

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Directorate of communication and spokesperson

Press release

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs acknowledges the historical relations and ties between the Sudanese and Ethiopian peoples. The Sudan is eager to maintain, develop these bonds and build on them to facilitate future partnerships that contribute to peace, stability and economic growth.

However, in the presence of an African Union envoy in Khartoum, in a mission consented to by the Ethiopian leadership to contain escalation and enable the Sudan and Ethiopia to solve the border problem, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia issued a statement that betrays the history of relations, disavows the respect exchanged between the two peoples and degenerates to addressing to the Sudan unforgivable insults.

The question of the common border cannot support the hostility with which Ethiopia acts towards the Sudan presently. This border was delineated and demarcated since the year 1903, on the basis of the 1902 agreement between Britain (co- ruling the Sudan at the time) and Emperor Menelik II, who requested and authorized in writing the determination of the border. Ever since, Ethiopia expressed commitment to the agreement, especially in the years 1955, 1957, to 1981, in 2011 and in 2013. But now, the Ethiopian ministry demeans itself by reneging on its endorsement of the agreement and attributing it to colonial dictation. It is astonishing that the ministry defines Menelik II as colonialist. What does the ministry want to say to the Ethiopians? Where does Ethiopia stand in relation to the cause of African emancipation and unity, to organs, norms and unanimous decisions taken in this respect to open space for developmental processes on the continent?

The Sudanese Ethiopian border was never contested until the advent to the ministry of a clique that is using it to serve personal and factional ends, pertaining to a certain group, risking in the process great benefits for the Ethiopian people, their safety and stability and the amity of a neighbor that never betrayed. If Ethiopia is genuine in its fresh claims to territories it previously acknowledged the sovereignty of the Sudan over, it has to resort to the available regional and international legal options, not to

threaten the regional and international peace with the violent disorder that the exploitation of Ethiopia's foreign policy by some, for narrow gains, will bring about.

The Sudan affirms its sovereignty over the territory that Ethiopia contradicts itself by claiming, and stresses that it will never cede the control of which. Yet the Sudan asserts its desire for the traversal of Ethiopia's new claims and for it to resume commitment to the agreements it concluded. Advocates of peace, commitment honouring, and surely the people of our region, expect that Ethiopia will correct its stand and act according to the law and in the interest of its people and according to good-neighborliness towards a neighbor that the decrease in the worth of Ethiopia displeases.

The insult in the statement of Ethiopia's foreign ministry to the Sudan and the accusation that it serves the purposes of a third party is an outrageous offense that cannot be pardoned. Besides, it is a complete negation of the facts. Ethiopia cannot ignore the history of the Sudanese sense of national pride. Only recently the Sudanese attracted global attention and admiration to their memorable revolution for freedom, peace and justice, and he who stands up for these values cannot degenerate to treason. Contrary to the allegation of Ethiopia, all of the Sudanese and their civilian and military leaders are united in their resolve to exercise the sovereignty of the Sudan in all of its territories. But Ethiopia will fail to deny the third party whose troops entered with it into the territory of the Sudan.

The Sudan demands of Ethiopia to cease its baseless claims, as its historical position in the matter refutes them. Ethiopia is once more called on to consider the rightful interest of its friendly people and free its foreign policy from the irresponsible employment that it is currently subjected to.

The Sudan entrusted to Ethiopia the role to assist keeping the peace within its borders. It is utterly unacceptable that the party entrusted mobilizes and leads its forces and violates the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a neighbor and a host. Ethiopia has to rectify this situation.

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