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The Eritrean-Ethiopian Border Conflict: Part 1—Events¹

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia

October 1998

By Marc Michaelson

May 6, 1998 was a fateful day for Ethiopia and Eritrea, the impact of which will be felt for years to come. The events that took place on that day near Badime, a village near the Eritrean-Ethiopian border, have seriously damaged relations between the two countries. Their once-friendly leaders are no longer talking, cooperation between their governments has ceased, and tension is rising between their peoples. The euphoria of peace lasted only seven years, having now dissipated into a new round of fighting, destruction and displacement. Old wounds have been reopened, and tragically, history is repeating itself.

As with much of the current conflict, the two governments' official versions of May 6th are somewhat different. According to Ethiopia, a few Eritrean military officials attempted to cross the border with their weapons. The Ethiopian authorities insisted they leave their guns on the Eritrean side of the border. They refused and opened fire on the local police and militia; a shoot-out ensued and both sides sustained casualties. In the Eritrean account, the small Eritrean delegation was en route to discuss border issues with local Ethiopian authorities. Such discussions were commonplace. But on that day, say the Eritreans, the Ethiopian militia shot down three Eritrean military officers in cold blood.

The precise events of May 6th are disputed, but ultimately who fired first, who provoked whom, who was right and who was wrong, are irrelevant. May 6th was a trigger event. The deaths of those three Eritrean military officials set off a domino-like reaction of attacks and counter-attacks, claims and counter-claims.

The Eritrean Account: Re-Taking Ethiopian-Occupied Territory

According to the Eritrean government, Ethiopia has been administering significant tracts of Eritrean territory, specifically in the Badime and Aliteina areas, since Eritrea's independence in 1993. However, in the interest of maintaining strong relations with Ethiopia and pursuing imperatives of reconstruction and development, the Eritrean authorities decided not to push the border issue. Relations between the two governments were close, and Eritrea assumed that eventually they would negotiate and finalize the border demarcation.

Over the past few years, Eritreans living in border towns complained of mistreatment at the hands of Ethiopian authorities. Despite these complaints, the Eritrean government issued no formal protests to the Ethiopian government until August 16, 1997. On that day, Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki wrote to

¹ This is the first of a two part series on the Eritrean-Ethiopian border conflict. Part 1 describes the conflict events and peace initiatives from both Ethiopian and Eritrean perspectives. Part 2 explores the background and causes of the conflict.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi protesting the Ethiopian army's occupation of Adi-Murug (Bada) in eastern Eritrea in July 1997, dismantling the existing Eritrean administration and installing a new Ethiopian administration. In the letter, Isaias suggested the two sides take rapid action to demarcate the border. Meles' response a few days later explained that the Ethiopian army had entered the area to pursue Afar opposition elements who were destabilizing the region.² Ultimately, the two sides agreed to revive a high-level joint committee to resolve the border issues.

The Eritreans claim there were other border incursions in the Badime area, and that authorities of the northern Ethiopia province of Tigray were pushing the border progressively deeper into Eritrean territory. For the Eritreans, the May 6th incident was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. The Eritrean Defense Force, seemingly prepared for just such an operation, attacked Ethiopian positions in Badime on May 12th and assumed control of the area. Eritrea explains these operations as re-taking control of Eritrean territories that Ethiopia had wrongfully occupied earlier.

Eritrea maintains that all of its forces (except those in Zalanbessa³) are mobilized on Eritrean territory, according to internationally recognized borders. They assert that the border was clearly demarcated in three colonial treaties between Ethiopia, Italy and Britain in the early years of this century.⁴ Eritrea denies the accusation that it is occupying Ethiopian land, and has challenged the Ethiopian government to present maps with geographical coordinates showing the "invaded" areas. The Eritrean government has accused the Ethiopian government of being expansionist, as evidenced by a 1997 Ethiopian map of Tigray province that includes small chunks of Eritrean land within Ethiopia. For Eritrea, the military operations beginning on May 12th are explained as strategically defensive,

aimed at protecting Eritrean territory from Tigrayan aggression.

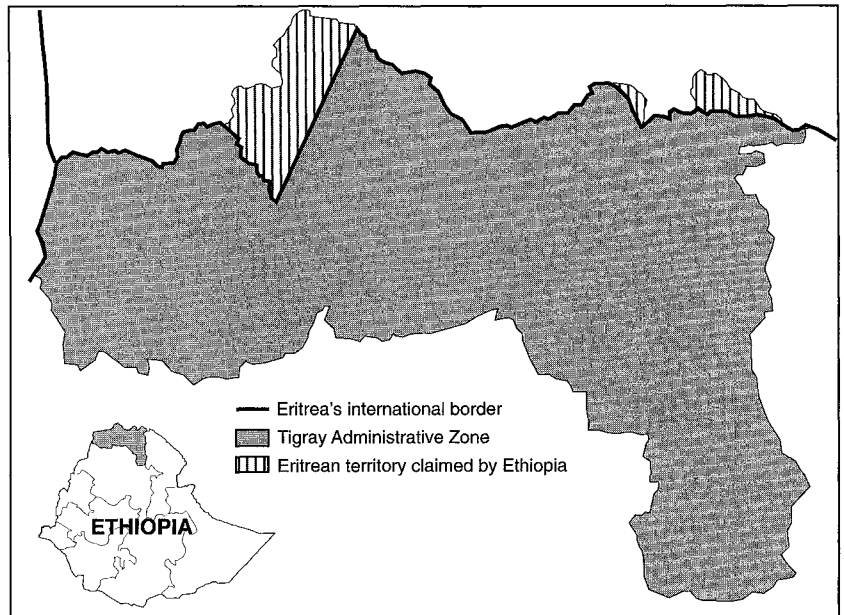
The Ethiopian Account: Eritrean Invasion

The Ethiopian explanation of events is much simpler. According to Ethiopia, the Eritrean attacks on May 12th were an invasion, pure and simple.

Ethiopian government officials assert that "the borders between Ethiopia and Eritrea are not fully delimited and demarcated," and that there have been "disputed localities."⁵ However, for the most part, they have avoided discussing any incursions or specific events occurring before May 6th. The bottom line is that Ethiopia was administering these lands prior to May 6th. The disputed territories had always been under the jurisdiction of Ethiopia — during the periods of Italian and British colonial rule of Eritrea right through to Eritrean independence and statehood.⁶

The Ethiopian government says that an Eritrean del-

1997 Ethiopian Map of Tigray Province



² The Afar are a herding people numbering around 100,000 who inhabit the Denakil Desert, which straddles the eastern Ethiopia/Eritrea border. Nationalistic as well, they have been agitating for independence since the overthrow of the monarchy by Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1975.

³ Eritrea acknowledges that Zalanbessa was Ethiopian territory. Since assuming control of the town in early June, Eritrea has held it for "strategic purposes."

⁴ Eritrean President Isaias cited these treaties in a television interview on May 27th: "The entire borderline between Eritrea and Ethiopia was demarcated through three separate international treaties made between Italy, Britain and Ethiopia (bilateral and trilateral) on July 10, 1900; May 15, 1902 and May 16, 1906 respectively. (Panafrikan News Agency report, May 28, 1998)

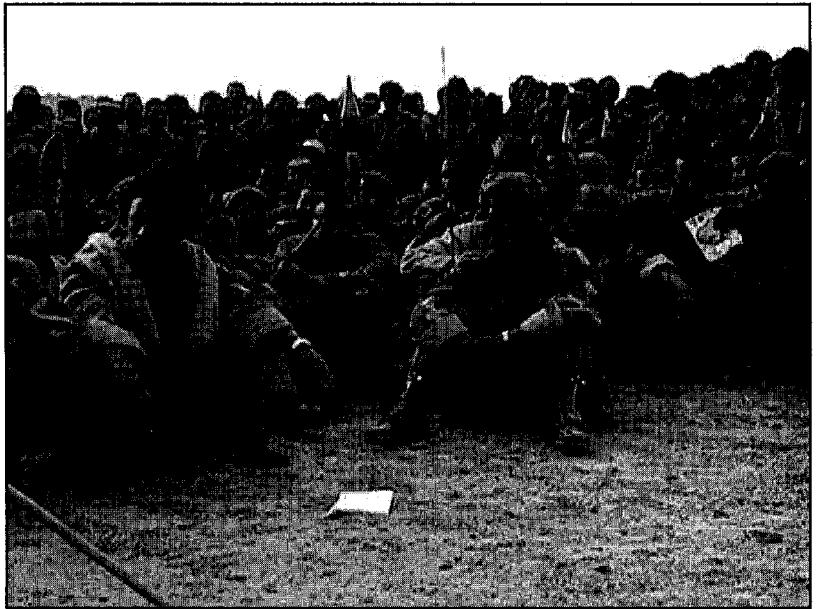
⁵ Statement by H.E. Ato Seyoum Mesfin, Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs To The Diplomatic Community in Addis Ababa, "On The Military Aggression by Eritrea," 19 May 1998.

⁶ "Background to and Chronology of Events on the Eritrean Aggression Against Ethiopia", Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 23 June 1998.

egation led by Minister of Defense Sebat Ephrem was actually en route to Addis Ababa to conduct meetings when the fighting broke out on May 6th. The Joint Committee met on May 9th, discussing the border issue and the Badime incident. Despite plans to consolidate the agreements on May 10th, the Eritrean delegation left that morning without informing their Ethiopian counterparts.

Then, Ethiopia claims, on May 12th, the country's territorial integrity was flagrantly violated. Three Eritrean battalions with tanks arrived in Badime, and Ethiopia was caught by surprise — it had no regular military troops in the border area, only local peasant militia and police. The Eritreans forcefully occupied Ethiopian lands in an effort, say the Ethiopians, "to create new facts on the ground."

The Ethiopian positions: That the border dispute and the invasion are two separate issues. That Ethiopia maintains a willingness to submit the border dispute to a third party for peaceful settlement. That this cannot be done until the invasion is entirely reversed. That Eritrea must learn that aggression is unacceptable and will not be appeased in any way. That resorting to the "rule of the jungle" by attacking first and negotiating second is intolerable. That in the civilized post-cold-war world, governed by international laws and norms, governments must not be allowed to use military force in



Ethiopian troops near disputed Aliteina border

violation of another country's national sovereignty.

Border Battles

Fighting continued intermittently throughout May and early June. A series of battles took place on three fronts along the border — Badime, Zalanbessa, Aliteina, and Burie. Both sides accused the other of expansionist aggression, vowing to defend their national integrity and sovereignty at all costs.



Eritrean local militia just north of the Mereb River

Eritrea accused Ethiopia of escalating the conflict and spreading the fighting to new sites. It asserted that Ethiopian forces launched attacks "on the 22nd, 23rd and 25th May in the Setit area (near Badime); on May 31st in the Alga-Aliteina areas" and on "June 3rd and 9th in the Ambesete Geleba area" (near Zalanbessa).⁷

Ethiopia, for its part, accused Eritrea of attacking Zalanbessa on June 9th, Erde Mattios (near Badime) on June 10th, and Burie (along the Assab road) on June 11th. Ethiopia claims that all of these attacks were repelled and that Eritrean forces were routed, sustaining 10,990 casualties including 4,100 dead. The Eritreans have refused to release casualty figures, preferring in the tradition of their long liberation struggle, a quieter approach. Both sides have claimed victories in these early battles, and point to independent observers who confirm their claims. On the ground, Eritrea retains

⁷ Press Release, Eritrean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3 June 1998.

control of nearly all the disputed territories. Ethiopia says its initial military successes prevented Eritrea from encroaching even further into Ethiopian territory.

Initially, the conflict was confined to ground skirmishes along the border. On June 5th the fighting escalated as both sides conducted air attacks in urban areas quite far from the border. Again, who struck first remains a bone of contention. According to Ethiopia, Eritrea bombed Mekelle twice, "deliberately targeting a civilian neighborhood and hitting an elementary school in session," killing 51 people. The Ethiopians then retaliated by bombing military targets at the Asmara airport. A week later, Eritrean planes bombed the town of Adigrat, destroying a grain store and barely missing the Addis Pharmaceutical Factory, one of the large new enterprises popping up in the major towns of Tigray Province.

The Eritrean account blames the Ethiopians for striking from the air first. At 2:00 p.m. on June 5th, they say, two Ethiopian Air Force fighter planes bombed areas in southern Asmara near the airport. In retaliation, at 4:00 p.m. Eritrean warplanes attacked Mekelle, the capital of Tigray Province. Eritrea claims Ethiopia attacked again at 2:30 p.m. on the same day and at 9:40 a.m. on the following day. Two Ethiopian MIG-23 fighter planes were shot down; one of the captured pilots was Col. Bezabieh Petros. History repeats itself. In May 1984, Col. Bezabieh was also shot down and taken as a prisoner of war by the Eritreans. At that time he was fighting on behalf of the Derg government of Mengistu Haile Mariam.

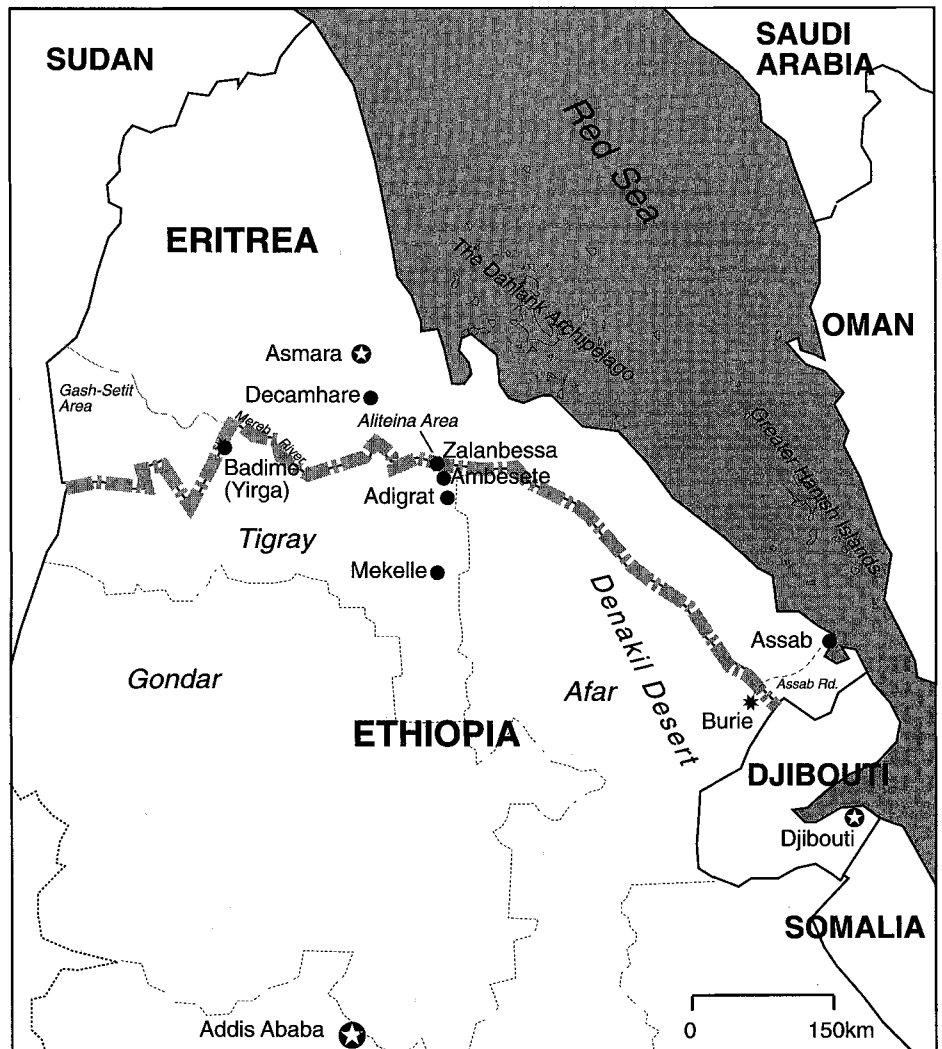
Independent sources have confirmed that Ethiopia launched the first air strikes. The attack, however, targeted only military installations at the Asmara airport. The Eritrean retaliation in Mekelle hit the Ayder Primary School compound not once but twice, in a residential area containing no evident military facilities. The resulting deaths of civilians, especially children, created enormous outrage among the Ethiopian people

and is still being used as propaganda footage on Ethiopian television four months later.

Trade, Transport and Communication Links Severed

The border conflict has adversely affected the economies of both countries. Immediately following the outbreak of hostilities, trade relations were severed. On May 13th, just a day after the Eritrean attacks on Badime, the Eritrean port of Assab, Ethiopia's main commercial outlet to the world, was shut down and Ethiopia quickly shifted its shipping business to neighboring Djibouti. Once again both sides have blamed the other for shutting down the Assab port. With the border closed, however, there was no route by which goods could pass, so keeping the port open would have been meaningless.

All other major trade between the two countries has also ceased.⁸ This is extremely significant, since Eritrea is heavily reliant on the importation of Ethiopian agricultural products, especially grains. For Ethiopia, the pri-



⁸ Only small levels of contraband trade in basic commodities has continued at certain spots along the border.

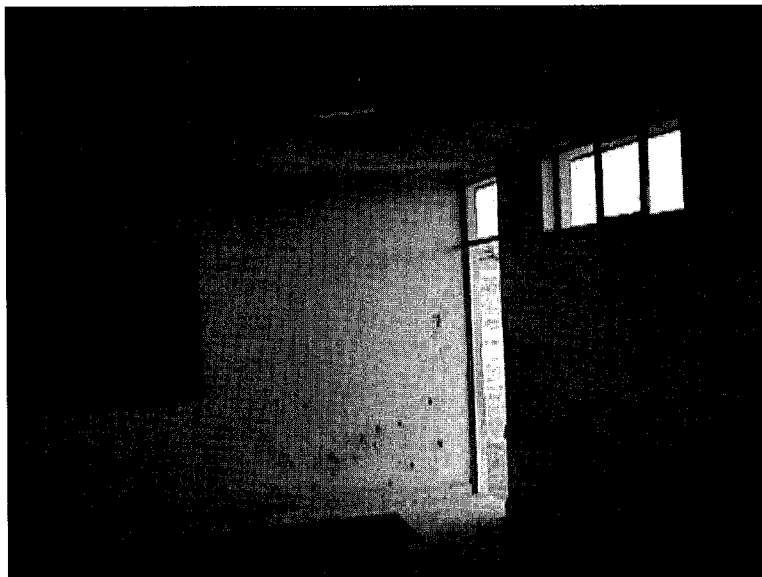
mary economic burden derives from the closure of the Assab port, the shift to Djibouti having increased the cost of both imports and exports.

On May 13th, Ethiopian Airlines terminated all flights to Eritrea, and air travel directly between the two countries ceased. Shortly thereafter, on May 22nd, the Ethiopian Telecommunications Authority cut all phone links from Ethiopia to Eritrea and left just a few lines open in the other direction (which could be accessed only by dialing the expensive international exchange).⁹

The many social and economic links between the peoples of Ethiopia and Eritrea have thus been rapidly and drastically reduced. Previously, the two economies were closely integrated and inexpensive transportation and communications services enabled people to maintain close contact. Now, the economies have been rapidly disengaged, and the populations have become increasingly isolated from one another.

Deportations and Other Abuses

As rains intensified in mid-June border areas muddied and ground fighting came to a gradual halt. U.S. President Bill Clinton spoke with both Meles and Isaias by telephone, and on June 15th both agreed to suspend air strikes. Clinton urged the two nations, both of which

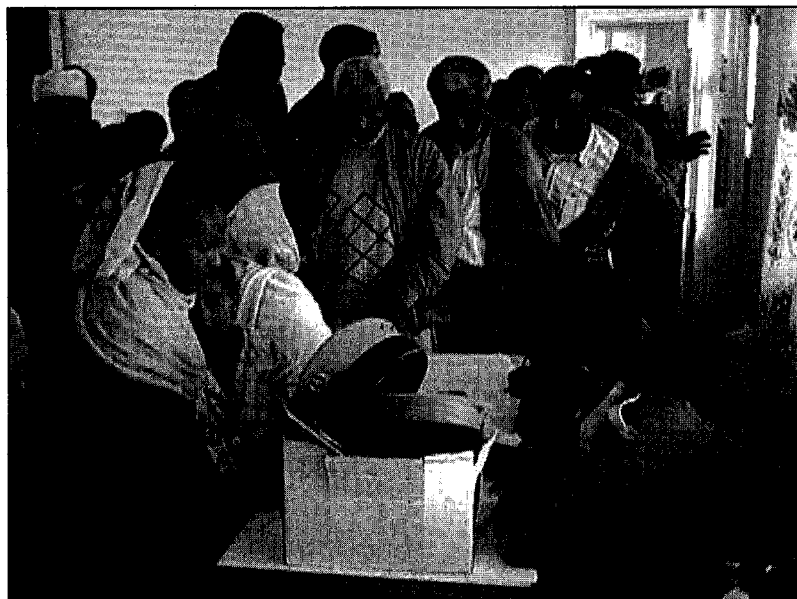


Classroom at Ayder Primary School in Mekelle damaged by Eritrean shelling on 5 June

are considered important U.S. allies in the region (Clinton declared them part of the "African Renaissance" during his trip to East Africa earlier this year, to make concerted efforts to reach a peaceful settlement.

Although the shelling subsided, prospects for peace became more, not less, remote.

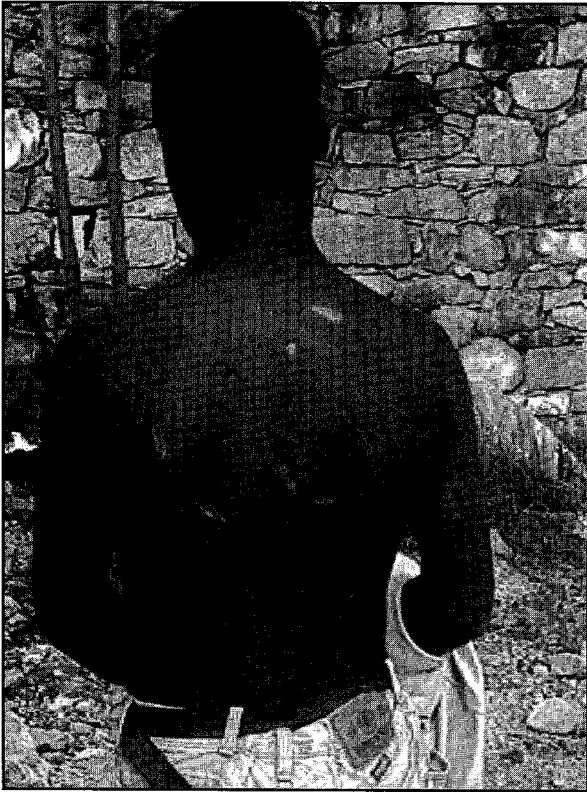
On June 12th Ethiopia systematically began to deport Eritreans, claiming they were spies and support of the EPLF's (Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front) aggression by covert means and monetary contributions. The deportees have been detained and then sent by bus to the border area where they cross by foot, sometimes at night. As of this writing, more than 30,000 Eritreans have been forcibly expelled, although the Ethiopian government denies the numbers are this high. Much to the chagrin of the Ethiopian authorities, the deportations have been condemned by UN Commissioner on Human Rights Mary Robinson and the U.S. State Department. The deportation policy has sewn ill-feeling between Eritreans and Ethiopians, escalating the political border conflict into a more personalized battle. Even once the border dispute is resolved, the deported will harbor bitterness and anger at their treatment.



Eritrean deportees being registered at a makeshift reception center in Decamhare

Hypersensitive to the condemnation

⁹ Press Release, Eritrean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26 May 1998. Previously phone communication between Ethiopia and Eritrea was relatively inexpensive since existing national links were maintained following Eritrea's independence. In June, these local links were shut down by Ethiopia. It is now impossible to call Eritrea from Ethiopia. Calls to Ethiopia from Eritrea are still possible using international country codes, but this is prohibitively expensive for most people.



Scars healing on the back of Gebremedhin Tsegaye-Tesfaye, an Ethiopian beaten by Sawa-trained military youth in Decamhare, Eritrea

Ethiopia received for its deportation policy, the Eritrean government has sought, at all costs, to avoid the perception that it is deporting Ethiopians. This has created a different, but also troubling, problem for Ethiopian nationals wishing to return to Ethiopia, since many have been denied exit visas.¹⁰ The Eritrean government has emphasized that Ethiopians are welcome to stay in Eritrea—any who wish to leave must state that they are doing so voluntarily, and must travel to the border with ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) accompaniment. These measures notwithstanding, the Ethiopian government has continuously labeled Ethiopian returnees as “deportees.”

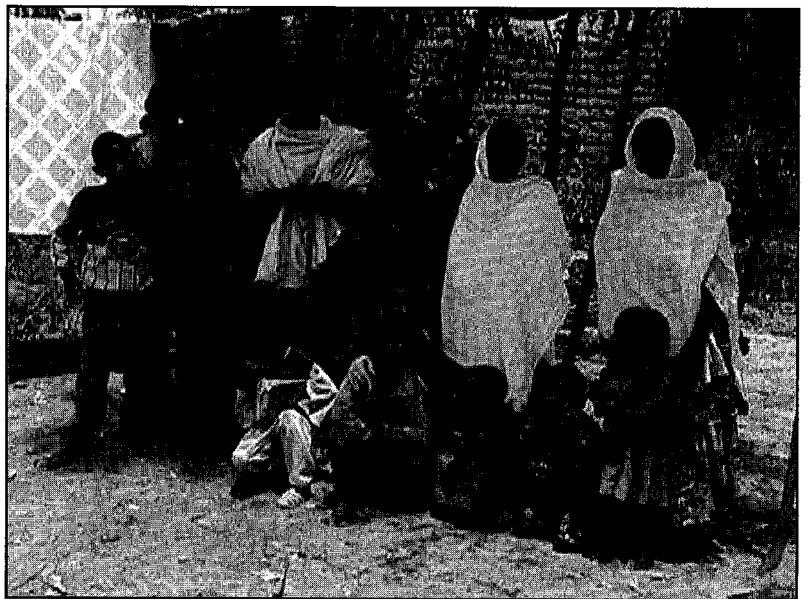
Ethiopia, for its part, has leveled numerous charges that Ethiopian nationals are being subjected to detention, torture and rape in Eritrea. They assert that Eritrea has enacted a covert policy of forcibly dismissing Ethiopian nationals from their jobs and evicting them from their homes. Any explicit Eritrean government policies aimed at the repression of Ethiopian na-

tionals, if they do in fact exist, have been carefully concealed and hidden from foreign journalists and expatriates. The Eritrean government has repeatedly stated that Ethiopians are free to continue to work and live in Eritrea, and those who harass or mistreat them in any way will be prosecuted.

While no convincing evidence of systematic and policy-sanctioned mistreatment of Ethiopian nationals in Eritrea has been uncovered, their living conditions of Ethiopians have seriously deteriorated. Many casual laborers who were working as maids and construction workers have lost their jobs. Without shelter or employment, these people are forced to live on the streets. Many have gathered outside the compound of the Ethiopian Embassy in Asmara, hoping to receive assistance to return home.

There also have been some serious cases of mistreatment, including rapes and beatings. Many of these abuses have apparently been committed by young graduates of Eritrea’s Sawa national military training camp. While these appear to be isolated incidents rather than government-sanctioned abuses, they are still extremely serious; if the Eritrean government is to make good on its pledge to protect Ethiopian nationals, the perpetrators of these crimes will need to be identified, tried and punished accordingly.

While Eritrea felt slighted by the international community’s coverage of the border conflict and peace proposals that favored Ethiopia, Ethiopians have expressed outrage at the condemnation they have received from international humanitarian groups over the depor-



Aregash Hailu (far right) and her family, lifelong residents of Zalanbessa, were displaced by the fighting and are now living in Adigrat, Ethiopia.

¹⁰ Recently, this has been changing. In late September and early October, the Eritrean authorities started issuing more exit visas, and larger numbers of Ethiopians have begun returning to Ethiopia.

tation issues. As such, both sides feel the other has manipulated the press, and that they've been treated unfairly by outside observers.

Perhaps most dangerously, the deportations and large displaced populations¹¹ have distracted attention from the ultimately more pressing and threatening prospect of renewed fighting. Rather than focusing on creative means for resolving core border-conflict issues, the international community has spent most of its time and resources responding to the pressing humanitarian needs of those deported and displaced. Should the fighting resume, a much larger humanitarian disaster will ensue, overshadowing the skirmishes in May and June.

Peace Efforts

On May 17, Vice President Paul Kagame of Rwanda arrived in Addis Ababa to begin a process of shuttle diplomacy. He was soon joined by United States Undersecretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice and a U.S. delegation. For 12 days the American-Rwandan team shuttled between Asmara and Addis Ababa, meeting with leaders, assessing the situation, and trying to negotiate both a rapid end to the fighting and a process for resolving the border dispute peacefully.

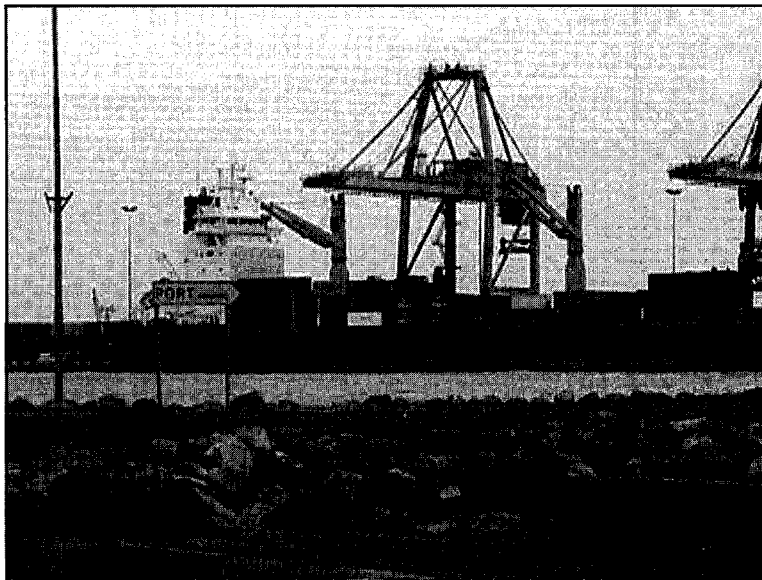
On May 29th, the U.S.-Rwanda Peace Plan was unveiled. It contained the following main provisions:

- 1) Disengagement in Badime by:
 - a) deployment of an Observer Mission (organized by Rwanda)
 - b) withdrawal of Eritrean forces to pre-May 6th positions
 - c) return of the civil administration in place before May 6
 - d) investigation into the events of May 6th
- 2) Binding delimitation and demarcation of the border on the basis of colonial treaties and international law by a Technical Team involving the UN Cartography Office.
- 3) Demilitarization of the border areas to reduce tensions

On June 4th, Ethiopia accepted the U.S.-Rwanda proposal. Eritrea, while commending the facilitation team, found provision 1c unacceptable. Eritrea would not evacuate Eritrean territories and allow the return of Ethiopian administration. That would effectively amount to an Eritrean admission that the lands are legitimately Ethiopian. Eritrea could accept demilitarization and tem-

porary third-party administration in the disputed areas, but never Ethiopian administration.

One high-ranking American diplomat who took part in the facilitation process believes the team made a major mistake. The peace plan favored the Ethiopian position, while invalidating Eritrean claims. Making matters worse, this diplomat asserts, was heavy-handed U.S. pres-



A ship offloading containers at Djibouti's port. Following closure of Eritrea's Assab port, Ethiopia shifted its trade outlet to neighboring Djibouti.

sure on the United Nations, OAU (Organization for African Unity, EC (European Community), and IGAD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Development) to endorse or otherwise support the U.S.-Rwanda Plan, effectively stifling other initiatives. Rather than successfully moving the disputants toward peace, the U.S.-Rwanda plan ultimately kept the parties apart, cementing them in their positions and squelching the emergence of other plans. Ethiopia insisted on U.S.-Rwanda as the only feasible path to peace, and the Eritreans were further marginalized.

With the peace process stalled, the Eritreans countered on June 18th with a proposal of their own. The Eritrean plan focused on binding demarcation of the border by the UN Cartographic Office within six months. In the interim period, the plan proposed internationally-observed demilitarization of the disputed areas and an unspecified ad hoc arrangement for their temporary administration. No one responded formally to the Eritrean proposal, and Ethiopia has held firm — full Eritrean withdrawal and return of the status quo ante are non-negotiable preconditions to any discussion on resolving the border questions. The Ethiopian government once again criticized Eritrea for blatant military aggression, and

¹¹ The number of people displaced by the fighting on both sides of the border is said to number approximately 300,000.

questioned the logic of attacking and then proposing demilitarization.

There were a few other piecemeal efforts to rejuvenate a peace process. Informal consultations and shuttle diplomacy missions have been conducted by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi, and even Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi. None of these initiatives were able to break the tense stalemate that has precariously held throughout the rainy season.

Djiboutian President Hassan Gouled Aptidon, acting in his capacity as Chairman of IGAD, the Horn of Africa's sub-regional institution responsible for economic cooperation and conflict management, also visited both Addis Ababa and Asmara. The revitalization of IGAD during the past few years was, ironically, pushed most vigorously by Ethiopia and Eritrea. However, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, Dr. Tekeste Ghebray, is an Eritrean, and the Secretariat (particularly the political sections) are primarily staffed by Ethiopians and Eritreans. Further complicating President Aptidon's efforts was the considerable economic benefit Djibouti has derived as a result of the conflict. When war broke out, Ethiopia could no longer use Eritrean ports. Needing a trade outlet to the Red Sea, Ethiopia turned to Djibouti, significantly boosting port business for the small Francophone nation.

Another initiative, this one by the OAU, was launched in Ouagadougou at a Burkina Faso meeting of Heads of State in early June. Since all other facilitation efforts had been unable to draw the disputants into negotiations, the OAU began to look like the last hope for a peaceful settlement. A team of foreign ministers (from Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, and Djibouti) was designated to conduct an assessment of the conflict, and to put forward recommendations for adoption and presentation by their Heads of State at a later date. The mission visited both Ethiopia and Eritrea in late June, collecting data and assembling their report. Bolstering the OAU initiative, on June 26th the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1177 (1998) expressing "strong support" for the OAU process and urging it to follow up quickly.

Unfortunately, the "African Renaissance" lauded by President Clinton was unraveling elsewhere as well. The mounting crisis in Congo postponed initial OAU presentation of its findings, and logistical complications caused another delay. The meetings have now been rescheduled for early November in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict presents a major challenge to the OAU, which in recent years had established a well-staffed office responsible for conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution. Again, the odds may be stacked

against bold action, as the OAU's headquarters are located in ... Addis Ababa. It may thus be difficult for the OAU to push its host government (and the Eritreans) to make tough compromises in the interest of peace.

As the parties await the OAU findings, the Americans have come forward with one more effort to revive discussions. President Clinton sent former National Security Advisor Anthony Lake to Asmara and Addis Ababa on October 7-8 in the hope that he could help break the impasse. The topics and outcomes of Mr. Lake's initial consultations have been carefully guarded. It is therefore difficult to determine whether or not progress was made.

The two governments' positions, while not far apart, have solidified over time, making the prospects for compromise increasingly unlikely. Both sides agree that Eritrea will need to pull its military back to pre-May 6th positions; both agree that the border must be delimited and demarcated by a third party. The major hitch is the issue of temporary administration of the disputed areas. Ethiopia insists that its administration be returned to Badime; Eritrea says Ethiopia will never again administer "Eritrean" lands. And so the stalemate holds.

Final Remarks

Both sides have dug in, and are refusing to budge from their positions. Both profess to want peace, but neither appears prepared to make the tough compromises necessary to get there. Pride and stubbornness are reigning supreme, while common sense and national self-interests are sacrificed. Now the rains have ceased, military procurements and troop mobilization are nearly complete, and front-line trenches have been expanded along most of the common border. In some places, battalions are positioned just a few hundred meters from each other.

All of the hard work and accomplishments of reconstruction and rehabilitation during the past seven years may soon be sacrificed. Large enterprises may be destroyed, new roads blown apart, fertile farmlands laid with landmines. Young recruits may slaughter each other over national pride and to uphold the lofty principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. If the OAU and other missions fail to bring about significant progress on the peace front, all eyes will turn to the war front.

Both countries are supremely confident in their ability to obtain a military victory. Such confidence appears misplaced. More likely, a protracted war will ensue, with destructive consequences for both countries. There may be temporary territorial gains, but an enduring resolution and firm border demarcation can only be obtained at the table, not on the battlefield. □

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INSTITUTE FELLOWS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES

Adam Smith Albion. A former research associate at the Institute for EastWest Studies at Prague in the Czech Republic, Adam is studying and writing about the republics of Central Asia, and their importance as actors within and without the former Soviet bloc. A Harvard graduate (1988; History), Adam has completed the first year of a two-year M. Litt. Degree in Russian/East European history and languages at Oxford University. [EUROPE/RUSSIA]

Shelly Renae Browning. A surgeon specializing in ears and hearing, Dr. Browning is studying the approaches of traditional healers among the Aborigines of Australia and the indigenous peoples of Vanuatu to hearing loss and ear problems. She won her B.S. in Chemistry at the University of the South, studied physician/patient relationships in China and Australia on a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship and won her M.D. at Emory University in Atlanta. Before her ICWA fellowship, she was a Fellow in Skull-Base Surgery in Montreal at McGill University's Department of Otolaryngology. [SOUTH ASIA]

Chenoa Egawa. An enrolled member of the Lummi Indian Nation, Chenoa is spending two years living among mesoAmerican Indians, studying successful and not-so-successful cooperative organizations designed to help the Indians market their manufactures, agricultural products and crafts without relying on middlemen. A former trade specialist for the American Indian Trade and Development Council of the Pacific Northwest, Chenoa's B.A. is in International Business and Spanish from the University of Washington in Seattle. [THE AMERICAS]

Paige Evans. A playwright and former Literary Manager of the Manhattan Theatre Club in New York City, Paige is looking at Cuba through the lens of its performing arts. With a History/Literature B.A. from Harvard, she has served as counselor at the Buckhorn Children's Center in Buckhorn, Kentucky (1983-84), as Arts Editor of the International Courier in Rome, Italy (1985-86), and as an adjunct professor teaching a course in Contemporary American Playwrights at New York University. She joined the Manhattan Theatre Club in 1990. [THE AMERICAS]

Whitney Mason. A freelance print and television journalist, Whit began his career by founding a newspaper called The Siberian Review in Novosibirsk in 1991, then worked as an editor of the Vladivostok News and wrote for *Asiaweek* magazine in Hong Kong. In 1995 he switched to radio- and video-journalism, working in Bosnia and Korea for CBS. As an ICWA Fellow, he is studying and writing about Turkey's role as nexus between East and West, and between traditional and secular Islam. [EUROPE/RUSSIA]

Marc Michaelson. A program manager for Save the Children in The Gambia, Marc has moved across Africa to the Horn, there to assess nation-building in Eritrea and Ethiopia, and (conditions permitting) availing and unavailing humanitarian efforts in northern Somalia and southern Sudan. With a B.A. in political science from Tufts, a year of non-degree study at the London School of Economics and a Master's in International Peace Studies from Notre Dame, he describes his postgraduate years as "seven years' experience in international development programming and peace research." [sub-SAHARA]

Jean Benoît Nadeau. A French-Canadian journalist and playwright, Jean Benoît studied drama at the National Theater School in Montreal, then received a B.A. from McGill University in Political Science and History. The holder of several Canadian magazine and investigative-journalism awards, he is spending his ICWA-fellowship years in France studying "the resistance of the French to the trend of economic and cultural globalization." [EUROPE/RUSSIA]

Susan Sterner. A staff photographer for the Associated Press in Los Angeles, Susan received her B.A. in International Studies and Cultural Anthropology at Emory University and a Master's in Latin American Studies at Vanderbilt. AP gave her a wide-ranging beat, with assignments in Haiti, Mexico and along the U.S.-Mexican border; in 1998 she was a co-nominee for a Pulitzer Prize for a series on child labor. Her fellowship topic: the lives and status of Brazilian women. [THE AMERICAS]

Tyrone Turner. A photojournalist (Black Star) whose work has appeared in many U.S. newspapers and magazines, Tyrone holds a Master's degree in Government and Latin American politics from Georgetown University and has produced international photo-essays on such topics as Rwandan genocide and mining in Indonesia (the latter nominated for a Pulitzer). As an ICWA Fellow he is writing and photographing Brazilian youth and their lives in rural and urban settings. [THE AMERICAS]

Daniel B. Wright. A sinologist with a Master's Degree in International Relations from the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University, Dan's fellowship immerses him in southwest China's Guizhou Province, where he, his journalist-wife Shou Guowei, and their two children (Margaret and Jon) will base themselves for two years in the city of Duyun. Previously a specialist on Asian and Chinese affairs for the Washington consulting firm of Andreae, Vick & Associates, Dan also studied Chinese literature at Beijing University and holds a Master of Divinity degree from Fuller Theological Seminary of Pasadena, California. [EAST ASIA]

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