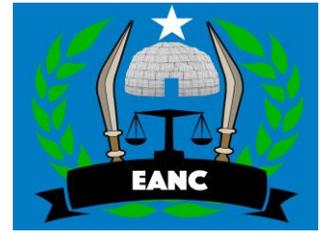


# ERITREAN AFAR NATIONAL CONGRESS ERITRIYAH QAFARIH AGATIH KOBOXU

## المؤتمر الوطني لعفر ارتريا

*Restoring the Self Determination of the Eritrean Afar Nation  
Eretriyah Qafar Isim Isih Madqittaamih Cakki Daabisenno*



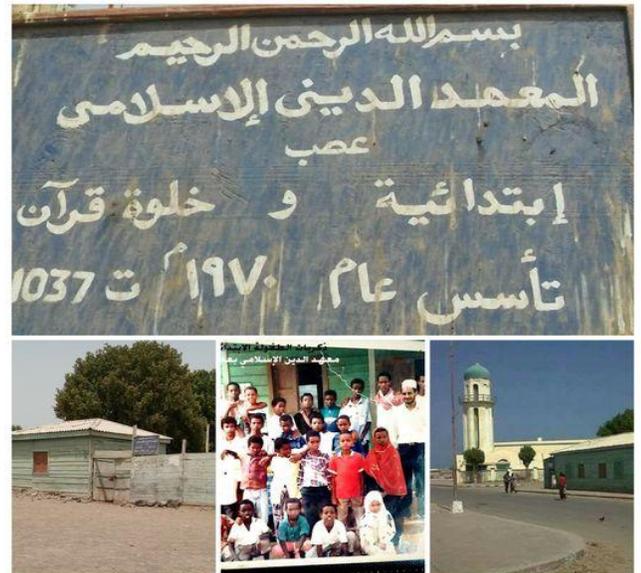
### PRESS RELEASE | RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION OF AFAR IN ERITREA

May 24, 2021: Assab-Eritrea, the Eritrean authorities forced the closure of the only Islamic school for Afar.

On May 11, 2021, two days before Eid-ul-Fitr, the Eritrean security agents (Hagerawi Dehinent) told the administration of the Mahad A-dini Al- Islami (Islamic School) in Assab to close the doors. The school staffs were told to go home without any further explanation.

The Islamic school in Assab was built in 1970 by the local traditional Afar leaders including Sheikh Mohamed Omar Akito. Historically, the school has been financed privately by Afar Salt business owners from Makaka, in the Assab region. Since the local Afar Salt mining and businesses were destroyed by the Eritrean authorities in the late 1990s, the school has been struggling to maintain its service to the Afar community.

[Dankalia Media TV](#) (DMT) which reported the School closure had said there have been previous attempts to pressure the school to close its doors. And that the school was told to stop teaching primarily Islamic classes and it should integrate its curriculum to provide other subjects such as Tigrigna among others. Since then, the school had complied with government orders and have been offering other courses to the community.



Mahad Al-Dini Al-Islami/Photo DMT TV

In 2017, the Eritrean government's interference in the privately-owned [Al Dina Islamic School](#) has led to a massive protest by the Akhriya community and the arrest and imprisonment of the school's Chairman, a 90-year-old Hajj Musa Mohammed Nur, who was a fierce critic of religious intolerance, he later died in prison.

In the past, the United Nations investigations found Eritrea guilty of [ethnic persecution and crimes against humanity](#) against the Afar people in Eritrea, but this latest violation is the first on religious grounds against the Afar in several years.

The Eritrean Afar National Congress (EANC) condemns the Eritrean government for this reprehensible act of religious persecution and any persecution against the population of Eritrea.

We call upon everyone to stand in solidarity to fight against any form of violence including religious and ethnic violence in Eritrea.

A link to short film on Mahad Al Dini School here: <https://youtu.be/g36etqDvveg>

#### Media and Communication (EANC)

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*Eritrean Afar National Congress (EANC) is an exiled Afar political organization dedicated to self-determination and self-rule of Eritrean Afar people in their coastal homeland of Dankalia, Eritrea, where the indigenous Afar are subjected to marginalization, persecution and ethnic cleansing at the hands of the current Eritrean government. EANC is the voice of the Eritrean Afar people. EANC draws its mandate from the political and traditional Afar leaders, the leadership of Afar women and youth groups, the Eritrean Afar Diaspora and Eritrean-Afar refugees.*