



24 July 2008

Excellency,

I have taken note of the Aide-Memoire, presented by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, dated 22 July 2008, detailing options on “*how the United Nations could most effectively support [Eritrea and Ethiopia] in implementing fully the Algiers Agreements*”.

From the outset, I wish to emphasize that the only effective support the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Security Council could give is to lend its full support to the impartial and independent arbitration body, the Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC), and its demarcation decision of 27 November 2007. Indeed, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 2.3 and 2.4 of the United Nations Charter and Article 4.15 of the Algiers Agreement, it behooves the United Nations Security Council to ensure the respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a United Nations Member State.

Sadly, the different options presented previously and more or less repeated in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO's) Aide-memoire of 22 July totally shun this cardinal matter. The gist and entire focus of the options appear to be geared at preventing a presumed resumption of hostilities through a permanent presence of United Nations Observer Force, in effect legitimizing Ethiopia's illegal occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories. The notion of a United Nations special envoy at this late stage of the process further accommodates Ethiopia's persistent request for an alternative mechanism to tamper with and modify the delimitation and demarcation determinations of the EEBC. The United Nations Security Council cannot clearly entertain or indulge in this grave breach of the Algiers Agreement.

Eritrea cannot accept these state of affairs for all the cogent reasons cited above. Eritrea will have no problems to restore good neighbourly relationship with Ethiopia. We are neighbours destined to live together and in harmony with the people of Ethiopia. We do not wish to live in permanent tension or under a tenuous peace that is maintained and monitored by a third force.

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York, N.Y. 10017

For this to happen, Ethiopia must withdraw its troops from sovereign Eritrean territories. Ethiopia's illegal occupation of Eritrean territories in violation of the UN Charter and the Algiers Agreement is the real obstacle that remains to be addressed. Eritrea expects and calls on the United Nations institutions to channel their efforts towards addressing this cardinal obstacle.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and I would be most grateful if this letter and its annex (letter from the President of the Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission) could be circulated as a document of the UN Security Council.

Araya Desta
Ambassador, Permanent Representative