



**ERITREAN COMMUNITY**  
**For Human Rights and Refugee Protection**  
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Eritrean Community for Human Rights and Refugee Protection  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention  
 January 5- 7, 2009

Eritrean Community for Human Rights and Refugee Protection 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention took place in Tuskegee (Tuskegee University - Kellogg Conference Center), Alabama, from 5 to 7 January 2009. The Convention was held to evaluate the annual report of the EC-HRRP and discuss the various human right violations taking place in Eritrea.

The Convention brought together EC-HRRP board of Directors from USA, Europe, Australia and the Executive Committee of the EC-HRRP.

The Convention underlined the important contribution the EC-HRRP has made and the inspiration it has provided. While acknowledging the challenges facing the Convention, it reaffirmed its continued support to Eritrean Human Rights causes along side of Eritrean Global Solidarity and other sister organization.

While drawing attention to recent positive developments in the emerging of new Eritrean civic organization for Human rights, the Convention highlighted the scale and gravity of Human right abuse and forced exodus in Eritrea today.

Against this background, the Convention adopted a document entitled "The Tuskegee Document on Human Rights violation in Eritrea", which draws attention to the continuing urgency of the current crisis. The document contains resolutions, recommendations which the Convention requested that the EC-HRRP executive circulate to the appropriate organs of Eritrean Civic Societies, Eritrean Political party/fronts, Eritreans in Diaspora and other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies.

### **Convention Summary**

*Having considered* the report and discussion of the EC-HRRP convention,

1. *Agrees* to adopt the decisions and recommendations contained in the annex to the resolution;
2. *Decides* to review periodically the implementation of the provisions contained in the annex;
3. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

### **Annex**

#### **Part I EC-HRRP Aspiration**

*The EC-HRRP Convention,*

*First and foremost, we pay tribute* to Eritrean martyrs and freedom fighter, Eritrean War veteran, Member of the mis-managed National Service, peace loving Eritreans and the international community for their commitments and unre-served support to people of Eritrea;

*Reaffirming* our commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of our nation, and recalling the importance of the principles of good neighborliness, non-interference and cooperation in the relations among us in our region,

*Express our* appreciation to all efforts made by the all Eritrean movements for democracy , All Eritrean human rights institutions, All Eritrean civic society and All Friends of Eritrea, for their determination to promote human Rights in Eritrea;

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## Part II Fact Finding

*The EC-HRRP Convention,*

1. *Attesting* that there are serious pattern of human rights violations, including executions, torture, detention of political prisoners and inhumane prison conditions in Eritrea;
2. *Noting* that prison conditions are extremely harsh and constituted cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment
3. *Noting that* thousands of people detained in 2001 also remained in secret detention;
4. *Witnessing* that the government officials and PFDJ continued to hold without charge numerous members of the Eritrean Liberation Front, and an armed opposition group that fought for independence;
5. *Noting* that many pastors and priests, church members, Muslims, are in detention at the end of 2008 as prisoners of conscience because of their religious beliefs and were indefinitely detained incommunicado without charge or trial;
6. *Noting that* , the whereabouts of 11 senior PFDJ and National Assembly members and several journalists and employees of diplomatic missions arrested by the government in 2001 remained unknown;
7. *Noting* that several prisoners of conscience were illegally sentenced to prison terms in their absence by a secret security committee and they were denied the right to present a legal defence or to appeal to a higher court.
8. *Noting* that that individuals were severely beaten and killed during government roundups of young men and women for national service;
9. *Confirmed* that there are executions of individuals on sight near the Ethiopian border, allegedly for attempting to cross the border.
10. *Witnessing* that several thousand youths fled the country to avoid harsh treatment, and many conscripts escaped from military service to seek asylum abroad.
11. *Noting* that relatives of conscription evaders were detained in all regions.
12. *Examined* that several hundred youths fled the country to avoid military service, and many conscripts escaped from military service to seek asylum abroad
13. *Noting that* the whereabouts of an unknown number of Kunama, and Afar ethnic group residing predominantly along the border were detained because of their association with other captured or killed freedom fighters, remained unknown.
14. *Noting* that the government monitored mail, e-mail, and telephone calls without obtaining warrants as required under the law
15. *Examined* that the government restricted academic freedom; freedom of speech, movement of students, and the right to assemble.
16. *Noting* that the persistent food crisis in Eritrea seems to be due to factors including Eritrean government/PFDJ misconceived policies.

*Having considered* the report of EC-HRRP and the EC-HRRP Convention,

- i. Hold accountable President Issayas Afeworki, Higher Eritrean Government officials, PFDJ, and Military Commanders for crimes and atrocities committed against Eritreans;
- ii. Unanimously requested an establishment of Special Tribunal with the help of sister Eritrean civic societies and International community “to seek accountability against the above mentioned officials bearing the greatest responsibility for crimes.

## Part III Resolution

*The EC-HRRP Convention,*

1. The name of the our organization shall be Eritrean Community for Human Rights (ECHR)
2. ECHR shall be transformed into a membership based institution
3. Approved short ( 1- year), Medium ( 2 - years) and Long ( 4- years) EC-HR work plan
4. *Adopt the following International Bill of Human Rights as core value of ECHR*

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- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights,*
  - *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,*
  - *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,*
  - *Prevention of Discrimination on the Basis of Race, Religion or Belief, and Protection of Minorities*
  - *Women and child's Rights*
  - *War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity, Genocide, and Terrorism*
  - *Political Rights, Freedom of Information, and Right to Culture*
  - *Refugees, Asylum, Internally Displaced, and Freedom of Movement*
  - *Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize*
  - *Protection From Torture, Ill-Treatment, and Disappearances*
5. *Reaffirms* our strong support for Eritrean Global Solidarity, Network of Eritrean Civil Societies in Europe and other Eritrean civic societies *calls upon* the parties to cooperate fully and when possible to merge as one or under one umbrella to alleviate and shorten the pain and suffering of the Eritrean people.
6. EC-HRRP authorized the following projects
- Refugee Protection and Integration
  - Crime Investigations and Forensics
  - Satellite Imagery Documentation
  - Media and Publication
7. EC-HRRP Awards of Excellence for the Year 2008
- **Mr. Tesfaldet Meharena** **MEDAL OF HONOR**
  - **Ms. Elsa Chyrum** **DISTINGUISHED MEDAL**
  - **Dr. Tricia R Hepner** **MERITORIOUS MEDAL**

### Part III Recommendation

*The EC-HRRP Convention,*

1. *Emphasizes* that the biggest deterrent to potential violence in Eritrea shall be addressing the root causes of divergence, including through the promotion of sustainable development and a democratic society based on a strong rule of law and civic institutions, including adherence to all human rights — civil, political, economic, social and cultural;
2. *Bearing in mind* that it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law as outlined in Universal Human Right declaration.
3. *Underscoring* the need for Eritrean communities to reject sectarianism between factions of political movements, participate in the political process, and engage in an inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation for the sake of Eritrea's political stability and unity.
4. Recommends that the linkage between Eritrean civic societies and Eritrean movements for human right, justice and democracy should be strengthened.

**Given at the EC-HRRP Convention,  
This Seventh Day of January, In the Year of Two Thousand Nine,**

