

## **A Week in the Horn 13<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

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### **International concern over the escalating conflict between the Republic of Sudan and South Sudan....**

The African Union issued a statement on Wednesday [11<sup>th</sup> April] expressing its deep alarm and grave concern over the escalating armed conflict on the border between Sudan and South Sudan. It called upon both sides to "exercise the utmost restraint and to respect the territorial integrity of the other State". It particularly noted with alarm the occupation of Heglig by the armed forces of South Sudan and called for their immediate and unconditional withdrawal. Sudan called the South's seizure of the contested oil-producing Heglig region the worst violation of its territory yet. South Sudan's army seized control of the oil-producing town of Heglig in South Kordofan on Tuesday after clashes with Sudan's army. Sudan said South Sudan's army had entered Heglig with a force of 3,000 fighters supported by artillery and tanks, penetrating 70 kilometres inside Sudan. A Sudanese official said that this action had torpedoed all agreements signed between the two countries and Khartoum decided therefore to halt negotiations with Juba. This brings to a halt the AU-led talks over the outstanding issues of oil, border demarcation, contested areas and citizenship issues that have been going on for some months in Addis Ababa. Khartoum called South Sudan's "blatant" invasion of Heglig a breach of international law and norms, accusing Juba of seeking to control Sudan's oil-production. Heglig is one of Sudan's main oil fields. Khartoum lodged an urgent complaint with the UN Security Council and with the African Union Peace and Security Council.

International concern has risen over the risk of all-out war. Uganda has called for a return to dialogue. UN Secretary-General, Ban ki-Moon, urged President Salva Kiir to meet with President Al-Bashir to head off all-out war. He told President Kiir that "before

undertaking a discussion on the causes of the escalation, the immediate priority is to de-escalate the situation to avoid any further bloodshed". The UN Secretary-General has also spoken with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Ethiopia's Prime Minister Meles on ways to halt the movement towards a war that will have a devastating impact on the wider region.

The US State Department urged both sides to end "all hostilities" and in a statement said it was "deeply disturbed by the escalating hostilities between Sudan and South Sudan". It condemned offensive military action by either side. "We condemn South Sudan's military involvement in the attack on and seizure of Heglig, an act which goes beyond self-defence...We also condemn the continued aerial bombardment in South Sudan by the Sudanese Armed Forces. The US said "Both governments must agree to an immediate unconditional cessation of hostilities, withdraw all forces that are deployed across the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1956 border, as recognized by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005, and cease all support to armed movements from the other state."

The State Department also urged both parties "to activate without delay the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism through UN Security Council Resolution 2024, authorizing the United Nations Interim Security for Abyei to assist Sudan and South Sudan with investigations and monitoring along the Sudan-South Sudan border." The statement noted that the continued violence in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile, and along the border, as well as the continued deployment of Sudan Armed Forces and South Sudan Police Services in Abyei, undermined the progress made in the AUHIP talks toward the creation of two viable states. It urged both countries to return without delay to the negotiating table and use peaceful means, not military action, to resolve outstanding issues.

The AU statement referred to the Memorandum of Understanding on Non-Aggression and Cooperation signed by both governments in Addis Ababa on 10<sup>th</sup> February. It called on both to respect the provisions including respect for each other's territorial integrity and the prohibition to support armed opposition groups in each other's State. It called on each party to withdraw any armed forces in the territory of the other State with immediate effect, and for both sides to cease aerial bombardment and support of each other's rebel forces. It called on Sudan and South Sudan to implement without delay the tasks detailed in last year's September 18<sup>th</sup> Decision of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism establishing the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mission. The AU concluded by calling on the Parties to meet under the auspices of the High-Level Implementation Panel to resolve the present clash and all other outstanding issues "in a peaceful way in accordance with the over-riding principle of establishing two viable states in Sudan and South Sudan."

## **...and the UN Secretary-General's Report and Recommendations on Abyei**

At the end of last month, UN Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon presented a report to the Security Council on progress in implementing the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA) and on the overall situation in Abyei. The report covers events since January and even before this latest fighting the Secretary-General noted the security situation remained tense and unpredictable because of the continued presence of unauthorized armed forces in the Abyei Area in violation of the

20<sup>th</sup> June 2011 Agreement, the on-going large-scale migration of Misseriya nomads and the return of displaced Ngok Dinka. The final status of the Abyei Area remains to be resolved and there had been minimal progress on implementation of the 20<sup>th</sup> June Agreement. The parties remained deadlocked over the nomination of the Abyei Area Administration, despite the efforts of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel to find a compromise. The only functioning body envisaged under the agreement was the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, which has held three meetings since its launch in September last year. However, the fourth meeting was delayed at the request of the Government of the Sudan, and no date has yet been fixed. Efforts by UNISFA to operationalize the secretariat of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee continue, and it has proposed that the secretaries of the Committee be made members of the joint committees composed of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee and UNISFA. One of these is tasked with sensitizing the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya on the processes for unarmed migration and return, the second is a “goodwill” committee to engage the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya leadership and encourage them to work closely with UNISFA.

The implementation of the Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Government of South Sudan on Border Security and the Joint Political and Security Mechanism and of the Agreement on the Border Monitoring Support Mission between the two Governments was given some impetus following the second meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism in Addis Ababa on 10<sup>th</sup> February when the two parties signed their memorandum of understanding on non-aggression and cooperation, committing them to non-interference in each other’s internal affairs and respecting each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. They agreed to establish the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. It was also agreed that UNISFA would assist the parties with an “area of operations” map to overcome the dispute on the borderline and present it at the next meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism.

The Secretary General said there have been unverifiable reports of troop build-ups, bombings and cross-border attacks since then but he said UNISFA had continued to move ahead with the implementation of its expanded mandate under Security Council resolution 2024 (2011). UNISFA now plans to adopt a phased deployment approach, immediately focusing on providing support in the areas of the border with the highest security concerns. The Secretary General reported that as of 15<sup>th</sup> March the military component of UNISFA comprised 3,800 of the 4,200 troops authorized. He noted that further financial arrangements would be needed after 27<sup>th</sup> May if the Security Council decides to extend the mandate of UNISFA beyond that date. As of 20<sup>th</sup> March this year, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNISFA amounted to \$53 million.

The Secretary General emphasized that conditions for the peaceful and orderly return of displaced Ngok Dinka and migration of Misseriya nomads were a critical requirement for restoring genuine and lasting stability to the Abyei Area and a necessary prelude for facilitating inter-community dialogue leading to peaceful coexistence. The Secretary General thanked Prime Minister Meles for his on-going engagement and Ethiopia’s commitment to UNISFA, and commended the continued engagement of the Head of Mission of UNISFA, Lieutenant-General Tadesse Werede Tesfay, with the leaders of both communities, and urged the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to take all necessary measures to ensure that their local political representatives and security services in the Abyei Area refrained from any provocative or hostile actions. Improving

access to and protection for the affected communities remained a major challenge for the UN efforts to stabilize Abyei. Delays in the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration seriously curtailed the provision of services to the population. The work of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee had been encouraging but postponement of the fourth meeting was a matter for concern.

The Secretary General said that given the fact that UNISFA has now taken full control of its operational area it was time for the two governments to withdraw their armed forces and police from the Abyei Area and strengthen their cooperation with the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, led by former President Thabo Mbeki, the Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios, and the UNISFA Head of Mission. He commended the decision by both parties to sign a non-aggression pact and to move ahead with the establishment of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism but noted that effective implementation required the full cooperation of both governments. He therefore recommended a six-month extension of UNISFA's mandate, to enable it to support the operationalization of the Mechanism, further stabilize Abyei and implement outstanding agreements.

### **Al-Shabaab reported to be concentrating in the Galgala mountains**

Somali Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohamed Ali said this week that the increasing military pressure on Al-Shabaab was forcing its members to flee to hideouts in the mountainous region of north-eastern Somalia, lying between Puntland and Somaliland. The Prime Minister said in an interview on Wednesday: "they are weakened. They are now in tatters. Their fighters are now moving to Galgala Mountains, which is an area with very difficult terrain." He added that Al-Shabaab high officials were now also relocating to Puntland. Galgala is where Sheikh Said Atom has been leading a mujahedeen militia some of whom recently declared their allegiance to Al-Shabaab.

President Abdirahman Farole of Puntland has also said that Al-Shabaab militants have moved into Puntland after being pushed out of central Somalia and indeed, since last August after al-Shabaab's withdrawal from Mogadishu, they had, he said, been moving to Puntland to make bases there. The aim, he said, was to strengthen their ties with al-Qaeda in Yemen only a short distance away across the Gulf of Aden. President Farole said the Al-Shabaab fighters were gathering in the Galgala mountains and the Golis range of hills that border Somaliland. The President said he believed these militants and their senior officials were a threat to the security of the region, and said he was ready to deploy troops against them. Sheikh Fuad Mohamed Khalaf (Fuad Shongole) is among the Al-Shabaab leaders now reported to be in the Galgala mountains. Websites supporting Al-Shabaab reported the arrival of "hundreds of Mujahideen" in the area earlier this week claiming that they were "to help in the battle against the 'pro-infidel administration' of Puntland".

In fact, Al-Shabaab or Al Qaeda fighters are highly mobile and rarely concentrate large numbers in one location for any length of time. In the last couple of months they have also been working hard to recruit new fighters to replace those lost. The Somali National Security Agency says it has captured over seven hundred Al-Shabaab and Al Qaeda insurgents in the last couple of months. Overall, Al-Shabaab numbers are

estimated between 6,000 and 8,000 including a number of foreign fighters. Numbers have fallen recently due to desertions and defections as well as losses in battle.

Al-Shabaab still appears to be trying to hold onto Afgoye and areas in Lower and Middle Shebelle. These are areas from which Al-Shabaab has been able to extract considerable amounts of tax, as well as extort money from the Internally Displaced People in the Afgoye corridor. They have been able to control farming and trading in these areas and in the past have had some local clan support though indications are that this is now falling. The coast north of Mogadishu has a number of small ports have been used by Al-Shabaab, including Adale, Mareeg, Warsheikh and others; to the south are the larger ports of Merka, Barawe and, of course, Kismayo. Activity at Kismayo, however, appears to have dropped off recently perhaps because of air attacks and drone activity. Al-Shabaab also still controls a number of airstrips in these regions including those at Jowhar (Middle Shabelle), El Dhare (Galgadud), Balidogle (Former Air Force Base – Lower Shabelle), K50 (Lower Shabelle) and Kismayo (Lower Juba).

The use of these ports and airstrips is one way that Al-Shabaab acquires weapons but there is also concern that it has been getting weapons and ammunition from other sources, including the sale of weapons by individuals particularly when wages for security forces have not been paid. There is now agreement that the TFG should implement a registration system in relation to weapons within the various Somali security services and in AMISOM, and this is expected to apply to the supply of weaponry to militias by the TFG or by other countries.

## **Sudan's support for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project**

President Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan, receiving the credentials of Ethiopia's newly appointed Ambassador Abadi Zemo, said the Sudan government understood the mutual benefits that the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project could offer Ethiopia and Sudan. He said he would extend the necessary support to ensure the massive hydro-power project would be successfully completed. Last year, when Prime Minister Meles laid the corner-stone of the Renaissance Dam, he pointed out that the Dam would significantly reduce the problems of silt and sediment that consistently affect dams on the Abay (the Blue Nile) in both Egypt and Sudan. These have been a particularly acute problem at Sudan's Rosseiries dam, producing a substantial reduction in output. Equally, when the Renaissance Dam becomes operational, communities all along the riverbanks and surrounding areas, particularly in Sudan, will be permanently relieved from centuries of flooding. In addition, Sudan and Egypt will have the opportunity to obtain increased power supplies at competitive prices. The Renaissance Dam will also increase the amount of water resources available, reducing the wastage from evaporation which has been another serious problem for the downstream countries. The Dam will in fact ensure a steady year-round flow from the Nile. This, in turn, should have the potential to amicably resolve the differences which currently exist among riparian states over the issue of equitable utilization of the resource of the Nile waters.

This is how the Sudanese Minister of Water Resources, Professor Sief El Din Hamad Abdallah, also sees it. At a Forum organized by the Sudanese Bar Association in cooperation with the Ministry of Water Resources on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March to discuss the Cooperative Framework Agreement between the Nile Basin Countries and the impact of the independence of South Sudan, Professor Sief stressed that, if even some dams were



erected in Ethiopia without prior consultation, in the end they all served Sudan's interests, reducing the flow of mud that accompanies Nile waters, improving possibilities for river navigation and electricity production and helping control floods. Professor Sief noted that Sudan was now buying electricity from Ethiopia at greatly reduced prices.

He also emphasized that the water storage capacity of dams in Sudan will benefit from dams in Ethiopia. He noted that the accumulation of silt in downstream dams was a main concern for Sudan as well as Egypt. Indeed, he said Sudan spends about US\$12 million to remove mud from the irrigation channels of the Gezira Scheme. The accumulation of silt at the Egyptian High Dam in Aswan had now reached 6 billion cubic metres. Some people even affirmed that the problem of the Nile Basin has nothing to do with any possible scarcity of water resources but rather the high evaporation of the water from source to outlet in the Mediterranean. This is no less than 85 percent of the total.

Professor Sief said that Ethiopian dams on the Nile, if constructed on the basis of mutual consultation and consideration would be beneficial for both parties. Indeed, in some cases, he said, Sudan might benefit more than Ethiopia as the quantities of silt would be drastically reduced bringing an end to the costly process of removing it from dam reservoirs. For example, after the building of a dam in Ethiopia, the Atbara river resources had increased by ten times. Professor Sief emphasized that one solution to the problem of resources was reducing evaporation. He cited the example of the 590 billion cubic meters of resources from the Equatorial Lakes Basin of which only 15 billion cubic meters reached the River Nile itself. Reasonable recovery of this lost quantity or of some of it at least, would make a big difference to the development of the Nile Basin countries and help resolve any disputes and disagreements.

Prime Minister Meles stressed last year that the Renaissance Dam would offer mutual beneficial opportunities to Sudan and to Egypt as well as Ethiopia. Indeed, he suggested, one might therefore expect these countries to be prepared to share the costs proportionally, with Sudan offering to cover 30 per cent and Egypt 20 per cent of the project. It now seems that some such commitment is being reflected in Sudan. Last year Sudan donated about 170 million birr worth of machinery to assist hydropower projects in Ethiopia. This commitment to assist development projects underway in Ethiopia underlines the maturity of the relationship between the two countries. It suggests that riparian countries have to begin to understand the fundamental principle underlying Ethiopia's Nile policies: **mutual benefit for all riparian countries**. Ethiopia in fact is working to strengthen regional co-operation to serve the interests of Sudan, of Ethiopia and of Egypt. The Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation has now completed the transmission lines to make Sudan the second country to benefit from Ethiopia's export of power. The 296 kilometre transmission link has a 230 kilovolt capacity and will start operations this year.

Today, the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan demonstrates a significant degree of interdependence. It can be seen as an example for the Horn of Africa and indeed more widely. Understanding the huge potential in joint natural resource management and agricultural investment projects as well as in the free exchange of goods and services along the more than thousand kilometre-long border, means that both countries are

working steadily to strengthen their relationship for their mutual benefit. There is no doubt that construction of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam will further strengthen this relationship.

## The 'depth' of President Isaias' leadership

The Eritrean regime is silent on many issues these days, but Eri-TV's programmes suggest that the spin-doctors of the regime in Asmara are still busy trying to sell their long-held idea that the rest of the world and especially the US and the CIA are continuing to hatch plots targeting President Isaias, aiming to deny Eritrea the work of its 'visionary' and 'prophetic' leader. This is not a euphemism or a metaphor.

These are the actual words used by the Eritrean media to describe Isaias. Eritrean politics have long been involved in building up a personality cult around the President, but this is the first time that a whole series of programmes are being broadcast on official media to convince Eritreans that in the absence of the 'dear leader' and his theory of self-reliance, Eritrea will collapse into chaos. It's not entirely clear if the spin-doctors believe this is sellable to the long-suffering Eritrean people but no doubt some will be convinced.

Indeed, some of his supporters appear so enamoured of President Isaias' exceptional powers and wisdom that they are prepared to claim in public that the CIA is targeting him because he "happens to be the only voice of defiance against their policy of creative chaos." They would have us believe President Isaias is the only worthy leader in Africa whose counsel is sought out by many on matters of global importance, ignoring the fact that the only evidence they can point to for this are his lengthy monologues about what he thought about what he had said the year before and the year before that. Of course, he does also travel quite often to inspect regions outside Asmara, berating local residents for being 'spoilt' if they are foolish enough to suggest they would like improved services. President Isaias' dismal record in diplomacy and his fallout with all his friends as well as isolation from the entire international community is touted as a hallmark of the 'depth' of his leadership. In fact, the only 'depth' of his leadership is the depth to which Eritrea has sunk, economically and politically under President Isaias.

It is not clear how many Eritreans will have to perish and how many will leave the country before the excesses of the regime are called into question. The Eritrean President has often blamed his own people for their suffering under his rule. He has even reprimanded them for trafficking in dough to evade the government's controls over the movement of cereals. This is not the depth in leadership that passionately patriotic Eritreans deserve but it hasn't prevented President Isaias frequently making similar remarks. Indeed, he has essentially managed to reduce an entire nation to barefoot soldiers who fritter their lives away in ridiculous projects meant to showcase the wise leadership of the President. His only task has become the maintenance of his position for as long as he can and now, apparently, until he thinks one of his offspring might become fit to take the mantle of power.

It isn't only diehard supporters of President Isaias who are complicit in his collapse into the depths of totalitarian debauchery. Some in the opposition seem to believe, perhaps sincerely, that there is still some saving grace to be found. They laboriously try to find a

few redeeming qualities even in an accomplished despot who kills his people without qualms. Some try to rationalize his ruthless rule by pointing fingers at the enemies against which he has to fight to maintain Eritrea's hard-won independence. They find solace in the "fact that Ethiopia is still kept at bay" thanks to his leadership. Some so-called opposition websites go as far as to suggest that President Isaias, the "personification of wisdom and justice", will now listen to their calls to reconsider the refusal to allow the burial of Naizghi Kiflu who died a couple of months ago. For some this is an aberration they find hard to understand, an isolated freak moment in the life of "an otherwise lucid and fair-minded leader". They stubbornly hold on to the hope that some explanation will be found in the crevices of Eritrea's presidential office.

In fact, the truth of the matter is that neither President Isaias' rule nor his callous response to a comrade's death is anything isolated or freakish. The attitudes revealed in these and similar episodes have been the hallmark of his leadership from day one. Nor can what we see today be considered in any sense a reaction to any real or perceived threats to Eritrea's independence. Rather, it is a dangerous pattern to which many Eritrean political forces and intellectuals have contributed, whether wilfully or inadvertently. The problems emanating from President Isaias' unbridled totalitarianism require sober assessment and understanding, as well as careful and considered response.

## News and Views

### TFG gains on the ground in Bay region

Transitional Federal Government forces, with support from Ethiopian troops, captured two districts and several villages from Al-Shabaab in the Bay region last Friday [6<sup>th</sup> April]. According to TFG and local sources this success involved only minor fighting before Al-Shabaab abandoned the districts of Burhakaba and Qasahdhere as well as the villages of Moodemoode, Daynuunay, Manaas, Iidaale and Ufurow. Abdifatah Gessey. The TFG governor for Bay region, confirmed the advance made by government and allied forces. He stressed that the operations against Al-Shabaab militants would continue and indeed increase. "Early on Friday, our troops advanced operations against the terrorist group, they tried to repel us, but the national forces succeeded in chasing them away," he said. "I can confirm to you that our forces are in full control of these districts and villages and operations will continue till we secure the entirety of the Bay, Bakool and Gedo regions," he added. He took the opportunity to ask local residents to cooperate with TFG forces. In fact, the allied forces now seem to have completely captured the whole of the Bay region, except for Dinsoor district where Al-Shabaab still has a large base. Despite these advances, Al-Shabaab still retains some capacity to carry out bomb attacks. Twelve people died in a bomb attack on Monday [9<sup>th</sup> April] in a busy market in Baidoa, the capital of Bay region. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for an attack it said was aimed at Somali and Ethiopian troops. In fact, however "Most of the casualties were people standing in front of the butchers shop inside the main market and all the casualties were civilians except for one soldier who was slightly injured," said a mother of five. Such attacks hitting civilians rather than soldiers underline Al-Shabaab's weaknesses and its resort to suicidal attacks targeting civilians in its efforts to survive.



## Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Rwanda Genocide

The 18<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rwanda genocide was commemorated at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa on 7<sup>th</sup> April, together with authorities of the Republic of Rwanda. The theme of the occasion was "Learning from our history to build a bright future". The ceremony was attended by member states, AU organs, national human rights institutions, inter-governmental and civil society organizations. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr Jean Ping, said in his opening remarks that the commemoration was an occasion for Africans to reiterate their commitment to ensure that no more genocide could occur on the African continent "now or in the future." Chairperson Ping noted that the occasion provided the opportunity for Africans to remember the killing of over one million people in Rwanda in 1994 within a period of one hundred days, in one of the fastest and most systematic genocides known to history. A minute of silence in memory of the victims was observed while religious leaders, representing Muslim and Protestant communities delivered prayers in remembrance of the victims and their families. The event was marked by the lighting of candles, by a musical play by school children, and with songs and prayers. A short documentary film was also shown describing the genocide and its effects on the country. Ambassador Joseph Nsengimana of Rwanda expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the AU's initiative in holding an annual commemoration of the Rwanda Genocide. He said "By remembering the genocide, we are able to firmly say NEVER AGAIN - never to allow this to happen again in Rwanda or in any other part of the world". Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hailemariam Desalegn also stressed the need to remember the lessons of this dark chapter in the history of the continent, and to reaffirm the common resolve to prevent such crimes from ever happening again: "We join the people of Rwanda in remembering the 1994 genocide". The commemoration is an annual event of the African Union following the decision to commemorate 7<sup>th</sup> April as a day of remembrance for the victims of the genocide and as a reaffirmation of Africa's resolve to prevent and fight genocide throughout the Continent.

## The death of Maitre Afewerk Tekle, Ethiopia's leading artist

Ethiopia's leading artist, the Most Honourable Maitre Artiste World Laureate Afewerk Tekle died on Tuesday this week [10<sup>th</sup> April] at the age of 80. A Week in the Horn expresses its deep condolences to his family and his admirers all over the world.

Born in the old city of Ankober in Shoa Province in 1932, Afewerk was originally sent to the UK to study as an engineer, but his artistic talents were quickly recognized and he was persuaded to enrol in the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London. He subsequently became the first African student to enter the Slade School of Art where he studied painting, sculpture and architecture. Returning to Ethiopia, Afewerk decided to travel around the country to get more experience of Ethiopia and its cultures. This was reflected in his first one-man show in Addis Ababa, and was followed by study tours in Italy, France, Spain, Portugal and Greece where he learnt to design and construct stained glass windows as well as extend his interests into murals, mosaics, and sculpture as well as drawing and painting. These experiences also infused his designs for stamps, playing cards, posters, flags and national ceremonial dresses.

It all went to build up his position as Ethiopia's foremost artist. He produced murals and mosaics for St George's Cathedral in Addis Ababa and designed a number of stamps. A monumental statue of Ras Mekonnen was completed for the city of Harar and he designed the stained glass windows in Africa Hall. The three windows, which cover an area of 150 square metres, represent the sorrow of Africa's past, the struggle of the present, and the hope for Africa's future. Other important works included an Altar cross (1959) for the Royal Chapel in the Tower of London in the UK, the Last Judgment (1970) mural in Adigrat Cathedral, Tigray, the victory of Ethiopia (1979) at the Hero Centre in Debre Zeit and the Chalice and the Cross in the Life of the African People (1997). In 1977, his painting Unity Triptych won the gold medal in the Algiers International Festival. In 1961 Afeverk held a major retrospective in Addis Ababa, which led to his painting Maskal Flower (1961) being shown at international exhibitions in Russia, the United States and in Senegal. It was at this time he became committed to the anti-colonial struggle, and this was reflected in such paintings as Backbones of African Civilization and African Unity. He held exhibitions in many countries including the US, Senegal, Turkey, Zaire, the United Arab Republic, Bulgaria, Germany, Kenya, the USSR, France and Algeria. In 1997 he exhibited at the Biennale of Aquitaine in France, winning first prize in the international competition. Afeverk also designed his own house, studio and gallery, known as Villa "Alpha", architecturally inspired by Ethiopia's cultural heritage.

Afeverk was a man of the African renaissance, who knew the "true meaning of compassion, of duty, of style, and of beauty," and he has left a "tapestry of art" in his paintings of Ethiopia and of Africa and his stained glass windows which have done so much to inspire generations of younger artists in Ethiopia and in Africa. Speaking a few years ago at Stamford University he summed up his work and by extension his life: "I am not a pessimist. I want people to look at my art and find hope. I want people to feel good about Ethiopia, about Africa, to feel the delicate rays of the sun. And most of all I want them to think: Yitchalal – it is possible." He will be greatly missed.