

**Review of the  
COI Report Eritrea of UKBA COIS**

**17 August 2012**

by  
**Dr. David Bozzini**  
and  
**Kibrom Mehari**

Prepared for the Independent Advisory Group on Country Information  
(IAGCI)

20 October 2012

## Introduction

A comprehensive framework of the UKBA COI report under review is defined by COIS in the preface of the document. It states in particular that<sup>1</sup>:

- The report provides general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the United Kingdom.
- The main body of the report includes information available up to 1 August 2012. The report was issued on 17 August 2012.
- The report is compiled wholly from material produced by a wide range of external information sources and does not contain any UKBA opinion or policy.
- It is not intended to be a detailed or comprehensive survey. For a more detailed account, the relevant source documents should be examined directly.
- The information included in this report is limited to that which can be identified from source documents.
- In compiling the report no attempt has been made to resolve discrepancies between information provided in different source documents though COI Service will bring the discrepancies together and aim to provide a range of sources, where available, to ensure that a balanced picture is presented.

As stated in the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration website:

- The IAGCI makes recommendations to the Chief Inspector about the content of material produced by the UK Border Agency's [Country of Origin Information Service](#) as well as recommendations of a more general nature.<sup>2</sup>
- It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any UK Border Agency material or procedures.<sup>3</sup>
- The IAGCI reviews "the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI material produced by the UK Border Agency" and assesses "the sources, methods of research and quality control used by the UK Border Agency to help ensure that these support the production of COI material which is as accurate, balanced, impartial and up to date as possible"<sup>4</sup>
- IAGCI normally commissions country experts or experienced researchers to

---

1 All points below are quotes of UKBA COIS COI report Eritrea August 17 2012, p.5

2 <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/country-information-%20reviews/>

3 <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/country-information-%20reviews/>

4 <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/country-information-reviews/terms-of-reference/>

evaluate and report upon selected COI Reports. At its next meeting in October 2012, the IAGCI will consider the most recent COI Reports on Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, and wishes to commission researchers to review these reports.<sup>5</sup>

- The purpose and scope of the reports are clearly set out in an introductory section of the document. Reviews should evaluate the reports in this context and seek to identify any areas where they can be improved. Specifically the review will entail:
  - (i) Assessing the extent to which information from source documents has been appropriately and accurately reflected in the COI Report.
  - (ii) Identifying additional sources detailing the current human rights situation in the country.
  - (iii) Noting and correcting any specific errors or omissions.
  - (iv) Making recommendations for general improvements regarding, for example, the structure of the report, its coverage or its overall approach.

It is specified that<sup>6</sup>:

- Any suggestions for additional information (or corrections to information in the document) must be referenced to a source document for the UKBA to be able to use it. UKBA can use foreign language source documents, but only if the information is considered essential and is not available in English language source.
- Reviews commissioned by IAGCI may be used as source documents for future COI reports.

Noting the purpose of the COIR, the mandate of the IAGCI mentioned above and the terms of reference for the review, our previous review of COIR Eritrea 2010, our current review focuses on:

- Evaluating the extent to which the information provided is balanced, factual and timely;
- Appraising the diversity, reliability and availability of the sources used;

---

5 <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/the-independent-advisory-group-on-country-information-invites-tenders-to-evaluate-the-uk-border-agency's-country-of-origin-information-coi-reports-and-operational-guidance-notes-ogns-on-er/>

6 <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/the-independent-advisory-group-on-country-information-invites-tenders-to-evaluate-the-uk-border-agency's-country-of-origin-information-coi-reports-and-operational-guidance-notes-ogns-on-er/>

- Checking the incorporation of previously accepted comments on the COIR and
- Evaluating its user-friendliness as the report is aimed to serve decision makers and appeals presenting officers, who require quick electronic access to information on specific issues and use the contents page to go directly to the subject required.

### **Guiding principles of the Review**

Mindful of the audience of the COIR review being UK officials from the COIS, we have tried to be as constructive as possible in our criticism. We have tried to provide additional sources and to update old information where possible with the aim of enriching the content of the Report.

Further, aware of the fact that the IAGCI's aims is to make recommendations to the UK Border Agency about the content of the UK Border Agency's COI material we have tried to point the IAGCI to explore some of the issues that are not mentioned but have strong link with the main issues of asylum mentioned by the UK Border Agency.

### **General comments**

As the team that had also reviewed the COI 2010, we have been able to note continuous improvement of the COI in terms of content and the presentation. There is greater cohesion between the different parts of the Report and more diversity and timeliness of the information references.

The focus of our comments as such is mainly on what more could have been done and could be improved in this COI material. Our criticisms both methodological and substantial are, therefore, a way of pointing the COIS what further issues and sources to explore.

### **On methodology**

- Regarding the sources, we note the effort being made to diversify the references. Considering the general lack of data related to the current situation in Eritrea, leaving out some potentially useful sources might not be effective. To this end, the letters from the UK embassy put in the annex were particularly useful.
- We, however, note that some references have been used repetitively and that limits the diversity of the sources. We have included a list of potentially useful references for each section possible. Further, we recommend the COIS to make
  - more use of academic works particularly, but not only, in the general background information. These include the small but growing body of scholarly literature available in published books and journal articles accessible on online platform.

- more extensive use of reliable Eritrean websites such as in particular [www.iceritreanrefugees.org](http://www.iceritreanrefugees.org), [asmarino.com](http://asmarino.com), [assenna.com](http://assenna.com), [www.ehrea.org](http://www.ehrea.org). Even though there are issues of reliability sometimes, not least because many are opposition websites, it is nonetheless advisable to still use them than not. In fact, many of the official reports used in this COI also make use of these websites
- Where the websites are used, we noted that the report relies often on [www.awate.com](http://www.awate.com) sources while it cites only one article of [www.assenna.com](http://www.assenna.com). A balanced usage of the different websites is advised here.
- Some issues in the relevance of some of the material used in the COI. For example, an [awate.com](http://www.awate.com) article on ‘Eritrea’s food security’ might not be the most reliable piece of reference for Eritrea’s demobilization program. On that note the back issues of [www.awate.com](http://www.awate.com) might not be available now. We have highlighted which of the links of this website are not available anymore.
- Sometimes large quotes raise various issues in our paragraph and create confusion. We advise that quotations be reasonably small.
- We also like to highlight that even though many of our previous comments also agreed by the COIS at that time have been incorporated, some also remain. We believe incorporation of agreed comments would enrich the content of this material greatly.

COIS: Accepted. While in principle we agree that academic sources may offer extra depth and detail we face difficulties in accessing them since they are usually subscription-based. Additionally, academic work tends to be retrospective, covering situations several years previously and may therefore not reflect the current situation. Nevertheless they may be useful. If you are able recommend any open-source academic work, we’d welcome seeing this.

We will review our use of sources and look to make more use of the recommended sites, and be mindful of their potential bias.

We’ll make sure that paragraphs with quotes are plain and clearly constructed though sometimes it is appropriate to use large blocks of quoted information.

We’ll review previous comments and, if still relevant in light of country changes, include this in the next update.

Thank you for the source suggestions.

## Substantial matters

- The current COI's methodological focus on situational analysis inside Eritrea seems to have resulted in the side-lining of the issue of Eritrean refugees in neighbouring countries and countries of transit. This wasn't the case when we reviewed the COIR in 2010 which contained a section on 'Eritrean refugees abroad'. We are convinced that these groups of Eritreans on the move face severe rights violations in the countries of transit. We believe the importance of violations and threats Eritreans face in those countries are also often crucial to assess their asylum cases. Moreover, these violations include human trafficking and kidnapping, two human rights issues, which are discussed at great length in this COI.
  - We recommend that the section on 'Eritrean refugees abroad' be reintroduced and greater awareness of the socio-economic and security situation of this group.

COIS: Accepted. We will implement the recommendation.

- We commend this report for its broad approach to Eritrea's relationship with neighbouring countries. While the focus of previous COIs on this topic was limited to war and security issues, the current COI presents Eritrea's socio-economic, political and security relationship with its neighbouring countries. We, however, believe that this section can still be further improved by discussing what the existing socio-economic, political and security relations with these neighbouring countries would mean to the lives of ordinary Eritreans living inside the country and in those neighbouring countries. The behaviour, activities and operations of the Eritrean government towards its diaspora merits greater attention because this considerably affects the asylum seekers and the refugees especially in neighbouring countries such as Sudan, Ethiopia, Libya and Egypt, Israel. This is important not only as part of Eritrea's foreign relations but also the country's treatment to returned refugees from those countries. Eritrea welcomes deportation of its citizens from Sudan, Egypt and Libya, it has, nonetheless, refused to accept any forcibly returned Eritreans from Israel.

COIS: Accepted. We look to add further detail including the government's attitude to its citizens refouled from other countries.

- Further, the state-centric approach has taken away some importance from analysis of the human effects of the nature of the state. We recommend refocusing attention on the human element to the extent possible and to take the human context in consideration while referring to such figures. For example, what does a 7.5% GDP growth in Eritrea mean to the people whose lives have been more than ever dependant on government rations? Analysis of the prevailing economic situation, policies and strategies of the country might not be

meaningful without looking at how it has reduced or affected poverty and humanitarian situation in the country.

COIS: Partly accepted. The Economy section in all reports is designed to provide an overview, so be relatively brief and simple. While we accept further information to illustrate what economic statistics mean to people, and we will consider adding further material, we intend to keep this section relatively short. The effect of the economy on food stability and associated humanitarian issues is covered in chapter 29 of the report.

Any recommended sources would be welcome.

- Finally, we urge the COIS to put a statement in the report informing readers about the qualitative and quantitative limitations of data about Eritrea and the necessity to refer sometimes to older but still relevant documents. In other words, the specific constraints to conduct research and retrieve data due to the political situation in Eritrea should be underlined in such report.

COIS: Accepted. Eritrea provides a particular challenge in gathering information: we will explain the limits to collecting data in the next update.

## Specific Comments on the COI

### 1: Geography

- 1.3 It is important to take into consideration that holidays in particular Muslim holidays, change every year. This is also noted in the [www.eritrea.be](http://www.eritrea.be)

Giving fixed dates on a multi-year basis might lead to some factual errors in the report such as when it is reported that *Eid Al Fetir* was celebrated on the 18th of August, 2012 whereas the exact date was the 19th.

- <http://www.shabait.com/events/national-holidays> can be a supplementary reference

COIS: Accepted. Greater clarification will be provided. Thank you for the additional source.

#### 1.04 Map

- The first map on **page 11** (<http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/eritrea.html#axzz0zbwhqfLr>) with the 'main cities of Eritrea' does not convey adequate information and do not add the needed value to the report. It leaves out some important cities both in area and population sizes including Dugarwa, Adi-Quala, Sen'afe and includes relatively unimportant towns and portal outposts such as Edi and Beilul.

The maps on **page 12** with links provided by the report also appear outdated.

- For example, the map with the following link (<http://www.geschichteinchronologie.ch/afrika/kol/Eritrea-Munzinger-d/012-karte-Eritrea.gif>) shows only 3 major roads, while there are 4 major roads that radiate from Asmara.
- Likewise, the map in the second link ([http://3.bp.blogspot.com/\\_NE-7ZZXuxg/RtQTj99dN8I/AAAAAAAAABec/craeyVasIGk/s320/eritrea.gif](http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_NE-7ZZXuxg/RtQTj99dN8I/AAAAAAAAABec/craeyVasIGk/s320/eritrea.gif)) is not readable at all.
- A more detailed map of the country can be found in the following [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/afrika/eritrea\\_ethiopia\\_2009.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/afrika/eritrea_ethiopia_2009.jpg)

<http://mappery.com/map-of/Eritrea-Physical-Map>

COIS: Accepted. More detailed maps will be used.

### 2: Economy

- 2.01: We believe that including the shadow exchange rates would also better reflect the



current economic situation in the country. Although, the rate varies, it is generally believed to be in the range of 1 USD for 35-40 Nakfas.

We had made similar comment in our 2010 COI review and the COIS agreed to look into reliable sources. The following source can be a starting document <http://assenna.com/nakfa-slips-to-economic-coma-2/>

COIS: Accepted. We look to add information about the shadow exchange rate. However, we are concerned that the source given is from 2009, and it is not certain that it reflects the current situation. If you are aware of alternative, more recent sources, we'd welcome seeing these.

2.02: On the importance of the remittances the paper of David Styan at: [http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Africa/2004\\_07eritrea.pdf](http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Africa/2004_07eritrea.pdf)

COIS: Accepted. We will use the information contained in the website quoted, assuming it remains relevant and is not superseded by other sources.

2.03: Even though, the COI does not aim for detailed economic analysis of Eritrea, we recommend the use of 2012 World Bank's Doing business report on Eritrea. This report particularly sheds new light into everyday challenges of business in Eritrea ranging from bureaucratic, infrastructure and services challenges of obtaining permits, credit, license etc. By providing meso and micro levels of analysis of business in Eritrea, we believe, that the WB report complements the Heritage Foundation's Economic Freedom Index. The report shows Eritrea's 2012 ranking of 180 from 183 countries is further 2 points down from its 2011.

COIS: Partly accepted. We will consider using the World Bank report but do not intend to enter into in-depth analysis of the economic climate.

2.04: With regard to the statement about land, it should be noted that state ownership of land has not displaced the customary land tenure system; the two rather co-exist. For example, while the regular allocation and redistribution of land in the villages for agricultural and residential use is mostly based on customary land tenure systems, the application of state laws guarantees that traditionally marginalized social groups such as women and migrants are also treated equally in the process of land redistribution.

More useful sources on land in Eritrea can be found from:

- Lyda Favali, Roy Pateman, 2003. Blood, Land, and Sex: Legal and Political Pluralism in Eritrea
- Sandra Fullerton Joireman (1996). The Minefield of Land Reform: Comments on the Eritrean Land Proclamation. *Africa Affairs*, (1996), 95

- A recent article of Dr. David O'Kane on village land issues can supplement this issue for the next report (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1754-9469.2012.01162.x/abstract>)

The ICG comment provides a useful perspective in analysing land and its role in the economy of the country. However, we believe that the main issue with land is rather the pattern of resource allocation and investment. Smallholder agriculture has been denied of labour and financial investment due to the government's investment focus on few agriculturally promising areas.

Further, forced evictions, resettlement of communities and government encroachment on traditional land-tenure systems have been recorded in the past.

Please refer:

[http://www.nharnet.org/April\\_2010/WA%20on%20Land%20day%20in%20Eritrea.pdf](http://www.nharnet.org/April_2010/WA%20on%20Land%20day%20in%20Eritrea.pdf)

On land evictions of the Kunama ethnic group: <http://assenna.com/recent-news-from-inside-eritrea-the-eritrean-dictatorial-regime-is-evicting-kunama-farmers-from-their-ancestral-farm-lands/>

In addition, HRW report 2009 mention also land eviction as a form of retaliation in case of desertion.

*General remark on the section on Economy:* An analysis of the economic situation of Eritrea cannot be complete without discussing how the policies in the country have affected poverty. The upshot of all these restrictive business and economic policies has been an increase in poverty, which had already been high with 69% of the population living below the poverty line (WB, <http://data.worldbank.org/country/eritrea>).

COIS: Accepted. See also comments above. We will consider using the sources quoted, though propose to keep this section relatively short.

## **History**

General comments:

We find that this section, which explores the historical development in Eritrea since the end of the Italian colonisation, is difficult to make sense of. In our understanding, this has to do with the way this section is organised (in themes or topic instead of a classic chronological presentation.) Events in 2009 for instance can be searched in 3 different sub-sections.

COIS: Partly accepted. We will review the history section in the next update to

make sure it is user friendly. However, we consider that thematic construction of the section makes it relatively straightforward for officials to understand the main and most relevant themes in Eritrea's recent history, perhaps more so than a conventional narrative. Users who wish to see a chronological order of events can make use of the timeline at the end of the report.

We'd welcome suggestions on how the section might be organised to more clearly and effectively cover Eritrea's recent history.

We urge COIS to use academic sources and quotes for the history and the timeline. For instance:

- On BMA and Federation:

- Tekeste, Negash (1997). *Eritrea and Ethiopia: the federal experience*. Uppsala, New Brunswick: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Transaction Publ.

- On ELF-EPLF liberation movements:

- Connell, Dan (1993). *Against all odds: a chronicle of the Eritrean revolution: with a new foreword on the postwar transition*. Lawrenceville, N.J.: Red Sea Press.
- Connell, Dan (2004). *Building a New Nation. Collected Articles on the Eritrean Revolution (1983-2002) Vol.2*. Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press.
- Pool, David (2001). *From guerrillas to government: the Eritrean People's Liberation Front*. Oxford: J. Currey ; Athens : Ohio University Press.

- pre/post-independence:

- Dorman, Sara Rich (2003). «Eritrea's Nation and State-building: Re-assessing the impact of "the struggle".» *QEH Working Paper Series*, (105): 19p.
- Dorman, Sara Rich (2005). «Past the Kalashnikov: Youth, politics and the state in Eritrea», in Abbink, John et Ineke van Kessel (éd.), *Vanguard or Vandals*. London, Boston: Brill, p. 189-204.
- Hepner, Tricia M. Redecker (2009). *Soldiers, Martyrs, Traitors, and Exiles. Political Conflict in Eritrea and the Diaspora*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Ruth, Iyob (1995). *The Eritrean struggle for independence: domination, resistance, nationalism, 1941-1993*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

- on the war with Ethiopia:

- Abbink, John (1998). «Briefing: the Eritrean-Ethiopian border dispute» *African affairs*, 97:389: pp 551-65.
- Negash, Tekeste et Kjetil Tronvoll (2000). *Brothers at war: making sense of the Eritrean-Ethiopian war*. Oxford etc.: J. Currey etc.

- on post-2001:

- Hepner, Tricia M. Redecker (2009). *Soldiers, Martyrs, Traitors, and Exiles*.

*Political Conflict in Eritrea and the Diaspora*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- O'Kane, David et Tricia M. Redeker Hepner, éd. (2009). *Biopolitics, militarism, and development : Eritrea in the twenty-first century*. New York: Berghahn Books.

COIS: Accepted. We will use academic sources where they are available to us: since we do not have subscriptions to academic databases we are reliant on open source material.

- 3.01: British Military Administration is officially between 1941 when the British army defeated the Italian army. On the same note, making an analysis of the period between 1949 and 1951 is misleading because the year 1949 does not represent any milestone in Eritrea's history.

There is also a factual error where it is mentioned the EPLF in 1972 was led by Osman Salah Sabbe. The founding and leadership of the EPLF was a complicated process not least because its split from the ELF had to be done secretly. However, from its founding Romadan Mohammednur and Isaias Afewerki, two of them having just returned from their studies in China, as well as a few others including many members of the G-15 currently in prison, run a vanguard party leading the EPLF in the field. Osman Salah Sabbe played very important role in uniting the different splinter factions of ELF too and was made the foreign officer head of EPLF because of his external connections and resource mobilization skills.

For more on this aspect of the EPLF's history, please refer to Dan Connel's, *Conversation with Eritrea's Political Prisoner* which presents a detailed narrative of the founding of the EPLF. Please also refer to the relevant academic sources mentioned above in the History Section.

COIS: Accepted. This will be considered in the next update.

### **POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS (1994 TO 2002)**

- 3.04: The turning point in Eritrea's political system came in 2001 with the abrupt ending of any democratic pretentions. Hence, it would be clearer to read and analyse if the section on political developments considers (1994-2001) instead of 2002.
- 3.05: Travel document might not be the most reliable sources for analysing political development in Eritrea during the period under consideration. As we recommended in the last COI report, there are well-researched and credible works including Dan Connel's, Gaim Kibreab and Roy Pateman.

COIS: Accepted. We will use these sources where they are available to us.

## RELATIONS WITH DJIBOUTI, SOMALIA AND SUDAN (2008 TO 2011)

- The broad conception of Eritrea's inter-state relations with neighbouring countries is commendable. However, we advise including the human dimension of such relations in the analysis. For example, what does Sudan-Eritrea abandoning visa requirements mean to population movement from the Eritrean side? What does improved Sudan-Eritrea security cooperation mean to the lives of Eritrean refugees living in Sudan mean? There have been numerous UNHCR reports about Eritrean refugees being deported back to their country by the Sudanese government.

Refer to (UN [News Service](#), *UN agency dismayed by Sudan's deportation of Eritrean refugees*, 18 October 2011, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4ea107a62.html> [accessed 7 October 2012] ; <http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-must-end-forced-returns-asylum-seekers-eritrea>)

- In the same manner Eritrean refugees in Djibouti have been subjected to inhumane treatment by the authorities in the country according to an assenna report. <http://assenna.com/eritreans-asylum-seekers-in-djibouti-call-for-an-urgent-help/>; <http://assenna.com/egs-jhd-eritrea-asylum-seekers-and-refugees-caught-and-shot-by-the-police-of-djibouti/>
- Further, the Arab-spring and the downfall of Gaddafi in late 2011 had repercussion on Eritrean refugees living in those North African countries. Many were caught in the civil war. Some fled to the Mediterranean of which some close to 400 people died in one ship (allegedly due to NATO's negligence), while thousands were relocated in Tunisia and Egypt.

Some reference on this can be found from

Amnesty International, *Egypt: Eritreans in Egypt at risk of forcible return*, 2 November 2011, MDE 12/055/2011, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4eb3e6832.html> [accessed 7 October 2012]

Amnesty International, *Tunisia must stop returning asylum-seekers to Libya*, 14 December 2011, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4fo574dd2.html> [accessed 7 October 2012]

The UNHCR also has the following report: Eritrean refugees arrive in Romanian emergency transit centre from Tunisia:

<http://www.unhcr.org/4daef2e39.html>

- <http://asmarino.com/press-releases/934-the-tragedy-of-the-eritrean-refugees-caught-up-in-the-libyan-uprising>

COIS: Accepted. Thank you for the source recommendations – this will be updated in the next edition.

- 3.17: The paragraph, ‘Ethiopia steps-up support for Eritrean rebels’ breaks the flow of the reading as it comes under ‘Relations with Djibouti, Sudan and Somalia.’ Better if it is put under the theme of ‘war and border dispute with Ethiopia (1998-2009) by prolonging the period to include 2011’.

COIS: Accepted. This will be altered for the next edition.

#### 4: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS (DECEMBER 2011 TO JULY 2012)

- Eritrean government is forcing people as old as 80 year olds to carry guns. This started around June 2012 and is being rigorously enforced. People avoiding to carry weapons are being systematically forced by withdrawing of their family’s food and fuel rations. The following is an assenna.com link in Tigrigna as English version is not available.

<http://assenna.com/%E1%8A%A3%E1%89%A5-%E1%8B%B5%E1%89%A3%E1%88%AD%E1%8B%8B-%E1%8A%A3%E1%89%A5-%E1%8B%9D%E1%89%B0%E1%8C%88%E1%89%A5%E1%88%A8-%E1%8A%93%E1%8B%AD-%E1%8A%A3%E1%8B%98%E1%8B%9D%E1%89%B2-%E1%88%B0%E1%88%AB/>

COIS: Many thanks for the link. However we are unable to translate documents from Tigrinya unless there are exceptional reasons for doing so – do you consider information vital, or are there alternatives to illustrate the point.

- Various youth opposition groups and civic movements held conference in DebreZeit (Ethiopia) and founded EYSNS (Eritrean Youth Solidarity for National Salvation).
- The UN Human Rights Council issues a resolution against the human rights violations in Eritrea and designates a special rapporteur. UN Human Rights

Council, *Situation of human rights in the Eritrea : resolution / adopted by the Human Rights Council* , 17 July 2012, A/HRC/RES/20/20, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/5016606e2.html> [accessed 7 October 2012]

COIS: Accepted. We will make amendments to this section as recommended, and use new sources.

## **6: POLITICAL SYSTEM**

6.01: In addition to those ministries listed in the report, the Ministry of National Development, which was set-up in 2003 with presidential directive but without any legislation can be added. For a list of Eritrean Ministries check: <http://www.eritrea.be/old/eritrea-government.htm>

COIS: Accepted. We will consider using information contained in this website.

6.02: this quote is too large and not easy to read. The paragraph should be limited to information about the structure and the political system...: government and ministries, Party, Army.

COIS: Not accepted. We think the paragraphs provide a useful insight the political system but we will review the source and section for the next update to ensure it is user-friendly and relevant.

## **7: HUMAN RIGHTS**

7.05: For discussion of Eritrea's progress in democratization, regular reports of monitoring organizations such as the MO Ibrahim Index and the Bertlestmanne Transformation Index (BTI) can also be useful sources.

COIS: Accepted. We will consider using these sources.

## **8: SECURITY FORCES**

8.02: The CIA figure of 2.7 million military reservists and military conscripts seems far bigger than most other estimates. Considering the fact that there are estimated 4 million resident population in Eritrea, close to 1 million being in the Diaspora, we agree with the figures 600,000 put by BTI 2012 and Gaim's 900,000 of men and women being in the army and increasing (Gaim, *The Eritrean National Service: a missed opportunity*. CDRIE, p.43 2009). As there has not been any significant demobilization from the army, we expect that the active service personnel to be roughly the same with the reservists.

We believe that many of the assessments on Eritrea's size of national service do not take into account the number of deserters, the UNHCR having already put

the number of those who fled recently at more than quarter a million.

COIS: Accepted. We will use other estimates of the size of the armed forces alongside that of the World Factbook, but there is a distinction to be drawn between reservists and conscripts, and full time members of the armed forces, especially in light of national service. We will look to provide more definition between the groups in the next update.

## 9: National Service

For this section, we recommend that the report aim at making clear distinction between civil and military components of the national service. Even though there are several overlaps between the two, there are also considerable differences and making such a distinction helps against making sweeping conclusions about the National Service program and to better understand it.

For further reference:

Gaim, Kibreab (2009). «Forced labour in Eritrea» *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 47(1): 41-72.

Bozzini, David (2011). «Low-Tech State Surveillance: The Production of Uncertainty among Conscripts in Eritrea» *Surveillance and Society*, 9(1/2): 93-113.

Bozzini, David (2012). National Service and State Institutions in Eritrea Agreed Minutes. 16th February Confederation, Federal Office of Migration. Country Analysis. Swiss. Bern: 12.

COIS: Thank you for these sources – we will look to use them where they are available to us. Would you be able to provide copies of these papers?

9.01: The BTI (2012) gives a rough number of 600,000 men and women being in the army.

COIS: Accepted. There are various figures given by different sources – we will look to include a range of estimates in the next update.

9.02: National Service officially started in 1994 instead of 1993 (Gaim Kibreab, 2009. Forced labour in Eritrea. *JMAS*).

9.03: However, national service was being implemented before 1994 albeit on a limited scale and on voluntary basis. The pre-1994 period mainly involved educated people deployed in the immediate national reconstruction program and on a bigger scale at conducting the Eritrean referendum. Quoting an Eritrea profile 1998 report, Sara Dorman, mentions that National Service was taking place in before 1994 where mainly returnee youth voluntarily worked for the state. Refer to Sara Rich Dorman, “*Youth, the State, and Politics in Post-*



*Liberation Eritrea*". Paper presented at the African Studies Seminar, University of Edinburgh, February 2003.

COIS: In both of these cases, we will include both the suggested and the current information where it is available to us.

### **National Service Proclamation 82/1995**

General remark: It should be noted that there are many other proclamations: 11/1991; 82/1995; 89/1996 on the NS itself or other aspects related with it.

We had also made similar remark in our COI 2010 review.

COIS: Accepted. We will make reference to the proclamations and highlight any areas where they have superseded 82/1995.

- 9.16: The Mahtot should not be conflated with NS although it started at the same time. Some reference about program (<http://www.shabait.com/articles/nation-building/10387-reviving-the-green-eritrea>)

COIS: Accepted. Thank you. We will include this information if still relevant in the next update.

- 9.17: This remark should be qualified as in deed there are differences between military service and civil national service in wages and other opportunities enjoyed.

Those in the civil national service, for example, professionals mostly graduates of the higher education can receive salary increment after their nominal demobilization.

I should, however, be noted that demobilization does not necessarily mean release as often it merely is remobilization in the civil national service. Please refer, Bozzini, David (2012). National Service and State Institutions in Eritrea Agreed Minutes. 16th February. Confederation, Federal Office of Migration. Country Analysis. Swiss. Bern: 12p.

COIS: Accepted. Thank you. We will include this information is still relevant in the next update.

- 9.18: The Ministry of Defence is mainly in charge of military deployment of conscripts both from Sawa and other training camps.
- The Human Resource department in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Defence jointly assign and reassign into the national service students who finished their university/college studies.

The involvement of other ministries in the National Service deployment is mainly in presenting the quality and quantity of their manpower needs or quotas.

Please refer to:

- e. 23.05.2011. <http://doc.rero.ch/record/25005>
- Bozzini, David (2012). National Service and State Institutions in Eritrea Agreed Minutes. 16th February Confederation, Federal Office of Migration. Country Analysis. Swiss. Bern: 12p.

COIS: Accepted. Thank you. We will include this information is still relevant in the next update.

- 9.19: Regarding the national service labour deployment, in addition to those assignments in civil and military sectors as well as party-affiliated enterprises, foreign investors are also being increasingly supplied with cheap national service labour. Even though the cheap labour abuses of investments by the Qatari government mainly summer residence buildings, hotels and airport in Dahlak Island are well-known, they are not documented. However, labour abuses in the growing mining industries are being documented.

Please refer to: <http://hrc-eritrea.org/?p=379>;

COIS: Accepted. Thank you. We will look to include this information.

- 9.23: This practice has long been abandoned. Students were required to pay a certain amount of money to go to Sawa, because they were considered to be leaving to complete their education, even though that's also the time they undergo military training. This fee seems to have been abolished after parents' complained of the exorbitant rate.

(The awate.com and assenna.com news about the initial fees to Warsai Yikealo Secondary School are dated and not anymore available in the website.

The fee is 150 Nakfa for the first year of national service and increases to 500Nakfa per month in the second year.

*Gaim, Kibreab (2009). «Forced labour in Eritrea» Journal of Modern African Studies, 47(1): 41-72.*

- 9.24: The data on National Service conscripts receiving 50 Nakfa (ERN) is -dated. This needs updating. Please refer to the preceding comment on 9.23
- These 'professionals,' in deed receive salaries if they had been enrolled in to the

National Service before the 14th round, which was the last of the rounds to be demobilized before the demobilization and reintegration program stopped.  
(source)

- Their salaries follow the CPA scale, that is, 1450 gross for BA/BSc holders, 1,250 Nakfa for diploma holders etc.

Please refer to the footnotes in Gaim Kibreab, 2009. Forced Labour in Eritrea, *JMAS*, 2009)

COIS: Accepted. Thank you. We will update this section in light of the information above, subject to being able to access it.

- 9.25: This information needs to be qualified. National Service members until the 14th round (who had been demobilized) receive salaries. Their salary scale is listed in Gaim Kibreab, 2009. Forced labour in Eritrea, *JMAS*

COIS: Accepted. Thank you. We will include this information.

- 9.28: The quotes from Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights report and Amnesty International discuss two different things and should not be lumped together. Whereas the two years punishment mentioned by Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights report applies to draft evaders. The punishment by commanders described by Amnesty International, however, applies to those already conscripted but had deserted the army.

COIS: This will be clarified in the next update.

- 9.30: The application of this punishment depends entirely on the whims of local administrators and varies from one area to the other. It is not entirely abolished in the same way that it was not even uniformly applied in the first place. There are still areas that practice this punishment.

Please refer to Bozzini, David (2012). National Service and State Institutions in Eritrea Agreed Minutes. 16th February Confederation, Federal Office of Migration. Country Analysis. Swiss. Bern: 12p.

- 9.33-9.37: About *Giffas* please refer to: Bozzini, David (2011). «Low-Tech State Surveillance: The Production of Uncertainty among Conscripts in Eritrea.» *Surveillance and Society*, 9(1/2): 93-113.  
<http://library.queensu.ca/ojs/index.php/surveillance-and-society/article/view/low-tech>

- 9.42: Likewise, students from Main Nefhi and other colleges have regularly been asked to present themselves to their assigned army units for ‘familiarization’ and ‘retraining’ and take part in Warsay-Yikealo development projects, which include

harvesting and construction work.

Refer to

e. <http://doc.rero.ch/record/25005>

A similar statement was made on our last review and the IAGCI had agreed to update its next Report.

COIS: Accepted. Thank you. We will include this information, where it is available, in the next update.

- 9.50: *'lewt'* meaning 'change' in Tigrigna is a walking disorder where mostly young women in military training suddenly walk two steps backwards. This, however, is treated as temporary malaise and doesn't entitle recruits for exemption from national service except may be temporary relief from military training.
- 9.56: There is variation in the sources as regards the age of the NS. Women older than 27 years do not generally do NS. However, caution is needed that women who entered NS before 27 years of age are not necessarily and automatically demobilized up on reaching the age of 27.

e. <http://doc.rero.ch/record/25005>

As well as Bozzini, David (2012). National Service and State Institutions in Eritrea Agreed Minutes. 16th February Confederation, Federal Office of Migration. Country Analysis. Swiss. Bern: 12p.

- 9.57: The Awate link to this report is not available

We believe that an awate article on 'education in Eritrea' might not be the best reference about demobilization program in Eritrea. As the distinction between demobilization and total release from national Service is very important, we advise you to refer to the agreed minutes and the Phd thesis by Dr. David Bozzini which has been cited in this review already.

We recommend using the following source, <http://www.ehrea.org/o8i.pdf>, to get detailed analysis of the demobilization and reintegration program

COIS: Accepted. The new sources will be used to add greater clarification to the national/military service section where these are accessible to us.

## 10: Judiciary

- 10.01: With regard to the levels of court structure, some argue that they are four and not three as stated in this report. They mention the community, regional, High court and Courts of Appellate (Andemariam, S., 2011. Ensuring access to Justice

through Community courts. Working paper No.3)

- The community court was established in 2003 through a proclamation. The proclamation, 132/2003, was issued on 22 September 2003 and entered into force on 1 November 2003.

Similar correction was made in our 2010 COI review and the COIS had agreed to correct.

- The reference to three '*judges*' in the community court needs further clarification. Members of the community court bench are all commonly referred to as "*judges*," even though Proclamation 132/2003 states that there is one judge and two *nebaro*, translated in Tigigna as sitters. Further the proclamation outlines some differences in the powers of a judge and *nebaro*.

For example, witnesses can be heard if at least one of the two *nebaro* is present but not if the judge is absent.

For further information on the mandate, structure and administration of the community court please refer (Andemariam, S., 2011. Ensuring access to Justice through Community courts. Working paper No.3)

David Bozzini on community courts:

[http://www.davidbozzini.org/works/publications/bozzini\\_troubled\\_judicial.pdf](http://www.davidbozzini.org/works/publications/bozzini_troubled_judicial.pdf)

We had provided additional sources on Community courts in our previous review as well.

- With regard to the lack of legal knowledge of the community court and *nabaras*, some have argued that keeping Community Court judges and *nebaros* without any substantive legal training is necessary to allow the development and functioning of the customary laws. Otherwise, the latter will be undermined by the modern courts established for its incorporation.
- The Ministry of Justice has, however, been engaged in capacity development programs of community court judges since the establishment of the Court system. [[77]]

Refer to Kibrom and Luwam, Introduction to Eritrea's legal system and research. Retrieved from

<http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/Eritrea.htm>

- The attractiveness of the community courts comes mainly from the fact that they reduce significantly the distance, time/cost and linguistic barrier between the courts and the disputants, which was the case before the establishment of the

community courts

Please Refer to Andemariam, S., 2011. Ensuring access to Justice through Community courts. Working paper No.3).

10.03: “The civilian court system consists of village courts, sub-regional courts, regional courts,” It should be noted that the establishment of community courts dissolved sub-regional courts, as stated in art 2(c) of Proclamation 133/2003, which amended the jurisdictions of Eritrean courts.

The establishment of community courts in fact provides that all criminal matters that had previously been under the jurisdiction of sub-regional courts were to fall under the jurisdiction of regional courts.

For further information please refer to Andemariam, S., 2011. Ensuring access to Justice through Community courts. Working paper No.3.

- With regard to village courts, it should be noted that the reference is rather for community courts, which can be in the village or for a group of villages.

A community court can be found in or near the district administration in any big city in Eritrea, or even in a popular spot, or under the shade of the largest tree in a very remote village.

For further information please refer to Andemariam, S., 2011. Ensuring access to Justice through Community courts. Working paper No.3.

COIS: Accepted. We will use new sources, where accessible, to provide greater clarification. In regard to comments made in the previous review but not implemented, this in part reflects difficulties we have faced in accessing online sources, in particular academic or non-English text.

## **12: Prison and Detention centre conditions**

12:06 The [www.awate.com](http://www.awate.com) link is not available.

Halhalas must be Halhale, a location south of Asmara. The spelling matters here as there are two places in Eritrea by the same name.

Wenjel Märmära<sup>7</sup> This is the current Head Office of the National Security Agency. This Office also runs another Office/prison facility at the former Keren Hotel.

---

7 <http://www.asmarino.com/press-releases/593-eritrea-continues-to-hold-thousands-of-prisoners-of-faith->

<http://asmarino.com/en/interactive/346-the-map-of-terror-in-eritrea->

The following web link also gives the location of the prisons in Eritrea with satellite views:

Similar comments were made in our 2010 Review as well and the COIS had agreed to amend.

COIS: Accepted. We will look at the information in the Asmarino website and consider using it.

#### **14: Political Affiliation**

General remark: The Eritrean political scene in the Diaspora has seen the multiplication of political Opposition groups and unaffiliated political and humanitarian activists. This section of the COI could be enriched by considering the activities of civic and humanitarian groups unaffiliated with the political opposition groups. Prominent among these groups is the Eritrean Youth Solidarity for Change whose institutional, organization setup and voice has been on the rise mainly with the use of social media outlets.

More on this, please refer to <http://assenna.com/list-of-youth-associations-and-media/>

Actions have recently emerged from the diaspora and especially the so-called youth groups; actions such as: *arbi harnet*, the death notice, erena radio program broadcasted by satellite in eritrea among others.

we can provide some few websites among others:

- <http://www.eysc.net>

- <http://smerrr.net>

It should also be noted that in addition to the organizations mentioned above, individual human rights and civic activists play important roles especially in the Diaspora.

COIS: Partly accepted. While we accept there is an overlap between political and civic groups, we'll focus on overtly political organisations in this section and cross refer with the Human rights institutions section. We will also make it clear that the issue of freedom of expression is one that affects and links political and human rights activists and media workers.

We'll add detail of the NGO groups in the HRIs section.

#### **15: Freedom of speech and media**

15.04: Reporters without borders on 31/08/2012 reported that 3 more journalists had

been confirmed dead in prison.

COIS: Accepted. We will consider using the new information from Reporters without Borders.

## **Media Organizations**

15:05: *Hadas Ertra* is published every day except Monday.

Refer to [www.shabait.com](http://www.shabait.com)

This had been corrected in 2010 review. Check with shabait.com

15.09: Refer to comment 15.04 for update on journalists' death

COIS: Accepted. We will make amendments to this section as recommended.

## **16: Human Rights Organizations**

16.01: Human rights organizations are being conflated for humanitarian organizations such as the WFP, UNICEF etc. in the quote and the text is slightly unclear. Without going into the semantic discussions, for practical policy purposes the government of Eritrean is less hostile to humanitarian organizations (such as when it appealed for their help following the 2002-2003 draught) than to human rights organizations whatever their nature. We urge the COIS to quote other sources which discuss Human rights organizations specifically.

COIS: Accepted. We will distinguish between these groups/activists and look to use other sources to provide greater clarification in this section.

## **17: Corruption**

17.03: In addition to the government's control over foreign exchange, the use of permit for imports gives it total control over imports and importers into the country. For example, anyone wishing to import building materials had to obtain first the authorization from the ministry of Public works and then a permit from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, according to Article 3 (1) of the Legal Notice No.7812003

For further information on this, please refer to the entire document of Legal Notice No.7812003 found at <http://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/eri42427E.pdf>

COIS: thank you for the information/source.

17.04: We believe that mentioning the CPI for 2011 alone is not adequate in giving a full



picture of the trend of corruption in the country. More important is that Eritrea's CPI score deteriorated further from 2.6 in 2010 to 2.5 in 2011.

In addition to the Transparency International's CPI, the World Bank's governance Indicator also gives a measure of corruption. Please refer [http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/mc\\_chart.asp](http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/mc_chart.asp)

Finally, it should be noted that the country is not known to be a party to any international anti-corruption agreements, according to the state Department's *2011 Investment Climate Statement - Eritrea*

COIS: Accepted. We will use new sources to provide greater clarification to this section.

## **18: Religious Freedom**

We note that our last recommendation on restrictions of religious liberties of Muslim radicals is updated in this COI.

## **19: Ethnic groups**

Additional insights on the Jeberty case for a separate ethnic group can be found at <http://www.jeberti.com/pdf/Salih%20%20Abdellah%20%20%28TGRINYA%29%2027-8-2011.pdf>

COIS: Accepted. We will consider using information from the website quoted.

## **21: Women's Rights**

21.01: Regarding abortion, the UN notes that Eritrea doesn't allow abortion for pregnancy that results from rape or incest, or foetus impairment. (UN Women, 2011-2012. Progress of the world's women: In pursuit of Justice: 2012')

21.06: Regarding womens' socio-economic rights, Ravindeera Rena's work 'Women and Economic Emancipation in Eritrea, 2007' can give some insights, even though we have issues about the balance of this work. Ravindeera, R., 2007. 'Women and Economic Emancipation in Eritrea. Osun State (Nigeria): *Gender and Behaviour*, Vol. 5. No.1 (June), pp. 1082-1088. Retrieved from [http://mpr.a.ub.uni-muenchen.de/12420/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_12420.pdf](http://mpr.a.ub.uni-muenchen.de/12420/1/MPRA_paper_12420.pdf)

On the same topic, perhaps one of the most serious setbacks to women's social advancement is their retreat in educational opportunities. Some have noted

decline in women's secondary and post-secondary school enrolment as more and more women drop out of school to avoid draft.

Refer to Militarization of education in Eritrea found in <http://redsea1.websitetoolbox.com/post?id=4628951&goto=nextnewest>).

- Regarding contraceptive prevalence rate reported to be 8% for 2010 in the table, the Lancet gives an updated figure of 9.1% for 2011 (Saifuddin Ahmed, et al. 2012. Maternal deaths averted by contraceptive use: an analysis of 172 countries. *The Lancet*, 2012, Vol 380). Yet this is still one of the lowest in Africa being only higher than Sudan, Angola, Chad, Mali and Sierra Leone.
- A Lancet Report also finds that in 2011 Eritrea scored the highest levels of maternal mortality in the world along with Liberia, Burundi and Afghanistan

*General remark:* the table on the socio-economic and demographic indicators of women doesn't show trend, whether it is an increasing or decreasing. Comparison should be made with previous reports and rankings.

COIS: Accepted. We will make amendments to this section as recommended and where this information is available to us.

## **Violence against women**

21.16: This remark is based on a survey conducted by the NGOs Haben and Care in 2002. This *Needs updating*.

21.17-21-20 More on women in National service from Bozzini, David (2012). National Service and State Institutions in Eritrea Agreed Minutes. 16th February Confederation, Federal Office of Migration. Country Analysis. Swiss. Bern: 12p.

**Protection:** This section is discusses violence against women and not about their 'protection' and should be considered with the preceding section 'violence against women'

21.21: There is some inconsistency here saying the government takes firm public stance against domestic violence and then saying that it has failed to protect women from violence.

21.22: The country's record of contraceptive use is only better than that of Sudan, Chad and Angola (UNDP/UNECA/ADB, Assessing Africa's Progress towards the MDG, 2011). Please also refer to comment no. 21.06 above.

COIS: Accepted. We will make amendments to this section as recommended.

## **22: Children**

- 22.15: “Children in apprenticeships may engage in hazardous work if NOT supervised”. Please, correct.
- 21.18: “Secondary education, beginning at 12 years of age, last for up to six years is incorrect. It should be corrected as Middle school, which starts at age 12 or grades 6 through 8.
- 21.20: Education above grade 7, required nominal fee” should be corrected as ‘education above grade 8”, which is officially the end of the middle-school
- 22.21: The Institute of Higher Education should not be clumped under Children's rights
- Eritrean Institute of Technology (Mai-Nefhi) is also called College of Sciences and Engineering

COIS: Accepted – it would be helpful to see links to this information.

## Trafficking

- 23.01: The trafficking of persons from Eritrea to the Gulf states is not limited to adults only but also involves children.

Please refer to Estifanos and Mekonnen who document the Eritrean government's participation in trafficking of child jockeys to the Gulf States  
Mekonnen, Daniel Rezene and Estefanos, Meron, *From Sawa to the Sinai Desert: The Eritrean Tragedy of Human Trafficking* (November 30, 2011).  
Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2055303> or  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2055303>

Also a new report of EEPA "human trafficking in sinai"  
<http://www.eepa.be/wcm/human-rights/3177-human-trafficking-in-the-sinai-refugees-between-life-and-death.html>> can be useful

- 23.02: There is an increased literature that implicates the government in the escalating human trafficking of Eritreans to the Bedouin in the Sinai.

Please refer to the report by the Somali Eritrean Monitoring Group as well as Estifanos and Mekonnen (2011) cited on 23.01 above.

COIS: Accepted. We will consider using the sources quoted.

## Medical Issues

- 24.01: “37% of the population lives below the poverty line” is incorrect. Most sources put the figures at above 50%, with the World Bank in fact putting it at 69% at national level and 53% for rural poverty  
(<http://data.worldbank.org/country/eritrea>).

COIS: Accepted. Thank you. We will revise this.

- Regarding Eritrea's health infrastructure, the country's health infrastructure "comprises 369 health facilities, including 13 tertiary hospitals, 13 secondary hospitals and 343 primary level facilities (health centres, health stations, Maternal and Child Health units and Clinics, clinics and health posts) [5]. There are 292 licensed private pharmaceutical institutions, including 33 pharmacies, 31 drug shops and 228 rural drug vendors [6]. The health infrastructure is operated by 215 physicians, 2505 nursing and midwifery personnel, 16 dentistry personnel, 107 pharmaceutical personnel, and 88 environment and public health workers [7

Please refer to Kirgia, J., Zere, E., Akazili, J., 2012. National health financing policy in Eritrea: a survey of preliminary considerations *BMC International Health and Human Rights* 2012, **12**:16

- In addition there are 7 maternal and child-health care services nation-wide.

Source: World Bank, 2007. Eritrea: Education and Health Expenditure Review. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/7952>

- Where it says "Secondary level care includes first-contact hospitals at the *local level* - known as sub zoba hospitals," it should be corrected as regional-level referral hospitals, not local level contacts.

Please refer ODI, 2011. Progress in health in Eritrea. ODI. Retrieved from [http://www.developmentprogress.org/sites/developmentprogress.org/files/resource\\_report/eritrea\\_-\\_master\\_o.pdf](http://www.developmentprogress.org/sites/developmentprogress.org/files/resource_report/eritrea_-_master_o.pdf)

- Regarding healthcare provider other than public, more important providers of health-care are faith-based providers, which amount to around 40% of the country's health-care provision.

Source, ODI 2011 (cited above); WB, 2007. Eritrea: Education and Health Expenditure Review both cited above

- Private healthcare outlets had been order to close in 2010 (<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,ERI,,4fc75aa141,o.html>). Recently believed to have been allowed to reopen.

24.02: Where it says "Eritrea has only one doctor per 10,000 people", the WB puts the number at one doctor to 20,000 patients.

Please refer WB, 2007. Eritrea: Education and Health Expenditure Review

24.06: Even though various facilities are available, so far only a quarter of those people in need of treatment receive ART. (UNAIDS, <http://www.unaidsrstes.org/region/countries/eritrea>)

24.10: The healthcare budget allocated for mental health is roughly around 5%

Please refer to Gebrat, Y., et al. (DNK): Bottlenecks in the provision of quality mental health services in Eritrea (<http://www.ajol.info/index.php/jema/article/viewFile/49621/35950>) also in WHO ([http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/eritrea\\_who\\_aims\\_report2.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/eritrea_who_aims_report2.pdf))

- Even though, actual treatment of severe mental disorders is available at the primary level, not mental health specialized unit exists at the primary health care level.

It should be noted that there are no physician-based primary health clinics in the country, and in the case of mental health less than 20% health doctors and non-physicians made at least a monthly referral to a mental health professional. (WHO, 2006)

26.08-09: references on AMCE should be read as *amitshe*  
Jennifer Riggan: *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, Vol. 34, Number 1, pps. 131–154.  
DOI: 10.1111/j.1555-2934.2011.01143.x.

COIS: Accepted. We will make amendments to this section as recommended, and use new sources.

## **28: Exit and return**

### **Failed Asylum Seekers and Refugees**

28.11: In addition to the inhumane treatment accorded to forcibly returned Eritreans, the gov't can also completely refuse them entry to the country as the Eritrean Ambassador to Israel made it clear.  
VOA Interview with Eritrea's Ambassador to Israel, June 2012  
<http://www.tesfanews.net/archives/1099>

COIS: Accepted. We will revise this section in light of the above.

## **29: Humanitarian Issues**

*General remark:* One main indicator of an existing humanitarian situation is the scale of malnutrition. The Global Hunger Index 2011 notes that Eritrea along

with Haiti, Burundi has the highest proportion of undernourished people – more than 50 percent of the population.

29.02: The IRIN report quoted doesn't reflect the humanitarian situation in Eritrea, rather the humanitarian situation that might arise from the massive flow of Eritrean refugees to Ethiopia at a time when the horn of Africa region is in crisis. The part of the report which is not presented in this COI, actually states that the majority of the Eritrean refugees flocking to Ethiopia were single, educated men who were escaping forced conscription but does not say humanitarian crisis in Eritrea.

COIS: Accepted. We will use these new sources to provide more information to this section.

## Chronology

1995: There were 9 administrative regions during colonial rule. The 10 administrative region was introduced by EPLF which treated Asmara as a stand-alone region than being merged with Hamassien

COIS: Thank you – would it be possible to provide weblinks that contain this information?

## Annex C

### Prominent People

- Minister Berhane Abrehe, Former Minister of Finance reportedly 'frozen' in August.  
<http://assenna.com/%E1%88%9A%E1%8A%92%E1%88%B5%E1%89%B0%E1%88%AD-%E1%8D%8B%E1%8B%AD%E1%8A%93%E1%8A%95%E1%88%B5-%E1%8A%A3%E1%89%B6-%E1%89%A5%E1%88%AD%E1%88%83%E1%8A%90-%E1%8A%A3%E1%89%A5%E1%88%A8%E1%88%80-%E1%8A%AB/>
- The Ministry of Trade and Industry is now headed by Mr. Estifanos Habte since 2010 and not by Dr. Giorghis Teklemichael
- Mr. Saleh Mekki, former Minister of Maritime Resources and Fisheries is deceased. Current Minister is Tewelde Keleta
- The Ministry of Construction, should be read as the Ministry of Public Works
- A comprehensive list of current and past Eritrean leadership can be found from the following source:  
<http://www.jeberti.com/pdf/Salih%20%20Abdellah%20%20%28TGRINYA%29%2027-8-2011.pdf>

COIS: Accepted. We will make amendments to this section as recommended, and use new sources.

**(OCTOBER, 20)**