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Asmara, 21 July 2010 - President Isaias Afwerki today opened the International Youth Symposium at Hotel Asmara Palace under the theme: “Common Understanding on Peace and Stability, as well as Sustainable Development.”

In an opening speech, the President pointed out that the symposium is the continuation of the 4th ERI-Youth Festival, and that it reminds the responsibility of the youth in the region towards meeting the challenges being encountered at the regional and global level through strengthening common friendship. He also wished success to the conference.

Meanwhile, in a seminar he conducted under the title “Current Challenges, Peace and Reconstruction of the country and the Region,” Mr. Abdalla Jabir, Head of Organizational Affairs at the PFDJ, pointed out that a country short of lasting peace and security, as well as clear political path negatively affects other countries, especially neighboring ones. In this respect, he underscored the paramount importance of fostering close partnership of cooperation among countries, especially active participation of solid organization and contribution of youths.

Noting that no country has been able to ensure economic emancipation by isolating itself from the outside world, Mr. Abdalla stressed the need for the youth in the region to enhance partnership, strengthen organizational capacity and become owners of their resources, and thereby strive for peace and security, as well as reconstruction of their respective nations.

Likewise, the Chairperson of the Symposium Coordinating Committee, Ms. Rahel Woldeab, stated that the symposium is aimed at fostering friendship among the youth in the region. She further explained that no peace and development at the national and regional level could be realized without the active participation of youths.

Representatives of youth associations and organizations from Sudan, Libya, Egypt and Somalia

conveyed messages of solidarity to the symposium. Lauding Eritrea's role in ensuring peace and security in the region, they asserted that they would strive for regional harmony and cooperation.

In the international symposium that would continue until July 23, nine study papers would be presented focusing on the role of youths in the nation-building process, the role of youth association in nurturing common understanding, development and peace, among others.