

## What does it take to get the helicopters back? By Yilma Bekele

Normally regimes do not lose such an important asset just like that. Fighter jets or helicopters just do not fly out of the coop so easily. But we are talking about Ethiopia here and no matter how you look at it ours is not a normal regime. Six percent of any group do not control hundred percent of the decision making. Even in business it requires fifty plus one to have a controlling interest.

Those rules do not apply in our country. The six percent have guns. This is where the rule of the jungle trumps the rule of law. Just like as in the movie 'The God Father' they have offered the people a deal they just can't refuse. When the question asked is your life or your silence I am afraid most sane people would choose to live another day. Losing a fighter helicopter should be seen in that context.

The population expresses its disgust with the regime in many different ways. We are witnessing many creative and daring ways our people have chosen to part ways with Woyane bastards. It is unfortunate a lot sacrifice their life trying to get away. Not a month passes without a mention of a boat capsizing in the Red Sea. Ethiopians, Eritreans and Somalis are victims of unscrupulous smugglers overloading the boat, I just hope they go down with their victims. Southern African countries are full of Ethiopians that are defying all odds and walking the jungles to reach the promised land of South Africa.

It looks like members of the Ethiopian Air Force have found a better way of travelling. It is a little confusing to think such highly trained individuals would abandon all that privilege and decide to leave a life of comfort. It is doubly perplexing to think the individuals that were forced to leave friends and family behind are members of the six percent that are assured a life of riches and fame. It just shows that there are some that have conscience and no matter how high the promise they would not sell their soul to the highest bidder. They silenced the idiot narrow tribalist among us. All is not lost.

Of course how could we forget the brave Ethiopian Airlines co-pilot that hijacked his own plane and forced it to land in Geneva? In Ethiopian Airlines the Air Marshals sit in the cockpit, forget the passengers the crew is what they are watching. Thus it was not a surprise that our Air Force pilots flew a fighter helicopter to Asmara and asked for political asylum. The whole world thought it was big deal. As usual we Ethiopians were not surprised. There is no dull day in Woyane land.

The Ethiopian Government did not waste time explaining the situation and as usual it just did not make sense. Their propaganda department has a very low opinion of the citizen and makes a story that for any thinking individual does not add up. Lying is part of Woyane DNA. The lying gene is what qualifies a person to be accepted into the criminal organization. If you do not believe me ask Dr. Tedros Adhanom the Foreign Minister, he is the one that administers the test. Every recruit today is expected to watch all interviews the good doctor gives to sharpen his lying skills. Dr. Tedros makes any Woyane cry with great finesse he can declare black to be white.

"The military helicopter landed in Eritrea, flown by a traitor pilot who forced both his co-pilot and a technician while they took part in a training exercise," the report said, citing a defense ministry statement. You see how absurd that is. The only way that could happen is if the pilot shot those two and that did not happen. The last we heard all there are well and alive in Asmara. Why did Woyane make such an outrageous statement? Bad habit is difficult to get rid of. They get away with declaring double digit economic growth, ninety six percent margin in election victory thus a lie about a pilot forcing two comrades is nothing to be excited about.

So now how to get your helicopter back is not a simple question. I am sure the Eritrean Government is waiting to see how Woyane would go about asking the question. You see there are a few issues to settle before the helicopter makes a return trip. I am not privy to the details but as a lay person and a simple business man I have been thinking about the issue and trying to contemplate ways to help my dear Woyane tormentors. First thing is it has to be asked in a civilized manner. No threats, no condemnations and no smart aleck comments. For starters I would suggest something like 'Please may we have our helicopters back? Will go a long way. Of course it would take a while for the Eritrean government to respond to such a request,

There is no international protocols in the book for such incident. It takes time for the request to go through the proper channels until it reaches the President of Eritrea. He would have to discuss with the appropriate departments and prepare the bill. What bill you might ask? Well my friend it is just like if you get your car towed and you go the next day to pick it up I am sure you are aware there is the issue of the bill before you get your auto back. This is close but a little bit more.

For starters there is the issue of crossing an international border without permission. There is a fine involved. The Eritrean government has included such fee in their budget. When the Eritrean Government found out there is a fighter helicopter crossing and on its way to Asmara I am sure they activated their defense system to meet the threat, somebody has to pay for the overtime wages involved. Every day the helicopter has been sitting in Asmara there is parking and storage fees. There is a fee to disconnect the batteries or starting the motors every two days to make sure when the time comes everything would work.

On the Ethiopian government side the biggest headache has been trying to find trustworthy pilots that would fly it back without making an unscheduled stop someplace else. There is also the issue of delivering fuel to fly the machines back. The Eritrean government has made it clear fuel is in short supply and they are not obligated to refill the tank.

Every day the helicopter is in Eritrea the bill is accumulating. Pretty soon the parking and other fees are going to be more than the value of the helicopter. Eritrea have no need for such fancy machine so keeping the helicopter is out of the question. It is no secret that they have been approached both by the South Sudan Government and Al-shabaab in Somalia that have shown interest in purchasing the war machine. South Sudan have already got Ukrainian pilots on standby.

As they say the ball is in Woyane's court. Deal or no deal is what Isaias is asking. Of course Woyane have the option of selling bonds to the Diaspora to raise the necessary funds and pay our Ukrainian friend a bit more to bring the helicopters back home and pray they would fly in a straight line. Woyane can always aim the missile they told us they are building to make sure the mercenaries do not stray and hold their collective breath the weapon would not land in in the great Republic of Tigray. Of course they would declare some opposition traitor is responsible. Who said dictatorship is easy?

