

**ERITREAN CONSTITUTION.—11th August, 1952<sup>(1)</sup>**

(Prepared by the United Nations Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of Article 12 of the Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly of 2nd December, 1950.)

**PART I  
GENERAL**

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**ARTICLE 1**

1. The Eritrean people, through their representatives, hereby

<sup>(1)</sup> Adopted by the Representative Assembly of Eritrea on 10th July, 1952, and ratified by Ethiopia on 11th August, 1952. The Constitution entered into force on 11th September, 1952.

adopt and ratify the Federal Act<sup>(2)</sup> approved on 2nd December, 1950 by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

2. They undertake to observe faithfully the provisions of the said Act.

Chapter I

STATUS OF ERITREA

ARTICLE 2

The territory of Eritrea, including the islands, is that of the former Italian colony of Eritrea.

ARTICLE 3

Eritrea shall constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown.

ARTICLE 4

The Government of Eritrea shall exercise legislative, executive and judicial powers with respect to matters within its jurisdiction.

ARTICLE 5

1. The jurisdiction of the Government of Eritrea shall extend to all matters not vested in the Federal Government by the Federal Act.

2. The jurisdiction shall include:—

- (a) the various branches of law (criminal law, civil law, commercial law, etc.);
- (b) the organisation of the public services;
- (c) internal police;
- (d) health;
- (e) education;
- (f) public assistance and social security;
- (g) protection of labour;
- (h) exploitation of natural resources and regulation of industry, internal commerce, trades and professions;
- (i) agriculture;
- (j) internal communications;
- (k) the public utility services which are peculiar to Eritrea;
- (l) the Eritrean budget and the establishment and collection of taxes designed to meet the expenses of Eritrean public functions and services.

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ARTICLE 6

1. Eritrea shall bear its just and equitable share of the expenses of Federal functions and services.

2. The Government of Eritrea shall assess and levy in Eritrea, by delegation from the Federal Government, such taxes as are established to that end for the benefit of the whole of the Federation.

3. Within the revenue which accrues to Eritrea shall be included the customs duties on goods entering or leaving the Federation which have their final destination or origin in Eritrea, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of the Resolution of 2nd December, 1950 of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 7

1. The Eritrean representatives in the Imperial Federal Council, composed of equal numbers of Ethiopians and Eritreans, shall be appointed by the Chief Executive with the approval of the Assembly. They shall be formally invested in office by the Emperor.

2. Eritreans shall participate in the executive and judicial branches and shall be represented in the legislative branch of the Federal Government, in accordance with law and in the proportion that the population of Eritrea bears to the population of the Federation.

ARTICLE 8

Persons who have acquired Federal nationality in Eritrea under the Federal Act (Section A, paragraph 6 of the General Assembly Resolution 390 (V) A) and have been granted Eritrean citizenship in accordance with the laws of Eritrea shall be citizens of Eritrea.

ARTICLE 9

1. On the basis of reciprocity, Federal nationals who are not Eritrean citizens shall enjoy the same rights as Eritreans.

2. Federal nationals shall enjoy political rights in accordance with the Eritrean Constitution and laws on the basis of reciprocity.

Chapter II

REPRESENTATION OF THE EMPEROR IN ERITREA

ARTICLE 10

There shall be a representative in Eritrea of His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Ethiopia, Sovereign of the Federation.

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ARTICLE 11

The representative of the Emperor shall, on all occasions, have the place of precedence at official ceremonies in Eritrea.

ARTICLE 12

The Chief Executive, elected by the Assembly in accordance with Article 68, shall take the oath of office in accordance with the provisions of Article 72. The representative of the Emperor, having noted that the Chief Executive has been elected by the Assembly, shall formally invest him in office in the name of the Emperor, Sovereign of the Federation.

ARTICLE 13

At the opening and closing of sessions of the Assembly, the representative of the Emperor may deliver the speech from the throne in which he will deal with affairs of common interest to the Federation and to Eritrea.

ARTICLE 14

1. When draft legislation has been voted by the Assembly, the Chief Executive will transmit it immediately to the representative of the Emperor.

2. If the representative of the Emperor considers that draft legislation voted by the Assembly encroaches upon Federal jurisdiction, or that it involves the international responsibility of the Federation, he may transmit a request to the Chief Executive within twenty days after the vote by the Assembly for reconsideration of the draft legislation by the Assembly, indicating his reasons for doing so.

ARTICLE 15

The representative of the Emperor will promulgate legislation in the manner laid down in Article 58.

Chapter III

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN ERITREA

ARTICLE 16

The Constitution of Eritrea is based on the principles of democratic government.

ARTICLE 17

The Constitution guarantees to all persons the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

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ARTICLE 18

1. All organs of government are provided for by the people. They are chosen by means of periodic, free and fair elections, directly and indirectly.

2. The organs of government shall act in the interests of the people.

ARTICLE 19

1. The organs of government and public officials shall have no further powers than those conferred on them by the Constitution and by the laws and regulations which give effect thereto.

2. Neither a group of the people nor an individual shall arbitrarily assume the exercise of any political power or of administrative functions.

3. Public officials shall perform their duties in strict conformity with the law and solely in the public interest.

4. Public officials shall be personally answerable for any unlawful acts or abuses they may commit.

ARTICLE 20

The electorate shall consist of those persons possessing Eritrean citizenship who:—

- (a) are of male sex;
- (b) have attained the age of twenty-one years;
- (c) are under no legal disability as defined by the law; and
- (d) have been resident for one year preceding the election in the constituency where they shall vote.

ARTICLE 21

1. The Federal flag shall be respected in Eritrea.
2. There shall be a flag, seal and arms of Eritrea, details of which shall be decided upon by law.

Chapter IV

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Section I.—Provisions reproduced from the Federal Act

ARTICLE 22

The following provisions of paragraph 7 of the Federal Act shall be an integral part of the Constitution of Eritrea:—

The Federal Government, as well as Eritrea, shall ensure to residents in Eritrea, without distinction of nationality, race, sex,

language or religion, the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental liberties, including the following:—

(a) The right to equality before the law. No discrimination shall be made against foreign enterprises in existence in Eritrea engaged in industrial, commercial, agricultural, artisan, educational or charitable activities nor against banking institutions and insurance companies operating in Eritrea;

(b) The right to life, liberty and security of person;

(c) The right to own and dispose of property. No one shall be deprived of property, including contractual rights, without due process of law without payment of just and effective compensation;

(d) The right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right of adoption and practising any creed or religion;

(e) The right to education;

(f) The right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;

(g) The right to inviolability of correspondence and domicile subject to the requirements of the law;

(h) The right to exercise any profession subject to the requirements of the law;

(i) No one shall be subject to arrest or detention without an order of a competent authority, except in case of flagrant and serious violation of the law in force. No one shall be deported except in accordance with the law;

(j) The right to a fair and equitable trial, the right of petition to the Emperor and the right of appeal to the Emperor for commutation of death sentences;

(k) Retroactivity of penal law shall be excluded.

#### Section II.—Other Provisions

##### ARTICLE 23

All persons are born free and are equal before the law without distinction of nationality, race, sex or religion and, as such, shall enjoy civil rights and shall be subject to duties and obligations.

##### ARTICLE 24

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

##### ARTICLE 25

Everyone resident in Eritrea has the right to freedom of movement and to the choice of place of residence in Eritrea subject to the provisions of Article 34.

ARTICLE 26

The right to freedom of conscience and religion shall include the right of everyone, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

ARTICLE 27

No economic, financial or political measure of a discriminatory nature shall be taken to the detriment of any religion practised in Eritrea.

ARTICLE 28

Religious bodies of all kinds and religious orders shall be recognised as possessing juristic personality.

Consequently, any religious denomination or any group of citizens belonging to such denomination shall be entitled:—

- (a) to establish and maintain institutions for religious, educational and charitable purposes;
- (b) to conduct its own affairs in matters of religion;
- (c) to possess and acquire movable and immovable property;
- (d) to administer its property and to enter into contracts.

ARTICLE 29

No pupil attending a public school shall be required to take part in any religious instruction at such school or to attend any religious service at such school.

ARTICLE 30

Everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to express his opinion through any medium whatever (press, speech, etc.) and to learn the opinions expressed by others.

ARTICLE 31

1. Everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to education. The Government shall make every effort to establish schools and to train teachers.

2. The Government shall encourage private persons and private associations and institutions, regardless of race, nationality, religion, sex or language, to open schools, provided that they give proof of the required standards of morality and competence.

3. The instruction in the schools shall conform to the spirit of the Constitution.

ARTICLE 32

1. Everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to form associations or companies for lawful purposes.
2. Companies or associations shall enjoy fundamental freedoms in so far as their nature permits.
3. Such companies or associations shall be regarded as persons before the law.

ARTICLE 33

1. Everyone resident in Eritrea, regardless of nationality, race, sex, or religion, shall have the right to opportunity of work, to equal pay for equal work, to regular holidays with pay, to payment of dependency allowances, to compensation for illness and accidents incurred through work and to a decent and healthy standard of life.
2. Everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

ARTICLE 34

1. The provisions in the last sub-paragraph of paragraph 7 of the Federal Act apply to the whole of Chapter IV of Part I of the Constitution. This sub-paragraph reads as follows:—  
The respect for the rights and freedoms of others and the requirements of public order and the general welfare alone will justify any limitations to the above rights.
2. In applying the aforementioned provision, the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms may be regulated by law provided that such regulation does not impede their normal enjoyment.

ARTICLE 35

Everyone shall have the duty to respect the Constitution and the laws, and to serve the community.

Chapter V

SPECIAL RIGHTS OF THE VARIOUS POPULATION GROUPS IN ERITREA

ARTICLE 36

Nationals of the Federation, including those covered by sub-paragraphs (b) and (d) of paragraph 6 of the Federal Act, as well as foreign nationals, shall have the right to respect for their customs and their own legislation governing personal status and legal capacity, the law of the family and the law of succession.

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ARTICLE 37

Property rights and rights of real nature, including those on State lands, established by custom or law and exercised in Eritrea by the tribes, the various population groups and by natural or legal persons, shall not be impaired by any law of a discriminatory nature.

ARTICLE 38

1. Tigrinya and Arabic shall be the official languages of Eritrea.

2. In accordance with established practice in Eritrea, the languages spoken and written by the various population groups shall be permitted to be used in dealings with the public authorities, as well as for religious or educational purposes and for all forms of expression of ideas.

PART II

THE ASSEMBLY

Chapter I

COMPOSITION AND ELECTION OF THE ASSEMBLY

ARTICLE 39

1. Legislative power shall be exercised by an Assembly representing the Eritrean people.

2. Members of the Assembly shall represent the Eritrean people as a whole, and not only the constituency in which they are elected.

ARTICLE 40

1. The Assembly shall be composed of not less than fifty and not more than seventy members.

2. Within the limits prescribed in the preceding paragraph, the number of members shall be fixed by law.

ARTICLE 41

1. The territory of Eritrea shall be divided into electoral constituencies, each electing one representative.

2. These constituencies shall be established in such a way that they will be approximately equal in population. The boundaries of the constituencies shall be fixed by law.

ARTICLE 42

All members of the electorate shall be eligible for election to the Assembly provided that:—

- (a) they have reached the age of thirty;
- (b) they have been resident in Eritrea for three years and have resided in the constituency for two years during the last ten years;
- (c) they are not disqualified for any reason laid down by law; and
- (d) they are not officials of the Eritrean or Federal Government, unless they have resigned at the time of presenting their candidature.

ARTICLE 43

1. The members of the Assembly shall be elected either by direct or indirect ballot.

2. The system of voting to be used in any given constituency shall be laid down by law.

3. Voting by direct ballot shall be personal, equal and secret. For this purpose, a roll of qualified voters shall be drawn up, and revised from time to time.

The system of establishing electoral rolls shall be fixed by law.

4. The first stage of voting by indirect ballot shall be conducted in accordance with local custom. At the second stage, voting shall be personal, equal and secret.

ARTICLE 44

1. If a candidate for the Assembly obtains an absolute majority of the votes cast he shall be declared elected.

2. If no candidate obtains an absolute majority, as defined in paragraph 1, a second ballot shall be held, and the candidate who then obtains the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected.

ARTICLE 45

1. An electoral High Commission consisting of three persons appointed by the Supreme Court established under Article 85 shall be responsible for supervising all electoral proceedings (including the compiling of electoral rolls), and for preventing or putting a stop to irregularities.

2. The High Commission shall appoint, in each constituency, from among the electors of that constituency, a representative to act under its authority.

3. The said representative shall be assisted by an advisory election committee, consisting of members chosen by him from among the electors of that constituency.

As soon as an election period has been declared open in accordance with the law every candidate shall be entitled to be represented on the committee.

4. The implementation of the present Article shall be prescribed by law.

#### ARTICLE 46

1. At the opening of the session following an election, the Assembly shall confirm its members. All members whose elections are unchallenged shall be confirmed simultaneously.

2. In any case where an election is challenged, the Assembly shall decide, by a two-thirds majority of the members present, whether the challenged election is valid, provided that such two-thirds majority shall be not less than one half of the members of the Assembly in office.

3. In the event of a member's election not being confirmed, he may, within three days following the adoption of the decision by the Assembly, appeal to the Supreme Court established under Article 85, but shall not take his seat until the Supreme Court has given its decision.

#### ARTICLE 47

1. The Assembly shall be elected for a term of four years.

2. Members shall be eligible for re-election.

3. If there is a vacancy during the term of an Assembly, a by-election shall take place. No by-election can, however, take place within six months of the election of a new Assembly.

### Chapter II

#### SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

#### ARTICLE 48

1. The Assembly shall hold two regular sessions each year.

2. The Assembly shall meet in regular session on a date to be specified by law.

This session shall continue for at least one month.

3. The opening date of the second regular session shall be fixed by the Chief Executive after consulting the President of the Assembly.

The second session shall be devoted primarily to voting the budget and the Assembly shall consider no other matter until the budget has been voted. The session shall not close until the budget has been voted as prescribed in Article 60.

4. The closing date of regular sessions shall be fixed by the Chief Executive after consulting the President of the Assembly.

5. With the consent of the President of the Assembly, the Chief Executive may suspend a session for a period not exceeding twenty days.

ARTICLE 49

1. The Chief Executive may convene the Assembly to a special session.

2. The Chief Executive shall convene the Assembly to a special session whenever a written request is submitted by not less than one third of the members.

3. When the Assembly is convened to a special session by the Chief Executive on his own initiative, only the questions set forth in the notice convening the Assembly shall be discussed. The Chief Executive shall fix the closing date of the session.

4. When the Assembly is convened to a special session at the request of not less than one third of its members, it shall determine its own agenda. The Chief Executive shall fix the closing date of the session in agreement with the President of the Assembly.

ARTICLE 50

Two thirds of the members of the Assembly shall compose a quorum.

ARTICLE 51

The Assembly shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

ARTICLE 52

The Assembly shall elect its officers at the opening of the first regular session of each year or at the beginning of a new Legislature. The officers shall consist of a President, of a Vice-President and, if the Assembly so desires, other officers.

Chapter III

STATUS OF MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

ARTICLE 53

Before taking up their duties, members of the Assembly who have not served in the previous Legislature shall take, in accordance with the faith and the customary practice of the individual

concerned, the following oath before the President of the Assembly:—

I undertake before Almighty God (or an invocation conforming to the faith and the customary practice of the member of the Assembly concerned) to respect the Federation under the sovereignty of the Imperial Crown, loyally to serve Eritrea, to defend its Constitution and its laws, to seek no personal advantage from my office, and to perform all my duties conscientiously.

ARTICLE 54

1. Members of the Assembly shall not be liable to prosecution for opinions expressed or votes cast by them in the performance of their duties.

2. Members of the Assembly shall not be arrested or prosecuted without the authorisation of the Assembly; save that in case of flagrant delict they may be arrested, but the prosecution, even in this case, shall be authorised by the Assembly.

When the Assembly is not in session, such authorisation may be given by its officers. The Assembly may subsequently decide that proceedings shall be discontinued.

ARTICLE 55

1. Members of the Assembly shall receive a remuneration fixed by law.

2. No increase of remuneration shall take effect until the term of office of the Assembly voting it has expired.

Chapter IV

POWERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

ARTICLE 56

The Assembly shall vote the laws and the budget, elect the Chief Executive and supervise the activities of the Executive.

Section I.—Legislative functions

ARTICLE 57

1. Draft legislation may be introduced into the Assembly by members of the Assembly or submitted to the Assembly by the Chief Executive.

2. Such legislation shall be considered, discussed and put to the vote as provided in the Assembly's rules of procedure.

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ARTICLE 58

1. Draft legislation adopted by the Assembly shall be immediately transmitted by the President of the Assembly to the Chief Executive.

2. The Chief Executive will transmit it as soon as received to the representative of the Emperor who may request, in accordance with the provisions of Article 14, that it be reconsidered by the Assembly.

3. If the representative of the Emperor, exercising the prerogatives for which provision is made under Article 14, has transmitted a request to the Chief Executive for reconsideration, giving his reasons for doing so, the Assembly must take a further vote. The draft legislation must obtain a two-thirds majority vote to be adopted.

4. If the draft legislation has been adopted after reconsideration, as provided in the preceding paragraph, or if the representative of the Emperor has not exercised his prerogatives under Article 14, the Chief Executive must within twenty days after the vote taken by the Assembly, either approve the draft legislation and transmit it to the representative of the Emperor for promulgation within five days of its receipt, or return it to the Assembly with his comments.

5. If the Chief Executive shall have returned the draft legislation to the Assembly, the Assembly shall reconsider the draft legislation and take a further vote on it. If the draft legislation is then adopted by a two-thirds majority, the Chief Executive shall transmit it to the representative of the Emperor for promulgation within five days of its receipt.

6. All draft legislation adopted in accordance with the provisions of this article but not promulgated within the time limit laid down in paragraphs 4 and 5 of this Article, shall come into effect after publication by the Chief Executive.

Section II.—Budget

ARTICLE 59

1. At least one month before the opening of the second regular session of the Assembly, the Chief Executive shall submit a draft budget for the next financial year.

2. The draft budget shall cover the whole of the revenue and expenditures of the Government of Eritrea for the next financial year.

ARTICLE 60

1. During the month preceding the second regular session of the Assembly, the Assembly Finance Committee shall examine the draft budget submitted by the Executive and report to the Assembly.

2. A general debate on the draft budget shall be held at the beginning of the second regular session of the Assembly.

Within ten days following the closure of the debate, the Executive shall submit a revised draft budget including the amendments it may decide to make to its first draft as a result of the observations made by the Assembly.

3. The Assembly shall then proceed to examine the various items of the budget:—

(a) It shall first adopt the expenditure estimates, with or without amendments, only the total estimate for each Executive department being put to the vote.

The Assembly may not increase the estimates proposed in the draft budget unless such increase is balanced by corresponding estimates of revenue and has received the consent of the Executive.

(b) The Assembly shall then adopt, with or without amendments, the revenue estimates chapter by chapter, each of which shall be put to the vote separately.

4. The complete budget shall be adopted before the beginning of the financial year; otherwise, the amended draft budget submitted by the Executive as provided in paragraph 2 above shall be deemed to be adopted, provided the Executive has itself observed the time limit laid down in Article 59 and in the present Article.

ARTICLE 61

No tax shall be levied and no expenditure shall be incurred unless authorised by law.

ARTICLE 62

A law shall be enacted governing the form in which the budget is to be submitted and voted on each year.

ARTICLE 63

1. When voting the budget, the Assembly shall include a credit for urgent expenditure.

2. The amount of this credit shall not exceed 10% of the expenditure estimates.

3. At the beginning of the following session of the Assembly, the Chief Executive shall report on the use he has made of this credit. The Assembly shall take a vote on this report.

ARTICLE 64

1. Within eighteen months following the close of each financial year, the Executive shall submit the accounts for that financial year to the Assembly for approval.

2. An Auditor-General, independent of the Executive, shall be elected by the Assembly.

3. The principal function of the Auditor-General shall be to examine the annual accounts, and to make a report to the Assembly containing his observations on them at the time of their presentation to the Assembly.

4. The method of election and the matters within the competence of the Auditor-General shall be established by law.

Section III.—Election and Supervision of the Executive

ARTICLE 65

The Assembly shall elect the Chief Executive as provided in Article 68.

ARTICLE 66

1. Members of the Assembly may submit questions in writing or short questions orally to the Executive, which shall reply.

2. At the request of ten members of the Assembly, a debate may be held on the Executive's policy.

The Executive shall be entitled to intervene both in the course of the debate and before its closure.

PART III

THE EXECUTIVE

Chapter I

COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT

ARTICLE 67

The Executive shall consist of a Chief Executive assisted by Secretaries of executive departments.

ARTICLE 68

1. The Chief Executive shall be elected by the Assembly by secret ballot; if a candidate obtains two thirds of the votes cast

he shall be declared elected. If no candidate obtains the requisite number of votes the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be removed from the list and the Assembly shall vote again on the remainder repeating the process if necessary until a candidate obtains the required number of votes.

2. Only Eritrean citizens having attained the age of thirty-five years and in possession of their political rights shall be eligible for the office of the Chief Executive.

3. The Assembly shall elect a Chief Executive at the opening of each new legislature.

4. In case of death or resignation of the Chief Executive, the Assembly shall elect a successor within fifteen days. If the Assembly is not in session, the President of the Assembly shall convene it to special session.

The newly elected Chief Executive shall remain in office until the expiry of his predecessor's term.

5. The Chief Executive shall be eligible for re-election.

#### ARTICLE 69

1. The Chief Executive shall have power to appoint and dismiss Secretaries of executive departments, who shall be responsible to him.

2. Only persons qualified to be members of the Eritrean electorate shall be eligible to hold office as Secretaries of executive departments.

3. The Chief Executive shall select the Secretaries of executive departments in such a way as to ensure as far as possible a fair representation in his council of the principal groups of the population and the various geographical areas of the territory.

4. The number and the functions of Secretaries of executive departments shall be prescribed by law.

#### ARTICLE 70

The office of the Chief Executive or of Secretary of an executive department is incompatible with the holding of any other administrative or judicial office.

#### ARTICLE 71

The Chief Executive, on being elected, shall designate one of the Secretaries of executive departments to act for him if he is temporarily prevented from discharging his duties or, if his post falls vacant, until such time as a new Chief Executive is elected.

ARTICLE 72

Before taking up his duties, the Chief Executive shall, according to his faith and customary practice, take the following oath in the Assembly before the representative of the Emperor:—

I undertake before Almighty God (or an invocation conforming to the faith and the customary practice of the Chief Executive) to respect the Federation under the sovereignty of the Imperial Crown, loyally to serve Eritrea, to defend its Constitution and its laws, to seek the welfare of the Eritrean people in the unity of its inhabitants bound together by ties of brotherhood, whatever their race, religion or language, and to seek no personal advantage from my office.

ARTICLE 73

Before taking up their duties, Secretaries of executive departments shall, according to their faith and their customary practices, take the following oath publicly in the Assembly before the representative of the Emperor:—

I undertake before Almighty God (or an invocation conforming to the faith and the customary practice of the individual concerned) loyally to respect the Federation under the sovereignty of the Imperial Crown, loyally to serve Eritrea, to respect its Constitution and its laws, to seek no personal advantage from my office and to perform all my duties conscientiously.

ARTICLE 74

The Chief Executive shall from time to time summon a council of the Secretaries of executive departments. This Council shall advise the Chief Executive on matters of general policy and on any questions he may submit to it.

ARTICLE 75

1. The Chief Executive shall not be answerable for any act performed by him in the course of his duties except for a grave violation of the Constitution. He shall be answerable for failure to dismiss any Secretary of an executive department committing a grave violation of the Constitution.

2. In such circumstances, the Chief Executive may be impeached by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Assembly in office, and tried by the Supreme Court established under Article 85.

3. If the Supreme Court finds the charge to be proved, it shall order the removal from office of the Chief Executive. It may, furthermore, disqualify him from performing any executive function or legislative duty.

4. Removal from office shall be without prejudice to any proceedings which may be instituted if the acts committed by the Chief Executive constitute offences under criminal law.

## Chapter II

### POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

#### ARTICLE 76

1. The Chief Executive shall ensure that the Constitution and the laws are enforced. He shall have responsibility for the direction of the executive and administrative departments and public services. He shall be chairman of the Civil Service Commission for which provision is made in Article 82, and shall make appointments in accordance with the Constitution and the laws.

2. He shall be responsible for the internal police of Eritrea and, to this end, he shall issue regulations conforming to the Constitution and the laws to ensure the maintenance of public order and security.

3. He shall convene the sessions of the Assembly as provided in Articles 48 and 49 of the Constitution.

4. Each year, at the opening of the first regular session, he shall give an account to the Assembly of his conduct of affairs and report on the general situation of Eritrea.

5. He shall have the power to propose legislation. He may request the Assembly to reconsider draft legislation. He shall publish the laws after their promulgation or under the provisions of Article 58.

6. He shall submit to the Assembly a draft annual budget and the accounts for the preceding financial year, as provided in Articles 59, 60 and 64.

7. He shall have access to and the right of addressing the Assembly. He may be represented in the Assembly and its Committees by the Secretaries of executive departments.

8. He shall issue the regulations required to implement the laws.

9. He shall issue orders as provided in Article 77.

10. He may temporarily limit certain provisions of the Constitution as provided in Article 78.

11. He shall take the necessary measures for the suppression of brigandage, as provided in Article 79.

12. Official documents issued by the Chief Executive must be countersigned by the Secretaries of the executive departments concerned.

ARTICLE 77

1. In the interval between sessions of the Assembly, the Chief Executive shall have authority to issue, when necessary, orders governing any matter within the jurisdiction of the Government of Eritrea except matters dealt with in Chapter IV of Part I of the Constitution, provided that such orders are compatible with the Constitution and the laws in force.

2. Such orders shall be submitted to the Assembly which must approve or repeal them within a period of two months from the opening of the session following their promulgation.

3. Failing a decision by the Assembly within the above-mentioned period, orders issued by the Chief Executive shall be deemed to be confirmed.

ARTICLE 78

1. In the event of a serious emergency which endangers public order and security, the Assembly may, on the proposal of the Chief Executive, adopt a law authorising him to impose under the conditions provided for in Article 34, temporary limitations on the rights set forth in Chapter IV of Part I of this Constitution.

2. The authorisation thus given by law shall be valid for a maximum period of two months. If necessary, it may be renewed under the same conditions.

3. During the interval between sessions, the Chief Executive may, if it is urgently necessary, issue an order prescribing the measures referred to in paragraph 1.

In such cases, a special session of the Assembly shall be convened as soon as possible and, at the latest, within twenty days following the promulgation of the order, to adopt a law approving, amending or repealing the said order.

ARTICLE 79

1. If public order and the security of persons and property in Eritrea are threatened by organised brigandage, the Chief Executive shall, after making a proclamation to the people, adopt the exceptional measures necessary to suppress such brigandage.

2. The Chief Executive shall inform the Assembly of the measures he has taken.

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Chapter III

THE ADMINISTRATION

ARTICLE 80

Officials shall be chosen for their ability and character; considerations of race, sex, religion or political opinion shall not influence the choice either to their advantage or to their disadvantage.

ARTICLE 81

1. The general status of administrative officials shall be fixed by law.
2. The special status of the various categories of administrative officials shall be fixed by regulations.

ARTICLE 82

1. A Civil Service Commission, under the chairmanship of the Chief Executive or his representative, shall be created.
2. This Commission shall be responsible for the appointment, promotion, transfer and discharge of officials, and for taking disciplinary action against them.
3. The composition of this Commission, the procedure for the appointment of its members, and the conditions under which it will function will be determined by law.

ARTICLE 83

1. The Constitution recognises the existence of local communities.
2. Municipalities shall be accorded the management of their own affairs.
3. Officials responsible for the administration of village and tribal communities shall be selected from persons of those local communities.
4. The conditions for the application of the preceding provisions may be determined by law.

PART IV

THE ADVISORY COUNCIL OF ERITREA

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ARTICLE 84

1. An Advisory Council of Eritrea is hereby established.
2. The function of the Council shall be to assist the Chief

Executive and the Assembly, with a view to achieving economic and social progress in Eritrea. To this end it may:—

- (a) draw up plans for the development of the country's resources and for the improvement of public health and hygiene;
- (b) put forward proposals concerning finance and the budget and the organisation of the administration and the public services;
- (c) give advice on draft laws submitted to the Assembly;
- (d) on the request of the Chief Executive or of the Assembly, prepare drafts of laws, regulations or orders.

3. The composition and organisation of the Council shall be fixed by law.

## PART V THE JUDICIARY

### — SOLE CHAPTER

#### ARTICLE 85

Judicial power shall be exercised by a Supreme Court and by other courts which will apply the various system of law in force in Eritrea. The organisation of these courts shall be established by law.

#### ARTICLE 86

1. Judges shall be chosen from persons of the highest moral reputation and known to be well versed in the customs and legislation peculiar to the various systems of law which they are required to apply.

2. Before taking up office, judges shall, according to their faith and their customary practice, take the following oath:—

I swear before Almighty God (or an invocation conforming to the faith and the customary practice of the judge concerned) to be a faithful guardian of the law and to administer it impartially and independently in order to ensure that justice shall reign supreme in Eritrea.

3. The judiciary shall be independent and must be free from all political influence. The Legislature and the Executive shall not give orders or injunctions to the judges, nor shall they bring any pressure to bear on them.

4. The status of judges shall be established by law.

#### ARTICLE 87

1. Judges shall be appointed by the Chief Executive on the recommendation of the President of the Assembly who shall be

supplied with a list of candidates by a Committee composed of the President of the Supreme Court and two judges chosen by the members of the Supreme Court and of the court or courts immediately inferior thereto.

2. The President of the Assembly shall recommend to the Chief Executive two candidates for each appointment.

3. The list of candidates drawn up by the committee provided for in paragraph 1 must include at least three names for each appointment.

ARTICLE 88

The Supreme Court provided for in Article 85 shall have jurisdiction in respect of criminal or disciplinary responsibility of judges for acts in connexion with the discharge of their duties.

ARTICLE 89

1. The Supreme Court shall consist of not less than three and not more than seven judges. On the proposal of the Court, the number of judges may be decreased or increased by law.

2. Judges shall be appointed for a period of seven years, which period may be renewed.

ARTICLE 90

The Supreme Court shall have jurisdiction in the following matters:—

(1) As a court of last resort with respect to appeals from final judgements on points of law, and also to the extent provided by law with respect to appeals both on questions of law and fact.

(2) Conflicts of jurisdiction between courts.

In the event of a question involving conflicting jurisdiction, proceedings shall be suspended and the issue shall be presented to the Supreme Court, which shall determine the competent jurisdiction.

(3) Disputes concerning the constitutionality of laws and orders.

If the constitutionality of a law or order is challenged before a Court, proceedings shall be suspended and the issue shall be presented to the Supreme Court, which shall decide whether such act is constitutional.

(4) Actions based on administrative acts brought against the Government of Eritrea or other public bodies, unless courts have been established by law to try such cases.

(5) Criminal and disciplinary responsibility of judges as provided in Article 88.

(6) Responsibility of the Chief Executive as provided in Article 75.

## PART VI

### AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

#### SOLE CHAPTER

##### ARTICLE 91

1. The Assembly may not, by means of an amendment, introduce into the Constitution any provision which would not be in conformity with the Federal Act.

2. Article 16 of the Constitution, by the terms of which the Constitution of Eritrea is based on the principles of democratic government, shall not be amended.

##### ARTICLE 92

1. Any amendment to the Constitution must be submitted in writing either by the Chief Executive or by a number of members of the Assembly equal to one quarter of the actual number of members.

2. A period of twenty days must elapse between the submission of an amendment and the opening of the Assembly's discussion thereon.

##### ARTICLE 93

1. If an amendment is approved by a majority of three quarters of the members of the Assembly in office, the amendment shall be declared adopted.

2. If an amendment is approved by two successive legislatures by a majority of two thirds of the members present and voting or by a majority of the members in office, the amendment shall be declared adopted.

3. Any amendments to the Constitution adopted by the Assembly according to the provisions of the foregoing paragraphs will enter into effect after ratification by the Emperor, Sovereign of the Federation.

PART VII

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 94

1. The Constitution shall enter into effect following ratification of the Federal Act by the Emperor of Ethiopia, and following approval by the United Nations Commissioner, adoption by the Eritrean Assembly and ratification by the Emperor of Ethiopia of the Eritrean Constitution.

2. The Administering Authority shall continue to conduct the affairs of Eritrea until the transfer of power to the Government of Eritrea has taken place.

ARTICLE 95

1. Any laws giving effect to the present Constitution, adopted by the Eritrean Assembly convened by the Administering Authority, shall enter into effect simultaneously with the Constitution.

2. Such laws shall conform strictly to the principles and provisions of the Constitution.

ARTICLE 96

1. Laws and regulations which were in force on 1st April, 1941, and have not since been repealed by the Administering Authority and the laws and regulations enacted by that Authority, shall remain in force so long as they have not been repealed and to the extent that they have not been amended.

2. In the event of conflict between such laws and regulations and this Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail in accordance with Article 90 (3).

ARTICLE 97

1. Obligations of any kind regularly contracted by the authorities administering Eritrea up to the date on which the Constitution enters into force shall remain valid for the Government of Eritrea and must be respected provided that such obligations relate to matters within the jurisdiction of Eritrea.

2. As from the date of the entry into force of the Constitution any undertaking regularly concluded by the Executive Committee established by the Administering Authority before the date of the entry into force of the Constitution shall remain valid and must be respected.

3. The provisions contained in paragraph 1 shall not apply to obligations terminated by the Peace Treaty with Italy of 10th February, 1947<sup>(3)</sup> or by the Resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 29th January, 1952.

ARTICLE 98

Administrative officials and judicial officials whether Federal nationals or not, holding office when the Constitution enters into force, shall continue in office. They may be dismissed only on three months' notice.

ARTICLE 99

The Assembly responsible for adopting the Constitution shall exercise the powers of the Assembly as provided in the Constitution for a period of four years after the Constitution enters into force.

<sup>(3)</sup> Vol. 148, page 394.

**INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION of the Eritrean Constitution<sup>(1)</sup> by the Emperor of Ethiopia.—Addis Ababa, 11th August, 1952**

(Translation)

Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Haile Sellassie I, Elect of God, Emperor of Ethiopia,

To all to whom these presents shall come, greetings:

Be it known that:

WHEREAS, on 10th July, 1952, the Eritrean Assembly, established in accordance with the provisions of Resolution No. 390 (V) adopted at the Fifth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on 2nd December, 1950, duly adopted the Constitution for Eritrea prepared and discussed in accordance with the provisions of said Resolution; and,

Whereas, in accordance with the provisions of said Resolution, the United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea has, on 6th August, 1952, approved the said Constitution of Eritrea as so adopted by the Eritrean Assembly; and,

Whereas paragraph 13 of the aforesaid Resolution provides that the Federal Act<sup>(2)</sup> and the Constitution of Eritrea shall

<sup>(1)</sup> Page 623.

<sup>(2)</sup> Page 621.

enter into effect following ratification of the Federal Act by the Emperor of Ethiopia, and following approval by the Commissioner, adoption by the Eritrean Assembly and ratification by the Emperor of Ethiopia of the Eritrean Constitution;

Now therefore We Haile Sellassie I, Elect of God, Emperor of Ethiopia, after having duly considered the aforesaid text of the aforesaid Constitution as approved by the United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea and adopted by the Eritrean Assembly, do hereby, as Crown and Sovereign of the Empire of Ethiopia, as now and as hereinafter constituted following the entry into effect of the Federation as provided by paragraph 13 of the aforesaid Resolution, do hereby approve, adopt and ratify said Constitution and do hereby command of all Our loyal subjects in Eritrea full respect of and obedience to the same.

In witness whereof We have caused the Seal of Our Empire of Ethiopia to be hereunto affixed and have hereunto subscribed Our Signature.

Given at Our Imperial Court at Addis Ababa, on this the Eleventh Day of the Month of August in the Year of Grace One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-two, and of Our Reign the Twenty-Third.

HAILE SELASSIE I,  
*Emperor.*

Certified correct translation :

AKLILU,  
*Minister for Foreign Affairs.*