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حزب الشعب الديمقراطي الارتري  
مكتب الرئيس

**ERITREAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY**  
**Office of the Chairman**

To:

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-Moon,  
UN Secretary General  
The United Nations Headquarters, New York,

April 13, 2010

Dear UN Secretary-General,

This is another SOS call to the UN system, and through it, to the European Union, the United States and to the rest of the World Community, to seriously address an ongoing tragedy of our distressed people in Eritrea. In particular, today's message wishes to draw your Excellency's attention to the grim condition of Eritrean political prisoners under the extremely cruel regime of President Isaias Afworki.

Dear Sir,

One of the guards of a high security-prison at Era-Ero, a torrid place north of Asmara, left Eritrea and crossed the border to Ethiopia in recent weeks. His name is Mr. Eyob Bahta Habtemariam, now accessible through the Ethiopian Red Cross. He is nowadays telling to the media the following depressing eyewitness story:

- 1. Of the 35 very high government officials and journalists who were imprisoned nine years ago, 15 have died due to medical neglect, food deprivation and excessive heat. Among the dead are the one-time Eritrean vice-president, Mahmoud Sherifo; General Ogbe Abraha, and five of the jailed journalists.*
- 2. Of the remaining 20 prison inmates at Era-Ero, 9 are reportedly disabled physically and/or mentally. Mr. Haile Woldetensae, the former Foreign Minister, who negotiated the Algiers Agreement in 2000 in the presence of UN, European and United States representatives, is now totally blind. Only 11 of the inmates are considered still 'aware of their situation' and thus kept in handcuffs and leg chains 24 hours a day.*
- 3. All the remaining Era-Ero prison inmates, who receive nothing else but one meal a day consisting of bread, lentils and tea, are emaciated bodies waiting for a slow death.*

Dear Mr. Ban Ki-Moon,

This telegraphic message is being sent to you in the UN system and copied to other concerned bodies, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, to kindly pay due attention to this freshly

arriving information about the tragedy in Eritrea and act through your good offices to save lives in imminent danger and also help to limit the extent of human suffering in Eritrea.

Your Excellency,

What is happening at the infamous prison of Era-Ero is only a tip of an iceberg of the gross abuses of human rights taking place at many levels in our new country. There are hundreds of such dungeons across Eritrea today, where up to 30,000 political prisoners and prisoners of conscience are reportedly kept in similar disturbing condition with equally high death toll because of systematic neglect.

Therefore, I, the undersigned chairman of an Eritrean opposition party in exile, am submitting this modest request to you and other concerned bodies to kindly take the following measures as a matter of absolute urgency:

1. The UN system to initiate sending a Special Human Rights Rapporteur to Eritrea and demand, together with a delegation of the ICRC, a visit to Era-Ero and other dungeons in the country;
2. The European Union and the United States to lead action without delay for the strict implementation of UNSC Resolution 1907 on targeted sanctions against the regime in Eritrea;
3. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other human rights organizations to demand the Asmara regime to bring all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Eritrea to a court of law or release them immediately. The human rights bodies are also requested to intensify their activities in exposing the real crimes against humanity going on in daily basis in Eritrea and make pressure bear on Governments to act soon to help stop the human tragedy befalling the Eritrean people many of whom are leaving the country en masse to take refuge in neighboring countries.

Trusting to obtain your timely and favourable response, I remain, Sir,

Sincerely Yours,



Wolde Yesus Ammar,  
Chairman, Eritrean People's Democratic Party  
[EPDPchair@gmail.com](mailto:EPDPchair@gmail.com)

**Copies To:**

(By emails, posts and hand deliveries by local EPDP representatives)

Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, UN Deputy Secretary General, New York

Ms. Navanethem Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva

Mr. Jacoub Kellenberger, President of the International Committee for the Red Cross, Geneva

Mr. Herman van Rompuy, President of the European Union, Brussels

Ms. Hillary R. Clinton, US Secretary of State, Washington DC

Foreign Ministries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, and the Sudan

Branches of Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, other regional and international human rights organizations