



Eritrean Civic Democratic Movement

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Press Release

The establishment of

Modern Civic Movement

Eritrean Civic Democratic Movement is hereby declared and established to carry on civic and democratic political activities in the Eritrean struggle for democratic change along with all justice and freedom loving Eritrean civil society and political entities and the broad Eritrean people. We are honored and humbled to declare our movement - Eritrean Civic Democratic Movement - as a legal entity for justice, freedom, democracy and human rights.

The infinite atrocities, suffering, and oppression imposed on our beloved Eritrean people by the illegal and totalitarian regime of Eritrea is creating havoc and incalculable damages to the wellbeing of our people and our beloved nation Eritrea. Eritreans from all walks of life are tirelessly struggling to remove and to replace the totalitarian regime. We believe that the only way to put end to the insurmountable suffering and oppression is to unite our voices and our efforts to remove the illegal totalitarian regime. ECDM and its members fully understand their moral and national obligation to strive and work along with all active political and civil organizations and the broad Eritrean people.

The task of removing the totalitarian regime and the task of building a democratic system that abide by national constitution and that respect the international law should be carried simultaneously. The establishment of a political system that respect human and democratic rights of its citizens; the creation of a system of governance that accepts in peaceful transition of power through popular and democratic election; and the ushering of a system that guarantee its people's rights in becoming the source of power and legitimacy should not be postponed

until after the removal of the totalitarian regime. In fact, the establishment of civic democratic institutions and solid national structures should be the main tool to remove the totalitarian regime. We at ECDM believe that both tasks are intertwined and should be carried at the same time and we are dedicated to carry these noble tasks with full conviction.

ECDM and its members acknowledge and respect the opposition struggle of the Eritrean people and its existing civil and political organizations. ECDM would like to confirm that the movement is ready to cooperate with all groups and organizations that strive for the achievement of united, peaceful and democratic Eritrea. ECDM is a positive addition to the ongoing struggle with a clear modern and civic vision. ECDM is committed to work hand in hand with all civic minded modern political and civil society organizations to build and restore Eritrea - our beloved civic nation.

This is our pledge and our deep rooted conviction that we managed to achieve after embarking on a long and deep discussion with our members. ECDM members entered into a continuous deliberation of studying national, regional and international issues and the environments surrounding our nation. After serious study and discussion that was based on openness and respectful exchange of ideas and experiences of different Eritrean political organizations at different fields of work from the long and bitter armed struggle to the period after independence and the current challenges that has faced Eritrea, ECDM members reached at a common understanding and managed to reach at a shared vision of civic and modern ideals culminated in the establishment of Eritrean Civic Democratic Movement.

ECDM's core vision is based on our Eritrean people's sovereignty and the individual Eritrean unrestricted rights and freedoms as a citizen with full civic responsibilities. The Eritrean people should be the owner and the decision maker of all its rights and freedoms. The people should be the owner of the constitution; the owner and decision maker of its governance; the owner and decision maker of the nation's resources. We at ECDM believe that rights are not gifts that can be bestowed by rulers or powers to be. Civic and democratic rights are inalienable natural part of each and every individual Eritrean. ECDM and its members firmly believe by the natural dignity of all individual Eritreans and the inseparable indivisible sovereignty of the people. We are committed to working

with all civic minded and civic oriented groups, intellectuals, organizations to achieve the civic power of our people and our civic nation Eritrea.

Dear Respected Eritrean People!

1. Our nation and our people paid immeasurable sacrifices and untold suffering to achieve their dignity and to live in freedom. The precious lives of our heroes and heroine martyrs that were sacrificed, the suffering and untold pain, maiming and loss of limbs, legs, vision and other vital parts of their body of our heroes and heroine wounded veterans; the immeasurable physical and psychological hardships and wounds sustained; the immeasurable loss in property, livelihood, villages and towns with their entire belonging; the immeasurable loss of displacements within and outside of our country added up to the achievement of our national independence and national sovereignty. Our national independence ensured and restored our legal identity and re-established our historical, social and national values. However, the illegal and totalitarian regime has squandered a lot of our resources and subjected our nation and its entire people to a totalitarian regime that rule by fiat and by the whims of a small group of cohorts of the dictator; and exposed our beloved nation and people to a grave danger.

2. The entire Eritrean people in general and the Eritrean youth in particular are the cornerstone of the Eritrean promise. After achieving our independence and our sovereignty, the Eritrean youth were supposed to live normal lives, go to school and enlighten themselves with modern science and technology and earn a living and work on different fields of their choice; marry and carry on their obligation of sustaining the heroic tradition of their forefathers and fathers and mothers. However, after paying dear sacrifice to achieve national independence and to protect the sovereignty of Eritrea after independence, the Eritrean youth are subjected to harsh slave labor with no pay in the so called “Warsay-Ykaalo”, project of the ruling regime. The youth are held hostage against their will and subjected to jail and killing by firing and are forced to flee their beloved nation to save themselves and find a breathing space. The forced trek to unknown is the next phase of bitter challenges that face our youth. They have to encounter tremendous hardship to cross barren desert plains and cross rough high seas with unfit small boats with meager or insufficient food and water that caused hunger, exhaustion and illness. Moreover, they are subjected to unimaginable suffering of kidnapping, rape and the inhumane harvesting of human organs from their bodies at the hand of nameless and faceless traffickers. The main source

of Eritrea's promise, the bearer of our nation's future — our youth — are subjected to horrendous crimes. The dispersion and disintegration of our youth has serious consequences for the future of Eritrea.

3. The deteriorating international relations of our beloved nation Eritrea are a great cause of concern: The Eritrean totalitarian regime is creating enemies left and right; far and near. As a result, the image of our nation is being tarnished by the illegal and dictatorial regime. Restoring Eritrea's image and removing the tarnished image should not be left to the dying regime that does not have an interest in fostering good relations.

4. The Eritrean opposition and its continuous division and disintegration do not help in advancing the civic and democratic objectives of our people and our nation. Instead of mutual respect and tolerance, various groups are dividing and disintegrating themselves; instead of democratic dialogue, various groups are embarking on blackmailing and accusations that has created mistrust, apathy and decline of support and participation in the democratic struggle.

Taking the above points in consideration the Eritrean Civic Democratic Movement calls for the following:

1. All justice and freedom loving Eritreans should unite our voices and efforts against the illegal and totalitarian regime by shelving our secondary differences. The nation and its entire people should come before our party or organizational interests. We need to build the foundation of our civic nation and its civic democratic institutions that belong to all citizens of Eritrea irrespective of their religion, region or ethnicity before we can embark on competition to sell our unique party or organizational goals. The creation of a civic and democratic level playing field for all Eritrean citizens should be given priority. All rank and file members of political organizations, civil society and intellectuals in general and the leadership in particular need to grasp the real challenge and double their efforts under a national unified objective of our civic nation Eritrea.
2. To build our civic nation and to enshrine civic and democratic rights of freedom to the Eritrean people, we need to focus on nation building on the principle of civic nationalism. Eritrean civic democratic institutions should flourish and thrive and unite their efforts with civic and democratic institutions of our region and the world. Civic relationships based on mutual

respect of national sovereignty and human dignity for the benefit of peace, prosperity and freedom for all should be the driving principle.

3. The Eritrean youth and Eritrean men and women are the main bearers of our civic nation Eritrea. Youth and women should be given an opportunity to be key players in establishing a powerful civic consciousness and civic capacity to break the walls of division within our society and create a united citizenry with full rights of freedom and responsibilities to sustain our civic nation Eritrea. We call on the Eritrean people in general and Eritrean youth and women in particular to rise to their responsibilities and take the banner of civic and democratic ideals and action to the desired destination — **Civic Democratic Eritrea.**

Victory to the Eritrean People

Glory to our Martyrs

Eritrean Civic Democratic Movement

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The website is under construction www.ericdm.org

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