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المجلس الوطني الإرتري للتغيير الديمقراطي  
مكتب الرئيس التنفيذي

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## *ENCDC Support to the Open Letter to the Eritrean Head of State by 103 Prominent Africans*

It is with great appreciation and gratitude that I write this letter on behalf of the Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change (ENCDC) in particular, and the Eritrean people in general, to say thank you for speaking out against the injustices and the tremendous suffering of Eritreans at the hands of the dictatorial regime of Isaias Afewerki.

As you have correctly stated, unlike Eritreans, “today, many more Africans live in freedom than under repression.” It is sad however that “over the past two decades Eritrea has been described as the most closed society on our continent.”

Despite the “country’s normalization of diplomatic relations with Ethiopia,” for which you congratulated the Eritrean government, the dire situation in Eritrea remains the same. No fundamental political, economic or social changes have occurred for the people of Eritrea due to the so called “normalization.” Still, there is no constitution, no election for any higher office, no democracy, no freedom of press, no freedom of assembly, no due process of law, no civil liberties, no civil rights, no human rights, no national assembly, no economic freedom, and no more institutions of higher education in Eritrea. That was the fact two decades ago in Eritrea, that was the fact last year before the “normalization,” and it is the fact today after the “normalization.” As we speak, today, it is reported that over 10,000 political prisoners are in jails facing harsh prison conditions in Eritrea. Almost half-a-million of our youth are serving unlimited national service under slavery-like conditions in Eritrea. We have over a million Eritrean refugees languishing in various regions around the world.

You truly are Africa’s statesmen and stateswomen and have received great admirations by the Eritrean people for standing with them and taking the initiative to try to bring democratic reforms in Eritrea. We full heartedly support your initiative and we demand that the Eritrean government accept your proposals to open communications with you and allow your delegation to go to Eritrea to speak with the people and visit the prisoners.

As expected however, we are starting to see that your fraternal gesture of goodwill is being responded by the Eritrean government and its cronies with hostilities to you and your motives. This is a natural reaction of an authoritarian regime and we don’t expect anything different from Isaias Afewerki’s regime even this time. Nevertheless, we in the opposition camp are very appreciative of your initiative and have very keen interest in opening dialog with you in the implementation of your proposals and in getting your support in our struggle for bringing democratic change in Eritrea.

Your “unequivocal solidarity with all the people of Eritrea” will for ever be remembered in the hearts and minds of Eritreans for generations to come.

Sincerely yours,

*Negash Osman,*  
*Chairman of Executive Office*  
*The Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change*

June 13, 2019

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