

A Short Introduction¹ to The US Talk Tour Planned by

Kubrom Dafla

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At the end of this introduction, I have written down, as briefly as possible, that part of my personal background (*resume*) which, I consider, to be relevant to the matter I am about to present to several Eritrean communities in the US in particular and the diaspora in general.

If I am given the opportunity, I intend to, present to the Eritrean community in your city, a sort of “project” many of us have in mind, which will interest all justice-loving Eritreans. My presentation to your community will not be about what happened *in the past*, but rather, what needs to be done *in the future*. It will not be about the need to *prepare* an action plan, but rather, about *implementation of an existing plan of action*.

What makes this “project” interesting, is that it consists of a detailed “Action Plan” that will implement a series of actions that will, hopefully, pave the way towards a fundamental change in our tormented nation. At its worst, the Action Plan will, encourage others to do better.

I will focus on the two grave dangers looming over our beloved Nation, and how best to avert them. The dangers, I believe, will be the result of the unbearable *suffering & humiliation of our people* on the one hand, and the looming threat of *a failed state scenario* on the other.

The Action Plan, which I will expand to your community, will focus on the following two practical national tasks:-

- a) how to avert the twin dangers looming over our people;
- b) what role a patriotic Eritrean can play to avert this role.

And achieve all of this, without, necessarily, resorting to an armed insurrection.

I present the ideas that have been given to me by many activists, who have helped me to prepare the Action Plan. I am convinced that many people would like to hear and discuss these issues further. Some have already expressed their intent to go all the way and to be part of an eventual action. Many have asked me to push this plan as far as is possible. Some are, in exile, some are, as we speak, deep in the hearts of Eritrea. Most have already committed their comfortable lives in exile, in exchange for being closer to Eritrea.

A Brief Background of Myself

Upon the request of most organizers of my talk sessions, here below, I have written down, as briefly as possible, that part of my personal background which, I consider, to be relevant to the Action Plan. It serves to reassure the listener, where my experience and expertise lie, with regards to the matter at hand. It must be noted that it is not through my own merit that I have accumulated such a varied experience but by a series of lucky coincidences, some of which I am not proud of.

¹ Please DO NOT publish on social media.

Born: - In September 1946, in Addis Ababa

Education:

- Bachelors in Business Management (HSI University, Ethiopia),
- MBA (Open University, UK) – completed, but degree not awarded, due to withdrawal of teachers when the 1998 border-war broke out)

Post-independence EPLF/PFDJ

- founder, and manager (for 8 yrs) of Himbol – the PFDJ foreign currency trading company
- manager of the Red Sea Corporation (aka “09”) – the biggest PFDJ company

Government:

Head of the National Treasury (3 yrs) - with the rank of vice minister

- responsible for collection of all national revenues, and disbursement of national budget,
- responsible for preparation of national accounting,
- responsible for servicing (administering) of national debt,
- responsible for representing Eritrea as governor to IMF, World Bank, and the other Bretton Woods institutions
- responsible for government-owned property including immovables such as houses.
- responsible for government-owned commercial activities (not including PFDJ ones), thus such Intercontinental Hotel, all hotels, Melotti, etc
- Head of all economic sectors during negotiations and eventual signing of bilateral agreements with other countries, such as Libya, Djibouti, Yemen, etc

Head of the Tax Authority, (3 yrs) - with the rank of vice minister

- Responsible for collecting taxes from any private or government-owned income generating activities, including that of the PFDJ and Min. of Defense.

CEO (and board member) of Eritrean Airlines - (5½ yrs.)

- Board member (2 yrs.)
- CEO (3½ yrs.)

Activist In Exile (8 yrs.):

- broadcasting a radio program intended for Eritrea, on Radio Erena, every week, for the past 4½ years.
- Giving my opinion when invited by such institutions as, the Dutch government, the EU, Dutch parliament members, University of Amsterdam, civic societies, etc.
- Participating actively in ECHO, the community’s mainstream movement in Holland, both as member to and advisor of its executive committee.
- active in within various Eritrean forums, such as the chat-rooms (Paltalk), social media, demo’s, workshops, etc.
- Giving specially prepared online awareness lectures to young exiles in Israel.

Hands on experience:

- As activist and leader in the *Ethiopian student movement* (1968-74)
- As EPLF secret cell and subsequent *“tegedalay” in the field* (4 yrs.)
- As EPLF *“tegedalay” overseas*
- As a ranking member of *EPLF financial activities* in foreign lands (14 yrs.)
- As intimate observer of the *EPLF ‘Hafash wudubat’* (mass org’s) activities in Europe and the Middle East (14 yrs);
- As active participant in the *international commercial and financial world*, before and after independence 30 years (30 yrs.);
- As an observer of *EPLF now PFDJ political culture* and strategy (35 years)
- As member of the *secret party of the EPLF* in the dying 3 years (1987-90);
- As a typical *resident of Eritrea* during the first years of independence (1992-98)
- As one of the first senior *officers of the PFDJ Economic Department* (7 yrs)
- As a resident of Eritrea during *the war and repression years* (1998-2001)
- As a *manager of organizations* belonging to EPLF/PFDJ or government (30 yrs)
- As a *high official (vice-minister)* of government (Min. of Finance) for 6 yrs.
- As responsible for *the nation’s treasury and properties*;

Useful social and political networks

The network of people that I have been part of, in the long period, near the center of Eritrean politics in the making, has given me the extra strength to convince people of this idea. The networks that have been part of my learning curve, are also the networks that I feel I can reach with my action plan. The networks consist of the following:

- of senior and *veteran EPLF tegadelti*, both pro and anti-regime
- of senior and *veteran EPLF ‘Hafash wudubat’*, both pro and anti-regime
- of senior *government civil servants*, both tegadelti and non-tegadelti
- of members of the *Eritrean business community*, both small and big, within Eritrea and outside of it.
- of financial and legal *professionals*, both within and outside Eritrea.
- of *intellectuals*, pro and anti, within and without Eritrea.
- of various *work colleagues*, my seniors and juniors.
- of common *citizens in my neighbourhood* in Asmara;
- of young and middle aged *”deleyti fithi”* with whom I intimately get involved during demonstrations, paltalks, social media, seminars, community associations, etc.
- of *radio listeners in Eritrea* of all ages and social groups
- of *Eritreans residing in the Netherlands*
- of my extended family members *from a mixed ethnic and religious origins*, ‘metaHit’ and ‘kebesa’, ‘aslam’ and ‘krestian’ alike.
- of *Ethiopians* with various levels of interest in the politics of Eritrea.
- of *western foreigners* with various levels of interest in the politics of Eritrea.
- of government and non-government *organizations in the Netherlands*