

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 22 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward a letter addressed to you from Ali Said Abdella, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, which I received today (see annex). This letter is in response to the false allegations directed at my country by the National Islamic Front regime in the Sudan (see A/58/669-S/2004/14).

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmed Tahir **Baduri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 22 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

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At the outset, my Government rejects all the charges made by the Sudanese Government against the State of Eritrea as contained in document A/58/669-S/2004/14. They are absolutely false. These allegations are part of a campaign to destroy the image of my country and Government and the timing is no accident. I wish to draw your attention to the fact that these allegations came at a time when (a) the leaders of Ethiopia and Sudan concluded a summit, on 29 December 2003 in Addis Ababa, that, inter alia, conspired against my country, (b) the political unrest in Sudan, particularly in Darfur region, is at its highest.

These fabricated allegations by the regime in Khartoum are thus part of a concerted smear campaign to isolate Eritrea from the rest of the Horn of Africa on one hand and to divert Sudanese public attention from the pressing domestic problems in the country on the other.

My Government finds it hypocritical on the part of the National Islamic Front (NIF) regime to file such accusations against my country with the Security Council. A regime that has a recorded history of embracing terrorism, including the hosting and supporting of Osama Bin Laden from 1991 to 1996 on its territory, and gross violations of human rights and international law has no right to point the finger at Eritrea.

The NIF regime in the Sudan has been training and arming members of the Eritrean Islamic Jihad since 1992 for terrorist acts in Eritrea. The training of these terrorist elements included in the camps of Mr. Bin Laden in both the Sudan and Afghanistan. The NIF's acts of interference in the internal affairs of Eritrea go back to the early years of seizure of power by this regime in the Sudan. For many years, its acts of unprovoked subversion and hostility have continued to escalate in spite of efforts by the Government of Eritrea to persuade the NIF regime to desist from its belligerent behaviour.

The NIF regime's subversive acts continue to this day. We wish to cite some of the most recent provocative acts:

- On 4 April 2003, a farmer and his wife were killed from mortar fire by the aforementioned terrorists in a place commonly known as Ararib at the Sudanese border;
- On 12 April 2003, the same Islamic Jihad group murdered, by sneaking into Eritrea from the Sudan, a British mining expert, Mr. Tom Nutt, in Bisha, Barka region. Mr. Nutt was working for Nevsun Resources, Ltd.;
- In June of 2003, the terrorist group attacked a Land Cruiser belonging to a charity organization, Mercy Core, in the Adobha sub-zone in Western Eritrea, and two Eritreans were killed in the car;
- On 21 November 2003, the same terrorist group destroyed World Food Programme trucks with 80 metric tons of food in Tesseney, Western Eritrea. This food was being transported hundreds of kilometres from Dekamare for the newly repatriated refugees from the Sudan to settle in the Ali Ghider and Goluj area;

- On 13 January 2004, at midnight, Sudanese security agents who claimed to have received orders from high government officials forcibly broke into the office of the Eritrean Community in Amarat and Jiref Kerib, both located in Khartoum, and detained 12 Eritrean employees of the community office. Condemning the action taken by the Sudanese authorities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea called for the immediate release of the Eritrean citizens who had been detained for no justifiable reason, but in vain. The Ministry further underlined that the Sudanese Government bore responsibility for the security of all Eritreans residing in the Sudan.

Given the historically good relations between the peoples of Eritrea and the Sudan, it has been my Government's sincere wish for the Sudan to live in peace with itself and with its neighbours. To this end, Eritrea has been playing an active role, with the other members of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), to bring a lasting resolution to the vicious conflict in the Sudan. As an immediate neighbour, Eritrea has a stake in the maintenance of sustainable peace in the Sudan. Therefore, my country will do everything in its power to bringing peace to this sisterly country in partnership with those who work for peace in the Sudan.

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ali Said **Abdella**
Minister for Foreign Affairs
