

## **ERITREA-ETHIOPIA:**

### **Asmara rejects new proposal on border dispute**

[ This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

NAIROBI, 28 Feb 2006 (IRIN) - The Eritrean government has rejected a proposal by the United Nations Security Council to work with an independent commission to resolve its ongoing border dispute with Ethiopia.

"The final and binding decision of the Boundary Commission marks the legal conclusion of the Eritrea-Ethiopia issue once and for all," said a statement issued by the Eritrean foreign ministry on Monday.

Eritrea was referring to the original ruling of the commission, which was handed down in April 2002.

"Any attempts to derail the dispensation of the border demarcation from its legal course or even entertain other alternative mechanisms suggestive of dragging behind or holding up the process will have no legal bearing or serve any other purpose than to prompt events that would set off a dangerous precedent," Eritrea maintained.

In a statement read on Friday by its current president, John Bolton of the United States, the Council called on Ethiopia and Eritrea to work with the independent boundary commission to implement its decisions. Both countries had agreed, the statement noted, to accept the decision of the commission as final and binding.

The Algiers peace agreement - signed in December 2000 - ended a two-year border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It stipulated that the countries would abide by the decision of the boundary commission. However, Ethiopia rejected the ruling, which gave Eritrea the town of Badme, where the war started.

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