A Sad and Heartbreaking Story


A sad and distressful story has come recently to our attention. It is the heartbreaking story of a 7-year-old Eritrean child abducted in 2010 from her mother while fleeing from Eritrea on the way to the Sudan. The name of the abducted child is Hiyab Eyob. She was born in Eritrea after her father was forced to flee the country to start life in exile. He now lives as a political refugee in Vancouver, Canada.

At the moment, Hiyab’s mother remains stranded in the Sudan, but needless to say, both she and the father are emotionally crushed and waiting helplessly for a miracle to happen and be reunited with their beloved child.

The mother’s original reason for leaving Eritrea by land was to reach the Sudan and then to proceed together with her child to join her husband in Canada. However, their hopes of being
reunited as a family were dashed when the child was abducted at night from her mother’s arms while they rested en route. Her abductors were the very people paid a large sum of money to guide and protect the mother and her child until they safely reached the Sudan.

The kidnappers of the child and their collaborators are three Eritreans, and all are engaged in human trafficking, and are well known individuals in their home town of Teseney and amongst the Eritrean Diaspora community in the Sudan. Hence, Hiyab’s kidnappers could easily be arrested if serious and coordinated efforts are made to trace them. Following are their physical descriptions:

1. **Fitsum Ghebrehiwot** is a man of about 25 years of age. He is tall and brown in complexion. His home town is Teseney, Eritrea, but he used to reside in Kasala, Sudan (see photo).

   ![Fitsum Ghebrehiwot (Main kidnapper)](image)

2. **Alexander Deres** is also between 25 to 30 years of age. He is short and light in complexion. He also lives in Teseney and used to reside in Khartoum, Sudan (photo not yet available).
3. **Merhawi Oqbatsion** (nickname “Stekin”) is a young boy of about 17 or 18 years of age. He is tall, slightly darker in complexion and has protruding front teeth. He is also from Teseney, Eritrea, and used to live in Kasala, Sudan (see photo).

![Merhawi Oqbatsion](image)

To be frank, the abductors of Hiyab Eyob are beasts in human clothing and there should be no mercy for kidnappers who abuse and torture children mentally or otherwise. The good news is that one of these animals has been reportedly sighted in Egypt and Ethiopia, while the other two are believed to be in Israel and/or Italy. It is therefore the duty of the international police in general, and the police and intelligence forces of the countries in which these hardcore criminals have been sighted and are hiding under various false names, to hunt them down and arrest them before they commit other serious criminal offences and cause pain and suffering to other families. Yes, it is of the utmost importance and urgency that these monsters are apprehended and brought to a court of law to face justice, so that Hiyab can be brought back to her beloved mother and father, who still remain in great shock and are emotionally traumatised and drained since her disappearance.
It should be remembered that a beautiful 4-year-old British child named Madeleine McCann also disappeared on the evening of Thursday, 3 May, 2007, in similar circumstances to those involved in the case of Hiyab Eyob. The incident happened while Madeleine was holidaying with her mom and dad in Portugal. Sadly, since the day of her disappearance, nothing has been heard of her.

Nevertheless, Madeleine’s disappearance was notable for the breadth and longevity of the media coverage surrounding the case. This was initially due to the active involvement of the parents in publicising the abduction, and to several awareness-raising campaigns conducted by a number of international celebrities. Indeed, the case of Madeleine McCann generated international media attention as it should.

The Case of Hiyab Deserves International Attention

We believe the distressful and untold story of Hiyab also deserves international attention and solidarity. We therefore appeal and would be most grateful if the international media and celebrities would pick up on the sad and untold story of our beautiful Hiyab Eyob and intervene on her behalf, just as they did in the case of Madeline.
Obviously, her mom and dad are suffering just as much as the McCann family still await the return of their little angel. We therefore call on men and women of goodwill, and as many high-profile celebrities as possible, to help us in our efforts to find Hiyab.

The very name “Hiyab” means “Gift of God”. We therefore would like to remind to her abductors or other third party persons holding Hiyab that she is a gift from God meant solely for her mom and dad and not abductors or strangers. We therefore demand that Hiyab be returned immediately to her family as meant by her creator – the Almighty God.

**A Call to Interpol**

We also call upon the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) to issue without further delay an international arrest warrant against these three Eritrean traffickers for kidnapping Hiyab Eyob. We believe that there should be no hiding place for brutal criminal gangs that have not even a tiny amount of respect for their fellow human beings or for the inalienable right of children to be loved and to left alone within the arms of their parents.

**A Call to the Abductors**

We would also like to inform the abductors of Hiyab Eyob (and their collaborators) that it is in their best interests to contact her parents and tell them where she is and who is holding her, and in turn pave the way for her eventual return. This is the only option you have left – the rest will take you nowhere. You can run, hide and change your names, but you will eventually be tracked down and brought to justice. Indeed, running away from justice is like running against a wall – you will be crushed by the force of your ever-increasing momentum away from decency and humanity.
We truly hope that with active international support and solidarity we are anticipating from humanitarian and government agencies, celebrities, the mass media, other human rights organisations and Interpol, this sad story will end up in joy and happiness for Hiyab, her mother and father.

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After all is said and done, we would like to bring to the attention of readers that in all societies there are good and bad apples and the abductors of Hiyab Eyob are Eritrea’s bad apples and they are the direct product of Ethiopia’s policy of economic strangulation directed against independent Eritrea and the repressive domestic policies of the PFDJ government of Eritrea. So in the finale analysis, the suffering and ordeal of Hiyab Eyob and her family are the true reflection of the suffering and great pain endured by the Eritrean people in their homeland. We thus demand an end to all political repression and for the immediate restoration of law and order in our country, Eritrea.

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P.S: If you have any information which could help us locate the three wanted criminal gangs or the whereabouts of Hiyab Eyob, please do contact the parents of Hiyab Eyob at the following telephone number: 001-604-5230124.
You could also contact the International Task Force on Eritrea (ITFOE) at the following telephone number: 00447896565456. Alternatively, you could also contact us by email: ITFOE@Easy.com. You could also contact the police nearest to you.

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London, February 21, 2011