



Celebrating anniversaries could be a landmark event in evaluating past achievements or the challenges a particular organization passed through during a given period of time. Accordingly, celebrating 30th anniversary occupies a significant chapter in the history of the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers and the experiences it has acquired over the years. Besides, since its establishment three decades ago, the NCEW, which was first founded as the National Union of Eritrean Workers had to pass various challenges given that the first 12 years of its existence was during the struggle for independence.

In this regard, the NCEW marked its 30th anniversary with incredible organization and by conducting a week long international symposium with invited guests and partners from different corners of the world. But the event as the Secretary General of the NCEW, Mr. Tekeste Baire said has a meaning that goes way beyond merriment; it is a juncture where the confederation looks back to its experiences and draft a roadmap for the future based on that experience.

A number of foreigners arrived in Eritrea to participate in the NCEW symposium, some of which presented research papers on various issues influencing labor and laborers including, HIV/AIDS and gender mainstreaming, global economic crisis and its challenges and others. Some of the participants of the conference gave our web site their view concerning the event.



Mr. Insa Dia is an activity manager of the ACTRAV in Africa. He said it is his second time to come to Eritrea and being part of the conference is a very important event for him. "This event allows people to bring back the right information about Eritrea to the rest of the world. I really was impressed by the opening cultural show. But we need to look at it in terms of development. If we want development, we shouldn't forget where we come from and who we are," he added.

Indeed it was a very interesting opening ceremony, which showed how much Eritrea has to offer visitors and how far the NCEW has come. A Swedish photographer by the name Mr. Kalle

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Written by shabait Administrator
Tuesday, 24 November 2009 07:41 -

Assbring, invited in honor of the memory of his father Mr. Goran Assbring, who died in 1983 while doing a documentary of the Eritrean struggle.

It was also a second time for Mr. Kalle to come to Eritrea. His first trip was in 1996 to visit his father's burial place and now at the invitation of the NCEW to take part in the anniversary. He said he feels so much connected with Eritrea and that his father's work inspired him to build a bond with the country.

"I was impressed by what I saw so far. In fact photographic exhibition of my father's work and the work of Eritrean photographers is being showcased in connection with the event. But the most important thing is that a lot more people will get a clearer picture of the Eritrean people when it comes to work".



Mr. Kalle was right. Just from the conference and the related activities, participants were able to learn at least something about the endeavors of the NCEW. Mr. Stephano from the Marche



province of Italy said, "I was quite blown away with the people, the workers and the general history and culture of the Eritrean people. That is why we need to strengthen cooperative endeavors."

In one of the many research papers presented at the symposium, Eritrean poet and researcher, Mr. Solomon Tsehaye talked about Eritrean oral poetry and handicrafts. Although the paper might seem a little unrelated to the topic at hand, Mr. Solomon had a different perspective. "By tradition, handicrafts, oral poets, iron smiths and others were marginalized from the society as a result of biased attitudes, but now that the public awareness is raised, what they do has become a respectable profession. All we have to do was look at them as workers".

A lot could be said about the participants of the symposium and what they came to know upon their stay. But the bottom line is, they all agree on one point. "The work capacity, the work culture and the ethics of the Eritrean society are a secret weapon for their inevitable development".

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