

Eritrea in the Empire's Crosshairs: "Regime Change Operations". Propaganda. Ann Garrison and Elias Amare

By [Ann Garrison](#) and [Elias Amare](#)

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Eritrea is a key player in the West Asian/North African strategic theater, controlling a long swathe of the southwestern Red Sea. It staunchly refuses to collaborate with US/EU/NATO security architectures, leading Western propagandists to denounce it as "the North Korea of Africa." **As if that weren't enough to make it a regime-change target, Eritrea eschews IMF and World Bank debt peonage and claims its natural resources for its people.**

While the nation has achieved [high rates](#) of vaccination against many diseases, its national Covid task force chose not to mass vaccinate because they saw no signs that the pandemic had spread there. Despite weathering the viral outbreak with relatively few deaths, Eritrea's policy predictably stirred the ire of Western media.

Since Israel launched its genocidal assault on the besieged Palestinian enclave of Gaza, Eritrean **President Isaias Afwerki** has stood out among world leaders for his withering condemnation of Western support for the onslaught.

"Are these Western leaders still human beings? Do they have any morality?" he [asked](#).





This June, *The Guardian* initiated perhaps the most aggressive – and certainly the most lurid – **wave of regime change propaganda to date against Eritrea**. The liberal British paper’s broadsides against the country appear to have been coordinated with a series of reports by Western NGOs financed by the US government and its assorted partners in **regime change operations**.

According to a [pair of *The Guardian* articles](#), Eritrean soldiers committed horrific rapes in Ethiopia’s Tigray Region during the 2020-2022 Northern Ethiopian Conflict, when Eritrea fought on the side of Ethiopian and regional Amhara forces against a longstanding [US proxy](#), the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF). The contents of the articles echo the [debunked](#) Israeli atrocity propaganda [uncritically amplified](#) by *The Guardian* and other Western outlets accusing Palestinian militants of systemic sexual violence on October 7.

Not surprisingly, both articles accusing Eritrean soldiers of mass rape were published in *The Guardian*’s “[Global Development](#)” section, which is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Gates has [greatly profited](#) off of vaccine sales and his foundation is notorious for pushing deleterious vaccine, [agricultural](#), and population control schemes and experiments in Africa.

In the [first](#) of its attacks on Eritrea, *The Guardian* asserted that Eritrean soldiers, half of whom are [women](#), somehow forced rusted screws, nails, nail clippers, and plastic rubbish into the uteruses of their Tigrayan victims.

It also attempted to convince its readers that at least one victim survived for nearly two years before finally turning to a regional medical clinic for help. She lived, it claimed, with eight rusted screws, steel nail clippers, and a venomous, plastic-wrapped note in her uterus throughout that time.

These hideous acts constituted crimes against humanity and genocide, *The Guardian* alleged, invoking Article II(d) of the [UN Convention on Genocide](#), which states that genocide includes “imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.”



The Guardian reports that Eritrean soldiers forced these nail clippers into a Tigrayan woman's uterus.



The Guardian identifies these as "nail clippers and screws removed from the womb of a survivor of sexual violence in Tigray."

Is it medically possible for a woman to survive after enduring such traumatic violence,

including having sharp, dirty objects forced into her uterus? Emergency trauma surgeon [Dr. Haile Mezghebe](#) said that he would stake his professional reputation against any doctor supporting the veracity of these reports.

This is Dr. Mezghebe's statement:

By training, I am a general surgeon with added training and certification in trauma and critical care medicine. From 1986 to 2007, I taught students at Howard University Medical School in Washington, D.C. and trained residents in the art of surgery. I also trained surgeons, obstetricians/gynecologists, and pediatric specialists in Eritrea from late 2007 to early 2011.

After returning to the US, I worked as a general surgeon and acute care trauma surgeon in a busy trauma hospital in Nashville, Tennessee until the end of 2024.

In my career, I have assessed and treated more than a thousand patients who sustained penetrating injuries (gunshot and stab wounds, etc.) as well as victims of road accidents and physical abuse that included sexual assault/rape. I have working knowledge of ballistics and the interpretation of diagnostic radiographic tests.

It is with this background that I am responding to the articles that appeared in The Guardian. I challenge the veracity of these reports by demonstrating the anatomic and physiologic impossibility of any of them ever happening as described.

The articles repeatedly allege that soldiers' gang-raped women, then inserted rocks and sharp, dirty metallic objects into the uterus. Any woman or family member who has experienced or witnessed the birth of a baby will testify to the long hours of waiting for the cervix to dilate in order for the baby to pass through the canal. When the mother's physiology does not work on its own to dilate the cervix, doctors and nurses administer pharmacologic agents to help it along. The very idea that a woman who is undergoing maximal physiologic stress (body clamps down) will have enough cervical opening to insert a foreign body (a jagged and sharp one at that) is patently wrong.

One way to insert foreign objects into the uterus would be to cut wide open the highly vascular and thick sphincter muscle of the cervix. Even in an operating room, this act would result in significant hemorrhage that would need urgent intervention to stop the bleeding. In a non-operative, austere war environment, this would almost immediately result in shock and death. The perpetrators most certainly couldn't save her in such an environment, even if we were to believe they would cut through her cervix and then try to save her from what they'd just done. Yet The Guardian asks us to believe that the victim survived this for two years to tell the tale.

Many will recall the almost epidemic level of deadly septic shock syndrome that was being reported in the lay and medical media about 15 to 20 years ago. This resulted from the vagina and cervix coming in contact with a certain fiber used for tampons. Just try to imagine how women could live to tell the tale for two years after sharp, dirty metal objects were inserted into their uteruses. Any woman with a sharp dirty object in the uterus will develop severe infection and die if not treated right away. Think of the infections and fatalities that occur from illegal abortions.

The X-rays also show metallic objects in the general vicinity of the upper pelvis. These

objects appear to have been placed on the skin, outside the woman's body, before the X-rays were taken. They appear similar to the X-rays that my colleagues would take after applying small metallic objects (clamps, clips, etc.) to the skin to track the path of bullets or fragments in relation to the entry and exit points. It is difficult to verify any X-rays like this without multiple angled X-ray views.

The first article appeared in *The Guardian* on June 30, 2025, the second on July 31, 2025. They used the same X-ray, and the second cited the first as a source, repeating its impossible claims.

This second article in *The Guardian* also accuses the soldiers of "mass rape, forced pregnancy, sexual torture, and deliberate transmission of HIV" that amount to crimes against humanity and, again, genocide by causing infertility. These are not crimes that can be proven or disproven by physical evidence years after the fact. Sexual assault and other atrocities no doubt happened in Tigray during the Northern Ethiopian Conflict, but did it happen at the alleged scale and with genocidal intent? Did the writers fabricate these impossible crimes about rusted screws, nails, nail clippers, and plastic rubbish jammed into women's uteruses for years, but honestly report all these other crimes?

The falsehoods in these articles trivialize sexual violence against women. Presenting the topic of rape in such a cavalier manner for political purpose is reckless journalism.

I question the professional integrity of any named and unnamed doctors who corroborate such bogus reporting. If they were in the US, they would probably be at risk of losing their medical licenses.

The *Guardian* articles contain many other inaccuracies, more than can be covered in the space of this response. The first article claims, for one, that Ethiopia's prime minister "has had no charges or sanctions laid at his door." In fact, however, **President Joe Biden** issued [Executive Order 14046](#) sanctioning both Ethiopian and Eritrean forces and officials in September 2021, and renewed it in September [2022](#), [2023](#), [2024](#), and [2025](#).

Can't *The Guardian* afford a fact-checker, given its size, stature, and handsome funding from Bill Gates?

Physicians for Human Rights and the Organization for Justice and Accountability in the Horn of Africa (OJAH)

A pair of Western NGO's, [Physicians for Human Rights](#) (PHR) and the [Organization for Justice and Accountability in the Horn of Africa \(OJAH\)](#), jointly published a report, "['You Will Never Be Able to Give Birth': Conflict-Related Sexual and Reproductive Violence in Ethiopia](#)" on July 31, 2025 - the same day that *The Guardian* published the [second](#) of its rape atrocity articles.

PHR's headquarters are in New York City and it also rents space in Boston and Nairobi. It doesn't make its funders readily apparent on its website, but they seem to include a combination of liberal foundations, US and European governments, and individual donors. Its Israel branch, [Physicians for Human Rights-Israel \(PHRI\)](#), is [funded](#) by the European Commission, Oxfam, the Ford Israel Fund, the New Israel Fund, and a long list of lesser known government entities, private foundations, and individual donors.

PHRI was at the forefront of the discredited Israeli propaganda hoax alleging that Hamas carried out “mass rape” as part of a calculated strategy on October 7. After independent journalists and researchers including *The Grayzone* pointed out major flaws in PHRI’s paper accusing Hamas of systematic sexual violence, it issued an embarrassing [“clarification”](#) noting that “some testimonies referenced within it have been disputed or deemed unverifiable.” The NGO further conceded, “PHRI lacks the sufficient staffing, resources, or professional tools required to carry out the thorough and competent investigation advocated for in the position paper.”

OJAH is headquartered on K Street, the epicenter of the American lobbying industry, in Washington, DC. Its website says it “partners” with a short list of organizations including two of the most prolific US regime change vehicles: the US government-funded, CIA-tied National Endowment for Democracy, and billionaire George Soros’s Open Society Foundations.

In targeting Eritrea’s government, PHR/OJAH appeared to spin out an even more gruesome version of the atrocity propaganda PHRI released after October 7. They alleged the same impossible crime alleged in *The Guardian*, with only slight variation: that a woman survived for two years with sharp, dirty objects somehow forced into her uterus.

They also made an outlandish claim that Eritrean perpetrators tried to remove a Norplant contraceptive device planted under a woman’s skin so as to impregnate her, hoping to eventually “wipe out the Tigrayan ethnicity,”

Trying to “wipe out the Tigrayan ethnicity” isn’t even a sensible accusation because inhabitants on both sides of the Tigrayan/Eritrean border are of the same ethnicity. Both are Tigrinya speakers who were part of the Aksumite and Ethiopian Empires before the latter was divided by Italian colonists who laid claim to what is now Eritrea in 1890. Intermarriage between Tigrayans and Eritreans has been historically common practice, particularly before the 1998-2000 border war.

In mid-June, when the Tigrayan/Eritrean border was re-opened for the first time in five years, families and friends joyfully celebrated reunion, as reported by the [BBC](#).

PHR also cited their own [2023 report](#), which includes this shocking statement:

“Recent studies estimate that 600,000 civilians in Tigray have died, either by direct violence and killings, or indirect violence, through starvation or lack of health care.”²⁴

Yet a quick examination of the source demolishes its credibility. PHR and OJAH’s citation (footnote 24) leads to a January 15, 2023 [Financial Times](#) report which quotes Olusegun Obasanjo, the former military dictator of Nigeria turned diplomat – not exactly an expert investigator – as the source of the huge number. According to Obasanjo, “The number of people killed was about 600,000 [in the entire war].”

Indeed, this notoriously corrupt former Nigerian dictator is the only source PHR/OJAH cites. Though the group could not muster up a single social scientific investigation, it referred to Obasanjo’s claim as “recent studies.”

PHR/OJAH not only cites the unsubstantiated 600,000 estimate of total war deaths, but also magically transforms it into “600,000 civilians in Tigray.”

This wholly bogus citation throws the group's entire report into question. As documented by Simon Tesfamariam in "[Disinformation in Tigray: Manufacturing Consent for a Secessionist War](#)" and Rasmus Sonderriis in his book [Getting Ethiopia Dead Wrong](#), it is a prime example of the highly dubious, pseudo-scientific coverage that has corrupted the West's understanding of the two-year-long Northern Ethiopian Conflict.

In almost every case, NGOs cite media, which then cite NGOs, which then cite more media, which then cite more NGOs, and round and round in a circle of self-validating regime change propaganda until unfounded claims are accepted as fact.

And few NGOs have played as central a role in targeting Eritrea as George Clooney and John Prendergrast's The Sentry.

George Clooney and John Prendergrast, from Save Darfur to The Sentry

Founded by celebrity regime change activist **George Clooney** and his handler, security state operative **John Prendergrast**, The Sentry was spun out of the "[Save Darfur](#)" crusade. Its funders include the US government's National Endowment for Democracy; billionaire US soft power operative Pierre Omidyar's Humanity United foundation; the Capitalism with a Conscience Foundation; the Clooney Foundation for Justice, the Ford Foundation, [Frank Giustra](#)'s Giustra International Foundation, and the Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, formerly known as the Matan B'Seter Foundation (meaning "anonymous gift" in Hebrew).

The Sentry and its funders, like PHR and OJAH, are all concerned with catching and prosecuting bad guys, mostly Africans, and holding them accountable to international law and the rules-based order. They want justice for women, children, and marginalized communities, but corporate crimes and crimes of empire are not on their radar.

The most obvious and widely affirmed case of genocide - Israel's ongoing rampage in Gaza - is noticeably absent from The Sentry's website. Yet the NGO says that many consider crimes against Tigrayans to be ethnic cleansing or even genocide, citing the *Journal of Genocide Research*, Human Rights Watch, and the US Department of Defense-funded [New Lines Institute](#).

Sean Jacobs sums up Prendergrast's cringe, white savior campaigning in "[Bwana Saves Africa](#)" on the website [Africa Is a Country](#). "A former Clinton White House official," he writes, "Prendergrast probably wrote the book on how to utilize celebrity diplomacy." The transformation of vapid actors like George Clooney, Angelina Jolie, Ben Affleck, and Don Cheadle into foreign policy experts originated with him.

Prior to his decades of celebrity recruiting, Prendergrast held top-level positions in the national security state. At the end of 1996, he joined Bill Clinton's National Security Council as Director for African Affairs and thereafter served as a special adviser to Susan Rice at the State Department. He even [served](#) on the [National Intelligence Council](#), an intelligence and policy interagency that serves the Director of National Intelligence.

The first of *The Guardian's* articles leveling impossible rape allegations against Eritrean soldiers appeared shortly after The Sentry published a regime change screed titled, "[Power and Plunder: The Eritrean Defense Forces Intervention in Tigray.](#)"

Despite its lack of hard evidence, the half-baked paper alleges that Eritrea was the guiltiest party in the Northern Ethiopian Conflict.

“War crimes were perpetrated by all parties to the conflict,” it says, “but the nature of atrocities and war profiteering carried out by the EDF was unmatched in scale and premeditation.”

The Sentry calls on the US, European Union, United Kingdom, and “other like-minded [white] jurisdictions” to threaten and sanction all parties to the conflict if they start fighting again, but urges the US, EU, and UK to immediately “designate” top Eritrean military officers. (“Designation” is the legal precursor to sanctions.)

Eritrea is already one of the most sanctioned countries on the planet. It is one of only four nations, including Russia, Iran, and the DPRK, which are currently excluded from the SWIFT system for conducting international financial transactions. Syria was also on the list [until](#) Ahmed al-Sharaa, founder of the Al Qaeda-affiliated Al Nusra Front, seized power and abandoned Syria’s historically independent stance and support for Palestinian resistance.

The Sentry cites the [Council on Foreign Relations](#) and an echo chamber of Western media, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch (HRW) reports, many of which rely on anonymous witness testimony, much of which was conducted by phone.

They also cite anonymous sources like “a witness,” “a medical professional,” “an Eritrean refugee,” “a western academic specializing in Eritrea,” or simply “multiple sources.”

The Sentry’s most preposterous source may be the [Commission of Inquiry on Tigray Genocide](#) (CITG), which the Tigray Interim Administration established to document its own region’s victimization in May 2022. Among the news reports which fill CITG’s website is one by CNN, which consists of little more than statements by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), which refuses to acknowledge genocide in Gaza, cites CITG in more than [one](#) of its Tigray Genocide reports. USHMM also recently removed a graphic from its website which appeared to acknowledge that non-Jews have suffered crimes against humanity.



One of many news reports that the Commission of Inquiry on Tigray Genocide presents as “evidence” on its website.

German state broadcaster Deutsche Welle cited The Sentry in its July 14 report, “[A look at Eritrea’s role as new Tigray war looms in Ethiopia.](#)” Both, without material evidence, accuse Eritrea of causing instability that could lead to another civil war in Ethiopia, where several ethnic militias are already fighting government forces.

Deutsche Welle repeated the “600,000 killed” figure, citing its own previous news [report](#) as evidence, but that report provides no citation at all. Indeed, it simply says that “600,000” without a shred of evidence.

The Sentry’s attack on Eritrea is about the New Cold War as much as anything else. Its authors complain that the lifting of 2009-2018 UN sanctions on Eritrea “was strongly supported by China and Russia” and that Russia is both selling arms to Eritrea and becoming its “key military ally.”

Saving Darfur, Slandering Eritrea

Most of the sanctimonious hypocrisy and dubious reporting produced by The Sentry is an outgrowth of the Save Darfur Coalition, a sprawling NGO umbrella founded by the [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) and [American Jewish World Service](#) on July 14, 2004, at the “[Darfur Emergency Summit in New York City.](#)”

George Clooney officially joined the Save Darfur Coalition in 2006, when he lent his star power to the “[Save Darfur: Rally to Stop Genocide](#)” in Washington, D.C., alongside Prendergast, [Samantha Power](#), Al Sharpton, then Senator Barack Obama, and a long list of lesser [celebrities](#). Five years later, on January 10, 2011, Clooney, Prendergast, Bono, and then Senator John Kerry gathered to [speak to the press](#) in Juba as South Sudan became a nation independent of Sudan. A year later Reuters explained this imperial engineering project in “[The wonks who sold Washington on South Sudan.](#)” (Today, Israel is [proposing](#) South Sudan is a potential repository for refugees it plans to ethnically cleanse from Gaza).



George Clooney speaking at a Save Darfur rally in Washington, D.C., 2006.

By design, the Save Darfur propaganda complex shifted attention away from Israeli crimes in Gaza to Sudanese atrocities, calling on the world to stop Arab Muslim crimes against Black Christians. Whatever abuses Khartoum might have committed, it served Israel's purposes very well.

Like Israel's [victims' pact](#) with post-genocide Rwanda and its president **Paul Kagame**, it reminded the world that holocausts happen, that the world must be ever vigilant, and that the Jewish people, who survived the worst holocaust of the 20th century, will always be on the front lines.

In 2007, Prendergast founded the [Enough Project to End Genocide and Mass Atrocities](#) with [Gayle Smith](#), whose career mirrors his own. After decades as a foreign correspondent in Africa, Smith became Special Assistant to President Bill Clinton, Senior Director for African Affairs at the US National Security Council, and Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (2015-2017). She served on Obama's National Security Council alongside [Samantha Power](#), former UN Ambassador, USAID Administrator, and author of [A Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide](#), when the US/NATO decimated Libya.

In what universe could one imagine that stopping genocide and mass atrocities are the principal concern of these top level security state operatives and strategists?

Propaganda Always Has a Purpose

Propaganda campaigns like that targeting Eritrea in the space of two months aren't launched for no reason. [Nayirah](#) told Congress that Iraqi soldiers were throwing babies on the floor to steal their incubators before the First Gulf War. Susan Rice claimed that Gaddafi was [giving Viagra](#) to his soldiers to help them rape women before NATO bombed Libya. The

West and the OPCW alleged that Bashar al-Assad had used [chemical weapons](#) on his own people before the US/NATO began bombing Syria, and of course the Bush Administration accused Iraq of possessing "[weapons of mass destruction.](#)"

So, are the US/EU/NATO plotting regime change in Eritrea, whether by sanctions, proxy war, color revolution, or outright military intervention? The sanctions and proxy wars have been going on for decades, and a [color revolution](#) is brewing. All options are no doubt under consideration, given the new [scramble for the Red Sea.](#)

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Ann Garrison is a [Black Agenda Report Contributing Editor](#) and Pacifica Radio reporter based in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 2014, she received the [Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza Democracy and Peace Prize](#) for her reporting on the African Great Lakes Region. She can be reached at ann@anngarrison.com and [@AnnGarrison](#), and you can help support her work on [Patreon](#).

Elias Amare is an Eritrean American journalist and geopolitical analyst based in Oakland, California and Asmara, Eritrea. He was an Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front organizer during the 30-year Eritrean struggle for independence. He hosts his own [YouTube channel](#) and is a frequent guest on Breakthrough News and Connecting the Dots with Dr. Wilmer Leon. He can be reached at [@EliasAmare](#).

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