



ERITREAN AFAR STATE IN EXILE

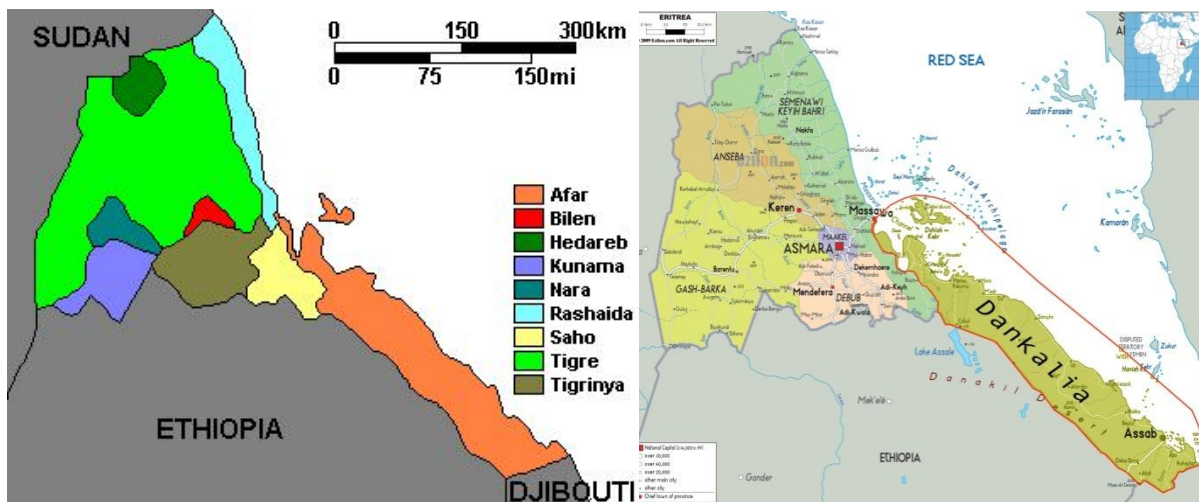
EASE POLICY – September 2016

"Restoring the dignity of Eritrean Afar People democratically"

"Eretriyah Qafarih Konnabna Demokraasil Daabisenno"

AFAR STATE OF DANKALIA

Alternative, Sustainable, Federated and Autonomous



1. Introduction: Afar Nation

The Afar People are one of Africa's long established and culturally homogenous indigenous people who have lived in the afar triangle, at the convergence of what are now Ethiopia, Djibouti and Eritrea since time immemorial. The Afar triangle is also the treasure trove of early fossil remains, including “Lucy, Australopithecus afarensis” dating back to 3.2 million-years-old—one of humankind’s earliest ancestors. Many Paleontologists refer to afar homeland as the “cradle of humanity”.

Most of the 3.5 million Afar continue their traditional way of life as indigenous pastoralist nomadic people engaged in animal husbandry, fishing, trade and salt mining. The northern region of the Afar’s traditional homeland is known as **Dankalia** which lies along the strategic and resource rich coastal area in what is now known as Eritrea. The people in Dankalia region are known as Eritrean Afar people. Eritrean Afar successfully shielded themselves and protected their land from foreign colonization and internal occupation by controlling and governing Dankalia for centuries.

For centuries the Afar nations have been self-governing themselves autonomously and practicing their indigenous customary laws and self-rule in accordance to their own unique legal systems called, ‘Madqa’.

The Afar societies in the region have been organized into independent territories, each ruled by its own Sultanate, Sheikdoms and Clan system. When conflict arose between Afar and neighbouring tribes and nations over territories and resources, Madaa was enacted to resolve conflicts and peace treaties were signed.

The Afar political and cultural systems have survived foreign occupations, colonial rules by Ottoman empire and Italian invasion. Internally, it continued to survive occupations by Abyssinian Highland Feudal Lords, changing of powers and military aggressions.

The indigenous Afar are heavily attached to their land and their environment. They continue to practice their distinct culture and traditions and their way of life as indigenous pastoralist. Their unique economic pursuits and sustenance consists of animal husbandry, livestock raising and trade, small scale farming, fishing, salt extraction in the coastal areas.

Afar are Sunni Muslims. Some historians credit the introduction of Islam into Africa, as a continent, starting in the Afar region at a place called “Mideri” and near Dahlak Islands. When the companions of Prophet Muhammad (PBOH) fled from Makkah, Saudi Arabia, after persecution, they arrived in some areas of Afar territories where Islam was mixed with their indigenous traditions.

2. Introducing Eritrean Afar and Dankalia

Dankalia is on the most sought after and prime real estate in Eritrea and the Horn of Africa. The Afar homeland of Dankalia and its 40,000 Square Kilometers of land, coastlines, territories and vast deserts holds Eritrea’s 70% of economic future with untapped natural resources, various minerals, precious metals, potash, and natural gas and more.

Dankalia is strategically situated on international shipping routes between the strategic passages at the heart of the red sea near Bab-el-Mandeb in proximity of Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Dankalia presents key geo-strategic asset for Afar and Eritrea to link the continent of Africa to Middle-East and Europe for global trade and intercontinental partnerships for development.

Dankalia and the Afar are critical in terms of peace and security in the region. This geopolitical region is crucial for international security, global investment opportunities, research and key for the global fight against religious fundamentalism affecting regional peace and the development in the Horn of Africa.

During Eritrea's independence struggle, the Afar Eritreans joined hands with their fellow Eritreans from all walks of life, regions and ethnic background and sacrificed their lives and struggled for more than 30 years to eventually realize Eritrea's right to self-determination to finally become a sovereign state. However, a new tyrannical regime brought horrors, atrocities and depravities to the region marking the saddest story in the history of the Afar and modern history of the Horn of Africa. The country was turned into a repressive, murderous police state.

The coast of Dankalia was the birth place of Eritrean liberation struggle against Emperor Sellassie's Feudal regime of Ethiopia, alongside their Eritrean brothers to ensure equality, ethnic diversity and democratic rights. The Eritrean Afar heroes and thinkers like Mohamed Omar Akito, Ibrahim Shehem and Ahmed Ahaw were the pioneers of Eritrea's liberation struggle.

During the early 60's and 70's the Eritrean Afar were the faces of Eritrean resistances against occupations. Martyrs like Idris Gumhed, Yassin Abdalla, Musa Rashid Gaas, Ali Company, Ali Gafo, Mohamed Usman, Dini Ismail, Ahmed Hilal, Ali Ibarhim to mention a few, were the leading military commanders not only in Dankalia but extending to Samhar. The Afar participation was the turning point for the liberation struggle and gave the ELF much needed access to the sea and supply routes.

3. ERITREAN AFAR STATE IN EXILE (EASE)

Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) is an exiled Eritrean Afar political organization dedicated to self-determination and self-rule of Eritrean Afar people in the 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. EASE is the voice of the Eritrean Afar people. EASE 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.

Our Vision:

EASE aspires to establish a democratically elected Eritrean Afar state in Dankalia, Eritrea. Our vision is to foster a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious democratic federation between pluralistic Eritrean societies founded on the principles of rule of law, fundamental rights and freedoms, equality of each nationality and respect for the human rights of all citizens of Eritrea.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to prepare the necessary groundwork for a transitional phase leading to Eritrean Afar self-government in the Afar Home State of Dankalia within federated Eritrea; to develop the human capital of the

Eritrean Afar people through education and sustainable economic growth; and the creation of an economic environment and foreign policy that encourages international investment, development, peace and security in the region.

Our mission is to:

1. Exercise our people's right to self-determination and to have the right to Self-government and autonomy in matters relating to our internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing Afar autonomous functions.
2. To preserve the rights of Eritrean Afar indigenous people in the region; preserve and promote Afar Language (Qafar-Af) as official language of Afar State, in Eritrea, to promote its impact on local economic development, while recognizing the cultural diversity of Eritrea and respect all of its ethnicities, its social, religious, economic, political and ecological factors.
3. Create a governance model to grow the human capital of Eritrean Afar people by promoting and protecting Afar political freedoms, and fulfilling the human rights of women and men to ensure their economic, social and cultural wellbeing.
4. End human rights violations against Afar in Eritrea, strive to end forcible displacement, achieve capacity building, and enable the right of return and the reintegration for the displaced Eritrean Afar.
5. Develop macro-economic policies that give adequate attention to the empowerment of the Eritrean Afar people and contribute to the economic growth through trade and employment.
6. Encourage responsible natural resources policy that provides indigenous Afar the rights to land and resources, rights to dignity and promotion of economic aspirations and to motivate the investment in Afar education and health sector.

4. The Afar under current Eritrean regime

Following the independence in May of 1991, the approximately 800,000 indigenous Eritrean Afar population of Dankalia have faced unprecedented persecution and prolonged tyranny from the Eritrean regime. The current Eritrean regime is removing the Afar from Dankalia and colonizing the area with others. In order to remove the Afar, the regime is using mass murder, rapes, kidnapping, political assassinations, and extrajudicial killings. The government of Eritrea has committed cultural genocide against the Indigenous Afar.

Led by President Isaias Afwerki's dictatorial ruling junta, the People's Front for Justice and democracy (PFDJ), the Eritrean government has deployed systemic policies to destroy Afar identity through assimilation and discrimination, denying Afar the right to own and live off their traditional lands and territories, destroyed the basis of their economies such as fishing, trade and animal husbandry, confiscated Afar businesses and properties. These policies are posing existential threat to Afar people.

The Afar leadership in Exile have filed numerous Human rights complaints against the State of Eritrea with the United Nations Human rights council, the UN SR and the commission of inquiry in Eritrea.

[In JUNE 8, 2016 Report](#)-The UN Commission of Inquiry on human rights in Eritrea (COI) held Eritrean officials including President Isaias Afwerki responsible for persecution of Afar in Eritrea and the COI concluded that "*crimes against humanity*" may have been committed against Eritrean Afar population since 1991.

COI Reported in Para- 295 stated “The Commission also has reasonable grounds to believe that Eritrean officials have intentionally and severely deprived Eritrean Kunama and Afar of fundamental rights contrary to international law on ethnic grounds. The Commission has corroborated evidence that the Afar and Kunama were targeted, at a minimum, in the period between 1998 and 2001. It has also received uncorroborated information that both ethnic groups were persecuted during other periods as well, and that such persecution persists”.

The Eritrean Afar leaders currently in exile acknowledged the graveness of Afar situation in Eritrea and called for immediate humanitarian, political and social intervention to assist the Eritrean Afar people.

Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) has called for unity among Eritreans, the international community and those who share the common interests and aspirations for democratic reform, a pluralistic and just society for a stable and prosperous Eritrea to come join hands with Afar Eritreans. In order to achieve success in Eritrea, the future constitutional framework and political roadmap must take into consideration the rights of minority and Indigenous people. Eritrea can no longer continue to implement policies that disproportionally threaten and marginalize Indigenous groups economically and socially, or that excludes them from the process of political decision making in the future.

Political Roadmap of Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE)

1. AFAR SELF RULE AND INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE POLICY
2. CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM POLICY
3. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY
4. ECONOMIC POLICY
5. FOREIGN POLICY
6. LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

1. AFAR SELF RULE AND INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE POLICY

1.1 Reinstating Indigenous Afar Self Rule in Dankalia

The Eritrean Afar identity has evolved with its own distinct cultural, distinct way of life and traditions and indigenous values and beliefs systems since the time immemorial. As indigenous people, the Eritrean Afar must define their self determination and the rights to self rule modeled based on their indigenous identity, their long established history and self governance in their territories based on their customary laws and distinct culture.

This collective perspective represents [the will of Afar](#), the indigenous rights to self rule and leverage the development of Afar political system, cultural diversity and economic institutions as collective assets of Afar self determination in Eritrea.

Our policy charts a new beginning for the Eritrean Afar People that will guarantee their autonomous self rule over their societies, control over their land and resources, rights to economic development, carry out their day-to-day economic activities, resolve conflicts in Dankalia’s territories and promote the diversity of Eritrea while advancing nation building and democracy in Eritrea.

Throughout history, Afar indigenous self reliance and traditional economic pursuit, their long established customary laws and their way of life have sustained their identity from being wiped out in the Afar region.

Prior to European colonialism "Age of Discovery" at the beginning of the 15th century and later followed by "the Scramble for Africa", at the end of the 19th, the Afar leadership exerted an impressive amount of authority over much of their land and the territories. Afar Sultanates of (AWSA, RAHAYTA, BIDRU, TADJOURA and GOBAD) served as traditional rulers and governors of Afar territory throughout the region in Ethiopia and pre-independence States of Djibouti and present Eritrea.

The Afar Sultanates were custodians of Afar ancestral and community land, culture, customary laws (Madqa), traditions including religion. The renowned Afar customary laws of Burili-Madqa, Budduto-barih-Madqa, and Debnek-Weemah-Madqa were instrumental to maintaining law and order including presiding over and settling criminal and civil disputes, land disputes and with the exception of the current Eritrean State's attempt to erase them, these laws continue even up to this day. The Eritrean Afar demand Afar-made solutions for Afar.

EASE's strategic priority for Indigenous Afar Self Rule in Eritrea

1. Re-Instating Indigenous Self Rule
2. Reclaiming Afar Customary Law and Its Authority
3. Afar Traditional Representatives (MAJLIS AL-AYAAN AFAR)
4. Re-Instating Criminal Law in Afar Society
5. Investing in Afar Education and Cultural Infrastructure
6. Preserving Afar Indigenous Way of Life and Economy
7. Restoring Afar Land and Resources rights
8. Protecting the Environment and Traditional Early Warning System

1.2 Introduce Ethnic Federation for Eritrea

The Eritrean regime and government believes itself invincible and uses violence to suppress the dissent to maintain power grip over Eritrean societies but the change is inevitable. The suffering is simply too great to continue. The regime's ideology drives its politics and their excessively centralized policy is incompatible with a deeply diverse nation like Eritrea. Many of those inner circles who were once the diehard supporters of Afwerki's regime are now fragmented. The Asmara regime is running out of steam. Like many tyrannical regimes in Africa and in the Middle East, Asmara is vulnerable to sudden political shock.

Inclusive and sustainable policies must be devised to protect the society and the nation from enraging in prolonged conflicts, insurrections and even the breakup of the state in the aftermath of the regime's collapse.

Eritrean Afar people are ready for a Multi-Ethnic Federalism in Eritrea where its ethnic identity, recognition and self-governance as a people is preserved at the federal government level. Though a minority in Eritrea, the Eritrean Afar still make up the majority in Dankalia, their traditional homeland, constituting more than 88% of local population.

Ethnic federations have proven to work in Africa and elsewhere in the world formations and nationalities. In much larger and more diverse societies and countries others have succeeded in maintaining their national unity and sovereignty.

A. Equality and Ethnic Diversity in Eritrea

The PFDJ concept of Eritrea as **“One Heart-one people”, “Hade Libi, Hade Hizbi”**, the current mantra of the Eritrean government must be abolished. Unity without recognition of diversity is a recipe for prolonged conflict and insecurity. Eritrean Afar people are bearing the brunt of the Eritrean regime’s assimilation agenda and are being stripped of their identity which had evolved historically as a self-conscious and a strong self-sustaining ethnicity in Eritrea.

Our policy calls for Ethnic Federalism in Eritrea. Eritrea is a deeply diverse nation. The current Eritrean regime agenda is racist and is systemically designed to destroy the unity of Eritreans and its social fabric. It is designed to subdue the smaller nationalities and weaken them in favor of a ruling majority Tigigna nationality. These policies by the current Eritrean regime have caused a collision between Eritreans within. The status quo in Asmara is unsustainable.

B. Rule of Law

Eritreans from all walks of life, regions and ethnic background sacrificed their lives and struggled for more than 30 years to eventually realize their right to self-determination to finally become a sovereign state. However a new tyrannical regime brought horrors, atrocities and depravities to the region marking the saddest story in the modern history of the Horn of Africa — and the history of the AFAR. The country was turned into a repressive, murderous police state.

Eritrean Afar people are calling for the building of a new foundation for Eritrea. A strong future for Eritrea is built on laws that free its citizens and protect them. The rule of law empowers its people and enables them to be masters of their own destiny. The security of the people guarantees growth and prosperity.

EASE policy call for end of impunity in Eritrea. That no conviction shall occur except by due process of law; That the people of all nationalities shall be secure in their persons, shall be free from arbitrary search, seizure, arrest, detention, and charge; That the judicial branch shall be independent and secure in its tenure. Our policy with restore the faith of Eritreans in their justice system and will bring perpetrators of crimes to face justice in front of courts of laws.

C. Democracy

The authoritarian PFDJ regime declares that Eritrea is not ready for democratic governance nor will it have free elections for the next forty years. The future of Eritrea is dependent on establishing new democratic governance that is based on political freedoms of its national stakeholders, the sovereignty of all of its states with respect of their cultural and ideological beliefs and aspirations.

Our policy calls for a new democratic governance to secure a true Eritrean national unity. Such governance should be based on the rule of law, justice and equality, with respect to all Human Rights including the right to development, and overall commitment to a just and democratic society in Eritrea.

In order for these demands to be met, Eritrea needs to politically remodel itself towards a power sharing system so that marginalized and Indigenous groups can achieve their rights and aspirations for self-

determination and self-rule, their territorial integrity, their right to develop their own resources to eradicate poverty and hunger, and establish an equitable power sharing with the other Eritrean nationalities. A power sharing system has proven to be the only political system which fosters stability in a pluralistic and deeply divided African societies.

Our democratic reform policy provides sustainable solutions for achieving peace and stability, restores indigenous rights and aspirations for self-determination and self-rule, protects territorial integrity, promotes rights to development and critical ownership of resources which is critical to eradication of poverty and hunger.

Our policy is committed to the country and to its reformed democratic institutions and its security to safeguard the Eritrean national cohesion and maintaining Eritrean diversity.

D. *Autonomy*

Autonomy has been the natural human rights of Afar people in Eritrea. The Afar way of life and culture cannot survive without autonomy.

The Eritrean government continues to commit serious human rights violations against ethnic Afar citizens including the rights to freedom of movement, freedom of assembly, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, mass killings, rapes and forced labour. Autonomous rule is an indispensable right for survival of our indigenous nomadic pastoralist people. Currently, Afar region (Dankalia) has been divided into two parts without the consent of Afar people and renamed by the present regime as southern red sea zone and northern red sea zone.

E. *National Unity and Sovereignty of Eritrea*

The current Eritrean Government and the ruling clique (PFDJ) have used Eritrea's national unity and sovereignty as a pretext to marginalize, subjugate and suppress the legitimate grievances of smaller nationalities wanting to preserve their rights to self-determination and self-rule under a national framework.

EASE is committed to the sovereignty and unity of Eritrea. While each nationality shall enjoy the right to self-determination up to and including the right of secession, ***Eritrean Afar State in Exile (EASE) and Afar People are not a secessionist movement.***

EASE will play its part to protect the nation's interests, unity and sovereignty provided the reformed Eritrea is founded on the principles of genuine democracy, equality of all nationalities and respect for self-rule, human rights and dignity of Eritrean Afar people and all Eritreans.

2. CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM POLICY

Eritrea's nationalities are distinguished by ancient and distinct languages, which are superimposed on cleavages of religion, economy, culture and more generally way of life. The ten nationalities are old, rooted in ancient histories and cultures. Eritrea, by contrast, is a new political construct, fashioned in 1993.

Though Eritrea's constitution presently remains unimplemented, the current government of Eritrea is unofficially using the policies and the texts from 1997 constitution to further its agenda of marginalization and assimilation by exploiting the Afar people's land and resources.

Below are some of the deeply flawed texts in Eritrea's unimplemented 1997 Constitution:

- The 1997 Constitution contains no chapter on minority rights.
- The rights of the national communities are nowhere guaranteed. The Constitution neither provides for any measures for autonomy or self-government of the nationalities, nor does the Constitution provide for guarantees for the small nationalities to participate in central institutions of the state.
- Art. 31 of the Constitution ensure Eritrea's central institutions will be dominated by large nationalities as they are now.
- The 1997 Constitution contains no guarantees for the autonomy or rights of the regional authorities. Art. 1(5) gives the Central Authorities full control over the regions, with "carte blanche" over Afar economies, resources, governing structures and societies.
- Centralized power has been used to reorganize the regions and depreciate their powers and territories. Dankalia, for example, has been reduced in size and parts of it subjected to rule by others.
- The reality of the 1997 Constitution is that the excessive centralization of Art 1(5) creates and makes Eritrea's small nationalities dependent on the large nationalities.
- Art 23.2 of the 1997 Constitution declares "All lands and all natural resources below and above the surface of the territory of Eritrea belong to the State. *"The interests', citizens shall have in land, shall be determined by law"*. This article expropriates the indigenous rights of Afar people to the soil, **contrary to international law**. It allows the central authorities to appropriate the traditional lands and resources of the Afar pastoralists and sell them to foreign resource extraction companies. It allows the large nationalities to displace the small nationalities from their rightful and guaranteed traditional lands and pursuits.

The present Eritrean regime and the unimplemented 1997 Constitution both undermine the Afar and other minority nationalities and the Afar will not accept the status quo or the 1997 Constitution being imposed on them. They have so resolved by the thousands in solemn declarations by their leaders and backed unanimously by the Afar people – in particular the **Samara Declaration of 2011**.

Sadly enough, The 1997 Constitution has the support of the United Nations, the USA and the EU. Though the intentions to restore democracy and rule of law by the democratic leadership in the West are commendable, it will fall short of desired goals of sustainable democratization in Eritrea. The U.N. recommendation to fully implement Eritrea's 1997 Constitution are misguided and lacks the deep understanding of grievances by the Eritrean Afar and other marginalized and minority nationalities in Eritrea.

For the unimplemented 1997 Constitution to become acceptable to Afar and other smaller nationalities, it will have to contain acceptable and durable guarantees for minority rights, rights to self rule and regional autonomy and recognition for indigenous lands, culture and resource rights. These are traditional concerns which the International Community and its authoritative actors have to recognize as contributing factors to the stability of Eritrea and which to some extent are expressed in the *Declaration on the Rights*

of Indigenous Peoples and the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

We believe that any attempt to impose the 1997 Constitution on the Afar without modifications tailored to Afar concerns will lead to prolonged instability in Eritrea. We believe these actions will bring about a new form of Eritrean conflict between the large nationalities and the small.

Our constitutional Reform policy calls for *Re-writing* of the 1997 Eritrean constitution that should resemble the makeup and the diversity of Eritrea's nationalities. The new Eritrean constitution must model itself and recognize the following rights;

- Power sharing constitution between Eritrea's ethnicities
- Protection for Indigenous and minority rights,
- Indigenous Rights for lands and resources ownership
- Freedom of Pluralism and equality of nationalities
- Rights to Self Rule and Autonomy
- Federalism, Rule of Law, Democracy and Fundamental rights

Our constitutional reform policy calls on all the stakeholders of Eritrea's nationalities, their representatives and the international community to join hands with us and establish a liberal democratic federation based on the systems, values and the principles stated above.

3. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

Eritrean Afar people inside Eritrea are in crisis. The current Eritrean regime is displacing them from their homeland in Dankalia, which they have inhabited for more than 2,000 years, and re-colonizing it with others. Eritrea is achieving this using mass murder, terror, intimidation, rape, persecution and other forms of violence.

The Eritrean regime is destroying the basis of Eritrean Afar economy, namely fishing and animal husbandry, and confiscating Afar businesses. Afar families are fleeing their homeland by the tens of thousands into nearby Ethiopia, Yemen, Sudan and Djibouti for safety. Those who aren't captured or shot by Eritrean security (who have orders to shoot Afar on sight) wind up in UN refugee camps, which are bursting at the seams with men, women, children and elders.

The Afar homeland is known to contain vast resources, including large potash deposits, gold and other metals. Dankalia's coast is significant geopolitically, as it includes the country's two main port cities of Assab and Massawa which are economically strategic to the regime's continuation.

3.1 Mass Murder and Extrajudicial killings

The Afar are subjected to extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture and rape, as well as the destruction of their traditional means of subsistence and livelihood and businesses. Eritrea is removing the Afar people from Dankalia by mass murder, extra-judicial killings, terror, and violence and by destroying the Afar economy.

3.2 Rape and Torture of Afar

The evidence collected to date, unanimously details the terror experienced by the Afar people in Eritrea which caused them to flee the country for their own safety. The deponents exemplified the fear felt across Afar society by men, women and children. Dankalia region is now a highly fortified military zone for Eritrea resulting in the abduction of Afar men, enlisting of the Afar youth and the widespread rape of Afar women.

Afar men are kidnapped, killed and tortured, leaving the women widows and their children without fathers. Eye witnesses testified to mass murders and executions committed by the Government of Eritrea first-hand. They have witnessed the murder of their family members, friends, and Afar leaders. Torture at the hands of the Government of Eritrea is used to suppress any Afar who speaks out against the Government.

3.3 COI on Eritrea Confirms Crimes against Humanity

The government of Eritrea has committed cultural genocide against the Indigenous Afar. The recent United Nation's Commissions of Inquiry report finds the Eritrean government accountable for crimes against humanity and crimes of persecution of Afar in Eritrea.

In JUNE 8, 2016-The UN Commission of Inquiry on human rights in Eritrea (COIE) reported that Eritrean officials have likely committed the crime of persecution, a crime against humanity, against Eritrean Afar population since 1991.

COI Reported in Para- 295, stated "The Commission also has reasonable grounds to believe that Eritrean officials have intentionally and severely deprived Eritrean Kunama and Afar of fundamental rights contrary to international law on ethnic grounds. The Commission has corroborated evidence that the Afar and Kunama were targeted, at a minimum, in the period between 1998 and 2001. It has also received uncorroborated information that both ethnic groups were persecuted during other periods as well, and that such persecution persists".

3.4 Exploitations of Afar Land and Resources

After successfully displacing the Afar from their resource rich and strategic coasts, Eritrean government and Afwerki is now selling the land, the airspace and the territorial waters of Dankalia to the likes of the United Arab Emirates for billions of dollars.

Afwerki and his Junta is now selling over 400 Square Kilometer of Potash Rich Afar land and resources to another multinational corporation from Australia, The [Cullili potash](#) project is estimated at Billions of Dollars and PFDJ elites own 50% of it. None of these corporations and foreign governments are concerned about Afar human rights violations or the impact on the environment, and do not care for their corporate social responsibilities.

3.5 Destruction of Afar Economy and Way of Life

Eritrean Afar people are active in animal husbandry, fishing, trades and salt mining. The systemic ethnic cleansing includes excessive and unaffordable fines on fishermen which results in the confiscation of their daily catch and ultimately their boats. These fishermen are charged with crimes imposed according to extrajudicial laws and then judged in "kangaroo courts" where fines are enforced at the whim of navy

generals. As an example, the revenues and traditional economic activities in the Afar salt fields in Assab region which have been a great source of local economic have been confiscated and destroyed.

3.6 Refugees and Displacement of Afar People from their Homeland

The exodus of Eritrean Afar people from their ancestral homeland in Dankalia continues with nearly 200,000 having already fled to neighbouring countries Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Yemen from the tyrannical regime in Eritrea. This has been the saddest chapter in the once proud and resilient African peoples' recent history.

Afar are fleeing Dankalia by the tens of thousands. Many Afar have perished trying to escape Eritrea as the security personnel have orders to shoot to kill the Afar as they attempt to cross the border to places of refuge. The UNHCR in Ethiopia has documented tens of thousands of Afar now living as refugees in Ethiopia, Sudan, Yemen and other states.

3.7 Accountability for Crimes against Humanity

- Our policy calls for bringing to justice the Eritrean Government, including high level officials, Generals and State security agents who are responsible for perpetrating crimes of humanity and crimes of persecution against Eritrean Afar.
- Our policy calls for reopening of Mass graves and investigate the remains of Afar victims.
- Our policy calls for re-writing of Eritrea's 1997 constitution, which is excessively centralized and intentionally aims to subdue and marginalized indigenous and minority rights in Eritrea in favor of ruling class and as a consequence subjects them to poverty and insecurity.
- Our policy calls to end of exploitations of Afar lands, resources and strategic properties by Eritrean regime owned corporations, multinational corporations, such as Australia's Danakali corporation (formerly South Boulder Mines Ltd), [United Arab Emirates\(UAE\), NMDC](#) , from displacing Eritrean Afar people and hold these companies accountable responsible for disrupting indigenous people's way of life and their economic wellbeing.

3.8 Our policy endorses the following June 8, 2016 recommendations by Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea (COI)

- Ensure the protection of all minority ethnic groups in Eritrea, in particular the Kunama and the Afar.
- Ensure accountability for past and persistent human rights violations and crimes, including enslavement, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, and other inhumane acts, persecution, rape and murder, through the establishment of independent, impartial and gender-sensitive mechanisms, and provide victims with adequate redress, including the right to truth and reparations;
- Bring to the attention of relevant special procedures, for appropriate action, the human rights violations and crimes identified by the Commission in its reports, including the situation of minorities, such the Kunama and the Afar;
- Refer the situation in Eritrea to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court;
- Impose targeted sanctions, namely travel bans and asset freezes, on persons where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the said persons are responsible for crimes against humanity or other gross violations of human rights.

3.9 Restitutions, Redress and Compensations (RRC)

- Our policy calls for restitution for Afar victims, those who survived torture, rapes displacement and deprivation and destruction of economy and losses of properties, businesses and lands. We call for return of confiscated homes, priorities and lands to Afar victims.
- Our policy calls for compensation for physical or mental harm, including pain, suffering and emotional distress; lost opportunities, including education; material damages and loss of earnings, harm to reputation or dignity; and costs required for legal or expert assistance social medical and psychological services.

3.10 Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Eritrea Afar Refugees (RRAR)

- Our policy calls for return, rehabilitation and reintegration of Eritrean Afar refugees and protection for their security and basic human rights; return to their traditional natural environment; property restitution, compensation, apologies and establishment of economic programs,
- Our policy call for setup of refugee rehabilitation centers and programs, establishment of skilled trainings and investment indigenous economic activities.

4. EASE ECONOMIC POLICY

The inspiration for our economic plan for Eritrean Afar people and Dankalia emanates from our people's rights to self determination, and a call by [Samara Declaration](#) for Afar economic freedoms in Eritrea. Our economic plan stems from our Afar indigenous values, our historic Afar self sufficiency and self reliance, our Afar expertise in traditional coastal economies and our aspirations for the protection of environment. Our economic plan is determined to put an end to the policies of exploitation of Afar lands, territories and resources, alleviation of Afar poverty, and to fight harmful practices such as corruption and extortion.

The Afar region of Dankalia and its socioeconomic, political, education systems and cultural institutions are a stark contrast of its past. Dankalia is severely underdeveloped in comparison to other Eritrean regions. Dankalia's economic wellbeing is aggravated by current Eritrean regime's systematic policy of marginalization of Afar people and exploitation of Afar natural resources.

The government of Eritrea consider Afar region of Dankaila a no-go military zone, long after two decades of no war and no peace with Ethiopia. All borders in and out of Dankalia's immediate neighbours remain closed in an effort to deliberately prevent foreign aid and international aid agencies from assisting affected Afar communities.

Excessive militarization of Dankalia is causing unprecedented suffering and threatening the livelihoods of thousands of Eritrean Afar. Dankalia and the Afar suffer from high unemployment, food insecurity, and lack of access to basic health care, education, economic development opportunities and deterioration of infrastructure.

The exploitation of natural resources of Dankalia for personal enrichment is helping build a political base for the ruling class and support terrorism and instability in the region. The Eritrean government policy and actions have dispossessed Indigenous Afar people of their lands, territories and resources.

Our economic plan for Afar and Dankalia will turn the page on poverty, historic discrimination, marginalization by President Isaias Afwerki and his regime in Asmara.

Our Economic policy will put an end to exploitation and marginalization and will fight poverty of Afar and Eritreans.

Our economic policy is pro-development, pro-social justice and fair play. Our policy promotes open, non-discriminatory and equitable trading systems that will enable all nationalities in Eritrea to improve their economic structures and improve the standard of living for all Eritreans.

Our economic policy for Dankalia will combine modern thinking and leveraging our strategic ports and create industries and will leverage Afar social, indigenous and traditional way of life especially our extensive knowledge of our economic environment in the region. This can be accomplished through:

1. Harnessing Eritrean Afar Economy by building capacity and a strong Self-sustaining communities to strengthen Afar indigenous experience as seamen, traders and businessmen while preserving the traditional pastoralist way of life.
2. Develop macro-economic policies that give adequate attention to the empowerment of Eritrean Afar people and contribute to the economic growth through trade and employment.
3. Investment in Micro financing and Local Small Business Initiatives(LSBI) and the traditional Afar economies such as:
 - Animal Husbandry and Agro-Pastoralism
 - Traditional Salt Mining
 - Afar Traditional Fishing Economy
 - Cross Border Trade and Animal Trade
 - Palm tree Plantation and Date Farming

5. EASE FOREIGN POLICY

EASE's foreign policy vision is to leverage Dankalia's geopolitical, commercial and socioeconomic potential for the promotion of international and regional partnerships. As Exiled state, based in Diaspora, our policy aims at gaining the support for the rights and self determination of Eritrean Afar people. Our policy aims at a safe and peaceful homeland and the re-instating of a Democratic Afar state in Dankalia within a federated Eritrea. This is a key foreign policy plank. EASE policy calls for enabling the development of the human potential of Eritrean Afar people through education and economic expansion and creating an economic environment and foreign policy that encourages international investment and development.

EASE understands the importance of infrastructure driven economic development. Infrastructure connects people to people, business to business. Investing in infrastructure projects will create jobs, enhance the quality of life for Afar and will promote friendly relations and trade in the region.

1. Leverage the proximity of Eritrea's coast to international trade routes and harness the economic capital of Dankalia as free market economy
2. Encourage free trade, international investment that enables economic prosperity, development assistance and foreign aid
3. Investment in Dankalia's strategic infrastructure, Assab ports and refineries and roads

4. Ensure Corporate responsibility and Fair Natural Resources Extraction policies
5. Promote Human right and Good governance
6. Further develop the support of the Diaspora Afar communities because of the instrumental role that they can, and will be willing to play, in the future of their Eritrean Afar People and State
7. Promote Tourism of Dankalia

6. EASE LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

Afar homeland of Dankalia has unparalleled resource advantage in Eritrea and the horn of Africa region. In much of Africa, conflicts over natural resources have been the leading factor behind instability and impediment to growth. Our policy for Eritrea promotes a responsible, just and economically productive resource management framework that is equitable in its distribution of wealth to all stakeholders of Eritrea, in particular Dankalia.

The wealth generated from natural resources and its social impacts should be beneficial to all nationalities even if they stem from Dankalia. EASE rejects the exploitation occurring at the hands of the Eritrean government. The present regime is now selling and/or leasing Dankalia's resource-rich land to mining companies as well as to foreign governments, without the consent, recognition or knowledge of the Afar people.

Our economic policy promotes a socially responsible, no-one left behind, approach to economic prosperity. The natural resources and the wealth of Dankalia needs sound resources management strategy that will guarantee just and equitable share and distribution of wealth to all regions and the stakeholders of Eritrea.

The laws and actions imposed on the Afar people have rendered Afar Eritreans landless and their natural resources exploited. The Afwerki regime has the complete monopoly over the wealth of Afar region (Dankalia) and control over its natural resources. The exploitation and revenues generated from Dankalia is used for personal enrichment by the elites of PFDJ, the Eritrean Generals and helping build a political base for the ruling class to maintain iron fist over impoverished population and democratic values. Our plan will revisit agreements made with multinational corporations and other foreign entities to respect their social corporate responsibilities and invest back in community based programs and initiatives such as Education system, Health Care, Jobs, and the environment.

Our policy for economic reform in Eritrea will put an end to exploitation of natural resources. EASE Land and Resources Policy will transfer the land ownership of Dankalia back to its rightful owners, The Eritrean Afar people. The Afar people will own and maintain control of their lands and resources including surface and sub-surface resources, sea coasts, fisheries and air space. Our Natural Resources policy is committed to deliver fair share of natural resources revenues for development and economic empowerment for all Eritrean populations.

EASE believes such process will prevent conflicts between regions and nationalities in the future. With agreed upon revenue sharing initiatives, in addition to the creation of resolutions and policies for resource management, a new social cohesion and coexistence between diverse nationalities will be created and a balance for economic power between all nationalities of Eritrea will emerge.

Our Land and Natural Resources policy will establish fair and equitable resources strategy to address the “Have-and-Have Not” regions and disparities when it comes to natural resources in Eritrea.

Our policy will put an end to colonization of Afar land and resources. Afar Eritreans Must re-claim and control their land, resources and strategic coasts, seaways and cross border trade routes. The Government enacted Proclamation No. 58/1994 “to reform the system of land tenure in Eritrea, to determine the manner of expropriating land for purposes of development and national reconstruction. President Afwerki was given “**carte blanche**” and unrestricted power to sell Afar land, territories and resources freely.

Key Strategies for sharing Natural Resources and Revenues:

- Reinstatement of the ownership of Land and Resources to indigenous ownership
- Setup National Framework for revenue and resources sharing between Eritrean people
- Devise revenue sharing national strategy to recognize inequalities and marginalization for disadvantaged regions and prioritize creation of jobs, socio-economic programs to address the neglect and economic marginalization and adequately address the needs of local communities
- Our policy will devise strategies to re-evaluate and re-negotiate contract agreements with Multinational corporations, mineral extraction companies, and foreign governments and hold them accountable for their corporate and state responsibilities and establish social programs like schools, health centers, clean water facilities and programs for economic empowerment of local populations.