



Restoring the Dignity of the Red Sea Afar People Democratically

"Qasabadih Qafarih Konnabna Demokraasil Daabisenno"

ERITREAN AFAR STATE IN EXILE

(EASE)

"Restoring the dignity of Red Sea Afar People democratically"



AFAR STATE OF DANKALIA IN ERITREA

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POLICY

A democratic vision for the future of an ancient people

The Eritrean Afar (Red Sea Afar) are an ancient indigenous people who have occupied territories near the Red Sea for more than 2,000 years. As nomadic pastoralists, the Afar have survived war, hunger, isolation and shifting political tides for more than 20 centuries. In the past two decades this legacy has come under threat inside the small country of Eritrea, where the Afar have been subject to systematic persecution in their ancient homeland of Dankalia.

Dankalia, which occupies 1,000 kilometres of the Red Sea coast, is home to some 700,000 Afar who make their living fishing and breeding livestock. For the past generation the Eritrean state has intimidated and persecuted the Red Sea Afar in an attempt to clear them from their strategic and resource-rich homeland.

The **Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE)** was established in 2013 in order to: recognise the rich heritage and proud history of the Red Sea Afar inside Eritrea; advocate for the Red Sea Afar and their families in Eritrea and promote a democratic alternative inside Eritrea where the Red Sea Afar can self-govern in peace and security.



State of Dankalia

- Eritrean Afar Population: 600,000 - 800,000
- Pristine beaches and wide variety of fish species , minerals and metals
- Dankalia Coastline: approximately 1000km
- potash , gold, granite, gravel, gypsum, kaolin, lime, limestone, marble
- Pumice, quartz, salt, sand, and silica sand
- chromium, copper, iron, lead
- magnesium, nickel, silver, and zinc
- Two world-class ports (Assab and Massawa)



The Will of the Eritrean Afar

In 2010 the Eritrean Afar people declared their will to self-govern their homeland in Dankalia through the creation of an autonomous, federated province within a reformed Eritrea. They did so in the *Samara Declaration*, a solemn document authorized at a formal gathering of 800 Afar leaders, elders, women and refugees from Eritrea and proclaimed in Samara (the seat of the Afar Regional State in Ethiopia).

That proclamation has since been re-affirmed in October 2011 by the Red Sea Afar Sultanate (Dardars), Red Sea Afar political leadership, Red Sea Afar Diaspora, Red Sea Afar Elders, Red Sea Afar Women’s Organizations, Red Sea Afar Youth League and Afar Refugees from Eritrea.





The Eritrean Afar State in Exile

The **Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE)** is a new political organization that will fight for the rights of all Afar inside Eritrea.

EASE is established by the joint will of: exiled Red Sea Afar leadership, Afar Sultans (Dardars), Afar Chiefs (Makaaban), Elders (Kasloytiit), Red Sea Afar Youth organization, Red Sea Afar women's organization, Eritrean Afar Refugees and Red Sea Afar Diaspora. These organizations are represented by the following Afar political and traditional leadership:

	NAME	Title	Region/Place
1.	Sultan Abdu Haysama Mohamed	Sultan of Bidu	Bidu
2.	Rep. of Sultan Mr. Shami Mohamed Ahaw	Sultan of Bidu	Bidu
3.	Rep. of Sultan Mr. Mohamed Houmad	Sultan of Rahayto	Rahayto
4.	Makabantu Hassan Yaqiidi Ali	Makabantu	Wade
5.	Makabantu Abdalla Mohamed Abdalla	AssabKalayto	Assab
6.	Makabantu Ahmed Kassim	Makabantu	Dabaysima
7.	Makabantu Hanfare Mohamad-Asawkaytu	Makabantu	EDI
8.	Makabantu Ali Ahaw Hamoda	Makabantu	Daabu
9.	Makabantu Ali Yussuf Ahaw	Makabantu	Gahare
10.	Makabantu Ali Ibrahim	Makabantu	Bada
11.	Makabantu Mohamed Abdalla Ali	Makabantu	Wade
12.	Makabantu Usman Abdalla	Makabantu	Baylul
13.	Makabantu Qedu Mussa Ali	Makabantu	Wade



14.	Makabantu Nur Houmad Gaas	Makabantu	Borri
15.	Makabantu Ahaw Mohamed Ali	Makabantu	Bidu
16.	Makabantu Habib Faraj Abubakar	Makabantu	Borri
17.	Makabantu Isse Abdulkadir	Makabnatu	Bidu
18.	Makabantu Ali Ahaw	Makabantu	Daabu
19.	Makabantu Abdalla Mohamed Mussa	Makabantu	Dabaysima
20.	Sheik Ismail Mohamed Ismail	Kasloyta-Elder	Saudi-Arabia
21.	Sheik Ahmed Yussuf Abubakar	Kasloyta-Elder	Harsile
22.	Sheik Abdu Rodiyo	Kasloyta-Elder	Edi
23.	Sheik Abdu Ali Tiqe	Kasloyta Elder	Tio
24.	Member of Parl. Helem Bourah	MP-Danaklia	Dabaysima
25.	Red Sea Afar Relief Association	RSARA- Youth	Logiya
26.	Red Sea Afar Woman's Association	RSAWA-Women	Logiya
27.	Makabantu Yussuf Alale Mohamed Ali	Makabantu	Massawa
28.	Makabantu Ibrahim Ali Motalla	Kasloyta-Elder	Tio

The founders have mandated EASE to protect Dankalia, the ancient homeland of Red Sea Afar people:

1. as a nation within Eritrea where the Afar people can be secure in their lives, properties, businesses, language, religion and way of life;
2. as an autonomous territory where the Red Sea Afar people can exercise their rights of self-determination and self-government according to international law;
3. as a political entity that contributes to regional peace and security;
4. as an open society governed by the rule of law, where democracy, justice and the exercise of fundamental rights can flourish; and
5. as an open economy that promotes economic liberty and prosperity for all stakeholders.



EASE recognizes the current circumstances of the Afar people living in Eritrea where they have been forced from their traditional lands, driven out of their businesses and persecuted on the basis of their religion, language, race and nationality.

According to a 2013 report from Sheila Keetharuth, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea, the Afar are an ethnic minority who "wish to continue their traditional way of life, which implies living off their land and its resources, while being involved in nomadic animal husbandry, salt mining and fishing."

Despite these humble goals, the U.N. Special Rapporteur reported that the Afar in Eritrea have been "subjected to extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture and rape, as well as the destruction of their traditional means of subsistence and livelihood, and businesses. They have also been forced into displacement from their traditional territory."

On June 10, 2013 the United Nations Human Rights Council condemned "the widespread and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms committed by the Eritrean authorities" as described by the Special Rapporteur.

A call to action

On behalf of the Eritrean Afar, EASE condemns the murder, torture, rape, disappearances, expulsions, forcible confinements and aggression aimed at our Afar brothers and sisters in our ancestral homeland of Dankalia. In the name of the Afar people,

EASE rejects the unimplemented 1997 Eritrean constitution because that document

- marginalizes Eritrean Afar from effective participation in Eritrean central institutions and political process,
- expropriates traditional Afar land, territory and resources,
- does not allow the Afar to self-determine or self-govern,
- does not share power with the Afar Nation, and
- fails to protect the Afar language and way of life.

EASE calls on The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya, to investigate Eritrea's expropriation of traditional indigenous lands and resources of Eritrean Afar, and to denounce the illegal exploitation and sale of Afar resources to multinational corporations and State owned entities in Eritrea.

In light of the conclusions reached by the United Nations and other governmental and non-governmental actors, EASE calls for:



- a reformed Eritrea founded on the principles of democracy and the rule of law, where the freedoms of religion, conscience, political opinion, expression, assembly, equality, mobility, association and liberty are respected and guaranteed;
- a reformed Eritrea with a power sharing constitution that respects the rights of each nationality to self-govern through a federal system comprised of autonomous regions;
- a constitution for Eritrea which respects the principle of equality for all Eritrean nationalities, minority rights, language rights and indigenous rights;
- an Eritrea that will welcome all refugees — Afar and other nationalities — back to their country, where they will be allowed to return to their homes and properties, and have Eritrean citizenship reinstated in full; and
- a reformed Eritrea that restores Dankalia's traditional borders to those which the Afar people enjoyed prior to 1991.

Next steps

In order to meet these goals, EASE will organize an international conference of Afar Diaspora and refugee organizations to consider and approve this document.

EASE will ask the conference participants:

- To consider concrete measures to broaden the base of EASE,
- To review the *Samara Declaration* (2011), and consider any modifications required to evolve that document into a Constitution for EASE, and
- To create an executive EASE committee to serve as transitional leadership until a formal state can be established and a Constitution proclaimed.

