**The Malice that Bleeds Ethiopia and its Unfortunate Neighbours**

At the outset, I must admit that the use of the word malice may be slightly unsuitable in the context of this article I am about to write. Nonetheless, I will use it and try contextualize as I write and I would encourage honest Ethiopian readers and those less versed in the historical relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia, to critically appraise the falsified Ethiopian claims in respect of Eritrean sea ports. It is this void illegal desire of Ethiopia that continues to keep the peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia in pitiful existence endlessly for decades draining all their human and material resources. There can’t be more malice than this dreadful malady.

 Let me now begin dwelling on in depth.

The purpose of this article is not to provide new information as regards the envisaged causes of the threat of war in the Horn of Africa. It is rather an attempt to highlight the rational of the aggressive illegal sea port acquisition policy agenda pushed by Ethiopia. Undoubtedly if pursued, it would unleash a catastrophic war in this geopolitically sensitive region with negative repercussions far and beyond. Clearly the peace and stability of this critical shipping route will see incalculable risk should this come to pass. That is where all stake holders and peace loving people should come in to stop this ill-conceived dangerous agenda of the current Ethiopian leadership.

Ever since Eritrea’s illegal and forced federation with Ethiopia, successive Ethiopian leaders have pursued a policy of subjugation and cultural genocide of the Eritrean people, with the view to destroy Eritrean identity and, thereby pave the way for controlling the country and acquiring a sea port on the Eritrean Red Sea coast. Brazenly all these leaders took it for granted that Ethiopia has a divine natural right to establish sea port on lands of sovereign countries specifically targeting Eritrea. According to their logical reasoning, this has to be because Ethiopia is a great country. This in point of fact is pure arrogance and smugness and never heard elsewhere. Past Ethiopian leaders falsely and shamelessly claimed that the Eritrean Port of Asseb belonged to Ethiopia without a shred of evidence or valid historical justification. Here watch out readers. The only and for the first time ever that Ethiopia set foot on the Eritrean Red Sea coast was the period between 1962 when the then Emperor Haile Selassie with forceful backing of United States abrogated the federal arrangement unilaterally and 1991 when the gallant EPLF forces drove out the half million Ethiopian army from Eritrea and secured its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The fate of this illegal and unattainable Ethiopian dream was sealed when in 1993 Eritrea became sovereign independent state and joined the UN as a full member.

All readers of this article including Ethiopians, please be reminded that:

1. Ethiopia has NEVER EVER OWNED Asseb or any other port on the Eritrean Red Sea apart from the 1962-1991 federation period. Even this period coincides with the protracted 30 years revolutionary war of independence which ended Ethiopian occupation in 1991. While this is the indisputable historical fact, all Ethiopian leaders and many activists have fed their people this fabricated claim of Asseb port ownership. Yet, not a single Ethiopian person in whatever capacity is able to provide veracious factual evidence to show Ethiopia’s legal claim to the Eritrean Port of Asseb.
2. The Ethiopian false claim of the Eritrea Port of Asseb is founded on wilful, deliberate and conscious disregard of the accepted standards of international legal tools and conventions of national sovereignty. The very essence and fundamental conception, acceptance and recognition of statehood is unacceptable defenestration- i.e. throwing out of a window. There would be no states without acceptance and respect of this standard.
3. The Ethiopian claim of the Eritrean Port of Asseb is even nowhere near irredentism claim. This is because this Eritrean littoral area has neither been under Ethiopia’s ownership nor under its jurisdiction in all its long history except during the period 1962-1991 when Ethiopia was the occupying power.
4. Article 2(24) of the UN Charter unequivocally affirms that *‘’ All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state , or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purpose of the United Nations’’*. It also stipulates explicitly that acceptance of territorial integrity is legally binding fundamental principle international law.

Notwithstanding this accepted and practiced legal framework governing relations between nations, Ethiopia has been violating this **red line** consistently to invade and annex Eritrea during the past several decades.

As regards the fallacious Ethiopian claim on Eritrea port of Asseb continues, the narration and logical reasoning of the current Ethiopian leader has no parallel whatsoever. I must confess that I could not find the right words. Let me lay down my perspective in the following manner for clear understanding Prime Minister Ali Ahmed’s Red Sea Accesses Agenda:

1. Inconsistent: His argument of justification Ethiopia’s accesses to the sea has two layers.

 Layer 1 for international audience. For this audience the argument is constructed in such a way that Ethiopia as a land locked country has a problem of normal access to the sea. This is coated with words of diplomatic language niceties. The fact that NO littoral country particularly Eritrea has not denied Ethiopia but actually invited her to use Eritrean ports for its maritime commercial services is absolutely put under the carpet. Access to sea for import-export business has never been an issue as guaranteed by the 1982 UN convention law of the sea (UNCLOS). Mischief and falsehood but also absolute RED HERRING!

Layer 2 for domestic audience: For this audience the argument is a direct appeal to nationalism employing sensational and sentimental words that Ethiopia as a great country must have its **own** port on the Red Sea coast for maritime and military services either by peaceful means or by invasion and subsequent annexation. Here falsified propagandist language urging the people to rise up in sacrifice and die for their country and support the government agenda of conquest is relentlessly and vigorously executed.

1. Flawed: When the above approach fails to deliver the dreamed port, the prime minister comes with the following absurd and flawed justification:
2. Ethiopia with a population of 130 million needs a sea port of its ownership and therefore must acquire it by hook or crook. He literary stated: Ethiopia is Not a Country Without a sea port.
3. He affirms no survival for Ethiopia without sea port as her Economic development and national security depends on this.

**I honestly cannot argue against this but ONLY to Say this is NONSENSICAL**.

1. Claiming Asseb Based on Ethnicity: The people who live in the Afar kill of Ethiopia and the Eritreans who live along the Eritrea-Ethiopia border area, speak the same Afar language. For Aby Ahmed this a valid justification to claim Asseb because the people are of the same ethnic group. Again this faulty logic if it where accepted means almost all countries of the world would be at each other’s throats as any country can claim any imaginable element in its neighbouring country. Take for example the Fulani speaking people in West Africa where more than 10 countries have ethic groups speaking that language. These countries would be locked in perpetual wars. According to Aby Ahmed all Arabic speaking Muslims should have been of the same nationality because of the common Arabic language. His use of language and ethnicity as a basis is one of the most farcical claim. Again there is no parallel for this infantile reasoning.

My take on all these recurrence of the malady of falsified claims by all previous Ethiopian leaders in respect of annexation of Eritrean coastal land has no factual basis but is driven by the arrogance of power not less than what Hitler or Napoleon did. These Ethiopian leaders just felt they are mighty enough and can act with impunity and forcefully take land of a sovereign country to build sea port or naval base. This is delusional and unprecedented futile divine righteousness. This is evil has been detrimental to Eritrea the victim and Ethiopia also as the perpetrator. Eritrea has had the misfortune yet again to be denied of peaceful and secure environment for development even as she was dusting the ashes of 30 plus years of destructive war. It has to stay on war footing to defend its precious sovereignty and territorial integrity as Ethiopia persistently continued to invade and in attempt to reverse Eritrean independence for good. For Eritrea the loss of 000’s precious lives, the missed opportunity of national reconstruction and economic development is more than painful.

 For Ethiopia this meant marshaling all human and economic resources to wage war of invasion against Eritrea while its people have to bear the burden of hunger. It is not an exaggeration to say that throughout its history, Ethiopia could not do without wars as each succeeding leader passes or would be violently removed having fought his own war before passing the torch. Wouldn’t such real glorification of and fixation to war be taken as the source for the misery of its people? The news and scenes of hunger and starvation in Ethiopia is too familiar to remind the ordinary reader and follower of world events. Ethiopia, a country that could be the bread basket of the Horn region continues to bleed and generate instability not to mention the internal chaos which in turn sets her to be an existential threat to Eritrea and the region at large.

Let me conclude by stating that all countries face constraints of one category or another. This is a real phenomenon which tests any country’s capability to resolve its national crisis. Sabre rattling and war mongering is not a solution. This is a direct and blatant threat to international peace and security. But what Ethiopia has been doing is unleashing unrelenting wars of aggression against Eritrea. True to its tradition of war making, the current leadership in Ethiopia has been recklessly boasting that even if it self fails to annex the Eritrean Port of Asseb, the future generation of Ethiopia has the mandate to do it. This is sowing the seeds of hatred and official receipt for war. Unfortunately this evil agenda ensures the continuation of the bleeding of the two countries. May God’s providence send us an Ethiopian leader who governs on fact based wisdom and deliver the people of the region from this sticking malice!

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