



THE STATE OF ERITREA
LEGAL ADVISOR TO THE
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

PRESS RELEASE

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An Eritrean delegation attended a meeting of the Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) on Thursday 6 September and Friday 7 September 2007, at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands. On the Commission's agenda was the question of what steps the parties would have to take to make demarcation possible as a practical and technical matter. The meeting was called by the EEBC in the face of Ethiopia's unwillingness to allow demarcation on the ground of the 13 April 2002 Boundary Award.

Eritrea presented a proposal to the Commission at the start of the meeting that agreed in writing to every point on the Commission's agenda. It committed itself to full cooperation with the Commission and with UNMEE in assisting the Commission in preparing for installation of the boundary pillars. Eritrea's only condition was that it expected Ethiopia to cooperate with the Commission, as well. The Commission therefore focused on whether Ethiopia was willing to allow the demarcation to proceed.

Ethiopia did not present any proposal to the Commission regarding demarcation. Instead, it accused Eritrea of various things, most of which were completely irrelevant to the demarcation proceedings. When the Commission responded that it had no authority to entertain demands that were unrelated to the demarcation, Ethiopia made clear that it was not prepared to cooperate with the Commission. Ethiopia stated that even if Eritrea did everything that the Commission specified, it was not prepared to move forward.

Therefore, after recognizing that it was not possible to make progress because Ethiopia was still refusing to cooperate, the Commission was forced to adjourn the meeting.

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