



February 6, 2015

An Open Letter

Here is Another Fake Story for the SEMG's Next Report on Eritrea

Dear members of the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group:

In case you missed it, here is a fabrication worthy of your attention. It is one more fake story on Eritrea that you can feature in your upcoming report and please do not disappoint us. In the past, you never found a fake story on Eritrea you didn't like or milk to the maximum to tar the young and independent-minded nation of Eritrea and we expect you to do same with this newfound bounty of fakery.

We expect you to give it a good spin to ensure readability. It has all the qualities you like in an effective fabrication: a lot of fake details to give it an air of authenticity, names of actual places to reinforce the lies it intends to convey, the fingerprints of the professional lying operatives and their enablers most of whom you met before in Addis Ababa, Nairobi, and other capitals. All in all, it is ready made for your next report on Eritrea.

It is a report from February 2, 2015 and we read you were snooping and salivating around the Port of Berbera. It is of the kind of bizarre stories, you love to report and do an excellent job, and as bottom feeders you love to get to the bottom of it. It is from "Horseed Media", you might know the source better than we do. Furthermore, it is a report designed to besmirch and tarnish Eritrea's image, which is your cup of tea, na, it is a bundle of "Khat" for your chewing. The story's title is also of the genre you love: **"Somaliland imports heavy weapons used by the Nazi in the World War II from Eritrea."**

*"The breakaway region of Somaliland has started to offload the arms cargo from a ship that recently docked in one of the ports in the region under the cover of darkness. The MV Shakir – a Sudanese-registered ship carrying a large consignment of heavy and dangerous weapons docked at the Berbera port on the 24th of January. Among the weapons offloaded was the famous Sturmgeschutz SAV 101 tanks, that the Nazi leader Adolf Hitler his troops used during the World War II, armoured vehicles, ammunition and other military equipment. The weapons are thought to have been purchased from Eritrea, credible sources have confirmed. Eritrea, a tiny state in Eastern Africa is facing sanctions from the United Nations after it was accused of aiding Islamist militants. It is a state that has been fuelling the Somali crisis for the past decades and found of supporting extremist groups such as al-Shabaab by arming and training its fighters."*ⁱ

It is pure disinformation, Ethiopia style. Mr. Yemane G. Meskel, the Director of the Office of the President of Eritrea, in his tweet from February 3, put it well: the story is a **"Crass disinformation at its worst! How would Eritrea export weapons it doesn't possess to an entity it has no ties with?"** We will be waiting to see how you will weave and blend it into the fabric of fakery that usually characterizes your reports; but in this case you will have to work a little harder because German weapons have never been part of Eritrea's arsenal and as for Somaliland, its mentors the U.S. and Ethiopia must have run out of weapons for Hargeisa to be shopping in Eritrea, which is not in the business of weapons manufacturing.

Furthermore, the same disinformation site admitted a day later, on February 3, that "the heavy weaponry was bought from a market in United Arab Emirates."ⁱⁱ However, the site never bothered to remove its erroneous story or apologize for not getting its facts right. But the story hints who the source of the disinformation might have been. It told us that "UN experts along with Ethiopian consular officials were refused entry into the port after a ship allegedly carrying weapons docked a few days ago."ⁱⁱⁱ We are sorry you were not given a chance to photograph the load so that you can use it for your reports. How could these American and Ethiopian allies do this to you? Supposedly you work for the same bosses and

to not let you have your heart's desire sounds callous to us. You should report immediately what the Somalilanders did to your bosses.

However, despite these challenges, we believe you will once again do a good job; as we said above, when it comes to coming up with bizarre and phantom stories to accuse Eritrea, there is none that rivals you. You are distinctly known for passing fabrications that comes to you without much common sense filtering. Let us cite some—not all— of your achievements as a purveyor of pure fabrications about Eritrea the last few years:

1. Your fabrication about Eritrea started in 2006 when you lied about the presence of 2000 Eritrean soldiers in Somalia, however, not even a single Eritrean soldier was found after the US backed Ethiopian invasion combed Somalia. Did you admit your story was a phantom story? No, you didn't!
2. In 2011 you alleged Russian built MANPADS (Man-portable air-defense systems) were passed to the Somali insurgents by Eritrea. To substantiate this fabrication you used photoshopped photos, passed to you by the US, matching the serial numbers the US Government knew were sold to Eritrea, except the weapons with the authentic serial numbers were still sitting in Eritrea and the Russians had confronted you. Did you admit wrongdoing? No you didn't!
3. You told the world of Eritrea's conspiracy to bomb the annual gathering of the African Union. To help you write a good fiction you told the world the "Planning for the operation appears to have begun in 2008" and "an Eritrean Colonel calling himself 'Gemachew Ayana', also known as 'Kercho'" was the mastermind. However, you knew well that Colonel Gemachew Ayana was an Oromo Ethiopian colonel. When you were confronted with the truth, did you admit mistakes? No, you didn't!
4. Again in 2011 you, with a straight face, told us that Eritrea was supplying surface-to-air missiles to the Palestinians, the operation was led by an Eritrean General trained in Syria. However, the intended target of these weapons, the Israeli government, dismissed your story. Did you apologize about your fabrication? No, you didn't!
5. In 2011, as the US and its allies were spinning a well-fabricated and orchestrated story of phantom Eritrean planes landing in Baidoa airport to supply Somalia insurgents, and were building it into a cornerstone to tighten sanctions against Eritrea, you knew your story was false, but you kept quiet until after the new sanctions were passed.
6. Finally in 2014, you alleged that Eritrea was supplying South Sudanese rebels with weapons and you admitted that you had worked so hard to substantiate your fabrication. You miserably failed, however you have yet to come out clean about this too.

Well, as we said, your record of compiling and disseminating fraudulent information is unrivaled by any group mandated to investigate crises in the Horn of Africa or anywhere else in the world. Congratulations, or something!

The Organization of Eritrean Americans (OEA) looks forward to seeing your next bounty of fakery.

ⁱ <http://www.mareeg.com/somalia-somaliland-imports-heavy-weapons-used-by-the-nazi-in-the-world-war-ii-from-eritrea/>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.mareeg.com/somalia-somaliland-may-return-some-of-arms-consignment-to-sudan/>

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