hard to protect the Eritrean refugees in general and Eritrean refugees in the Sudan and Ethiopia in particular. The horrors of Eritrean refugees are well documented and ENDDFF will work relentlessly to minimize the dangers that Eritrean refugees are exposed to. In this respect, ENDDFF:
 - Shall create awareness about the dangers that any would be Eritrean refugee may

be exposed to such as the ‘shoot-to-kill’ policy of the dictatorial regime, the abuses in the different refugee camps, the cruelty of the human traffickers, the money extortions schemes of smugglers across the borders of countries, across deserts, as well as across oceans and deep seas;

- Institute a unite that documents the conditions of Eritrean refugees in different parts of the world;
 - Shall create awareness about the conditions of Eritrean refugees among international humanitarian and aid originations, as well as governments of the communities of nations;
 - Shall work with the relevant and respective agencies of the Sudan and Ethiopia to address the problems of Eritrean refugees in the two countries;
 - Shall work hard to protect Eritrean refugees in the Ethiopian and Sudanese Eritrean refugee camps from the abuses at the hands of Eritrean entities; ○ Shall work hard to mobilize financial and material help to the Eritrean refugees; ○ Shall establish permanent liaise office in the refugee camps run by volunteer refugees who live in the camps to help with psychological and post- traumatic stresses among the refugee population; and
 - Shall work to promote the provision of continuous training and education in Eritrean refugee camps.
- ENDDFF shall work to cultivate the support and understanding of the international community – foreign governments, non-governmental organizations and the foreign media.
 - The term limit of the council of leaders shall be four years.
 - The global council of leaders shall meet every six months; regional council leaders shall meet every three months; and local council leaders shall meet every month and assess and evaluate the federation’s activities in their respective jurisdictions during the specified periods.
 - Local council leaders shall report to their respective regional council leaders and regional council leaders shall report to the global council leaders of the federation.

b. Middle-Level of the Alliance

The entities that occupy the middle-level of the Alliance could be single organization or alliances of different numbers of organizations. The alliances in the middle-level such as Alliance 1 and Alliance 2 in the above chart are alliances of organizations who have common stands not only on

the above nine national policies but on other lower level policies such as on social issues, on local issues, on economic issues, etc. This is to signify the fact that any organization can enter or form an alliance with other organizations that have common interests or stands on locally-based issues besides having common stand on the nine national level issues described above.

c. Bottom-Level of the Alliance

The entities at the bottom-level of the Alliance are independent organizations formed by individuals with common stands on the national level policies, local level policies and on policies on social-economic and other relevant issues that matter to the Eritrean people. Thus, any entity or organization, can form alliances with other independent entities or organizations that have similar stands on some socio-economic policies in addition to a common stand on the fundamental preconditions expressed above. These alliances could develop into complete union over time. The alliances formed in such a way could also form an alliance with other alliances and organizations, such as the case of Alliance 1, Alliance 2 and Organization 6 which form the Federation in the above chart.

10. Conclusion

This report documents the work of the Eritrean Sinit Study Group Roadmap Subcommittee (Group 2), and identifies issues and methodologies needed to ensure national harmony and unity, create an organized opposition force, and work towards obliterating the dictatorial system in Eritrea. Towards supporting national harmony, the report establishes minimum transparency and accountability standards that the justice-seeking groups need to follow and provide a framework on how a united front of the justice-seeking groups should be formed.

Some of the key conclusions of this study report are:

- The **divisiveness and disharmony** within the opposition groups is attributed to: (1) the lack of trust and confidence on each other and in democracy, (2) lack of participation of women and youth, (3) power hungry, autocratic, and self-centered leaders, (4) bringing party before country, and not been able to distinguish between your friends and foes, and (5) use of similar divisive tactics that the government uses (religious, regional, ethnic, etc.).
- Unity and **harmony** among the justice-seeking Eritreans is a must.
- **Unity of the justice-seeking groups** is created when actions are taken to: (1) narrow down their differences and focus in saving the country, (2) believe that country comes first than the party, (3) have trust on each other, support each other, and listen to one another, (4) bring

harmony among the diverse groups of Eritreans, and (5) create conditions for greater participation of women and youth.

- Some level of **transparency and accountability** requirements is needed to: (1) create trust and confidence among Eritreans, bringing together groups of common programs and goals, and create opportunity to narrow down differences between groups through dialog, (2) identify bad actors and correct bad behavior within the groups, and identify programs or strategies that are contradictory to or deny the human rights and the desire for democratic changes of Eritreans, (3) bring more women and youth participation, (4) attract strong leaders, bring greater financial support to the movements, and allow effective and strong diplomatic approaches.
- Key components of the **Minimum Transparency and Accountability Standards** that each of the group must adhere to deals with documentation and full transparency of their political programs, strategic plans, bylaws, annual financial reports, and governance structures.
- To meet the **minimum transparency standards**, political program shall include full articulation of: (1) Eritrean sovereignty; (2) the constitution, human rights, justice and rule of law, in Eritrea; (3) national service and national security; (4) Eritrean refugees and their repatriations; (5) land ownership and rights; (6) economic and international relations policies; and (7) PFDJ dictatorship.
- To meet **minimum leadership accountability standards**, all groups shall be ready to provide full information and verifications of their leadership, organizational and financial affairs.
- It is recommended that a “**Reconciliation and Unity Committee**,” be establish within the justice-seeking camp to facilitate dialog and reconciliation among the various groups.
- A multi-level alliance formation approach is proposed to form a national alliance, **Eritrean National Democratic Forces Federation (ENDFF)**, of the justice-seeking groups.