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**አስተያየት**  
**Opinion | رأي**  
**The BBC's very own fake news!**

*The BBC are once again at it! Broadcasting what I can only call their very own fake news for the 57<sup>th</sup> year running:*

*"Emperor Haile Sellassie had annexed Eritrea in 1962, against the will of the Eritrean people!"*

*I mention here the BBC because they are, to my knowledge, one of the few media groups anywhere in the World to consistently remind their listeners of this particular piece. Others have long chosen to avoid it, as it is highly dubious to say the least, or because it has lost any relevance today, and more importantly because the end result of independence has been catastrophic for everyone, including the West.*

*Returning to the "fake news" side of the issue: Emperor Haile Sellassie did not "annex" Eritrea; he did not need to do so. It was the democratically elected Eritrean parliament, the Bayto, which in 1962 unanimously voted the motion calling for the pure and simple reunification of Eritrea with the motherland Ethiopia. The Emperor merely enacted their democratic decision into law by signing the proclamation order on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November of that same year. Eritrea had in those days a proper Parliament (which it never had since "independence"), a proper Constitution (which it never had since "independence"), proper elections too (which it never had since "independence").*

*The British monarch Queen Elizabeth II visited Ethiopia in 1965, and on the same occasion honoured the inhabitants of Eritrea - now the 14<sup>th</sup> Province of Ethiopia - by paying them a visit, to*

*their great satisfaction (footages are available, courtesy of Youtube.com).*

*We may accuse emperor Haile Sellassie of many misdeeds, including autocracy; but "annexation of Eritrea" does simply not stand scrutiny. True, there were regional and global powers which, for their own geo-political gains, opposed the reunification of Eritrea with Ethiopia, as this would give anti-colonialist Ethiopia direct access to the Red Sea. These inimical or even adversarial forces did succeed finally in achieving the "independence" of Eritrea in 1995; but this has since turned into a nightmare situation for all involved; especially for the hundreds of thousands of Eritrean families that have simply disintegrated through death, human trafficking and emigration, famine, imprisonment, disappearances, ...*

*At a time when even the Eritrean regime comes to its senses, and decides to engage with the Ethiopian people to rebuild a common future of peace, unity and prosperity, how is it that the BBC fail to notice it and keep on repeating the same absurdity? When the Eritrean regime reopened the border with the rest of Ethiopia late in 2018, Eritreans gate-crashed border control: in the space of six months, an estimated 300'000 Eritreans had already crossed over, out of a population of less than 2.5 million. The regime has since tried half-heartedly to close back the floodgates, but to no avail.*

*Only a black thread on the map separates now Eritrea from the rest of Ethiopia: on the ground nature is taking its course, and the BBC cannot do anything about it, except perhaps continue in their annual ritual, come what may! Even long after the ultimate peaceful reunification ...*

*Rezene, London.*