



**ACTION GROUP FOR
ERITREA**

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Date: 24th January 2008

Dr. Robin Niblett
Director of Chatham House
10 St James's Square
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Dear Dr Niblett

Re: Formal Complaint

I am writing this letter as a follow up to the email I sent on 7th of January 2008 and 14th of January 2008. In my email, I asked you to look into my complaint regarding the way Chatham House has organised a series of meetings to discuss issues relating to Eritrea. I gave you a detailed account of how we were denied the opportunity to attend the meeting held on the 17th of December 2007 as well as the way in which other meetings were organised in the past. I am yet to receive a response from you. We believe Chatham House is in breach of its own stated aims and objectives as well as its legal obligations when selecting individuals to attend such meetings.

As highlighted in my email, Chatham House invited individuals who, in our opinion, do not represent the entire spectrum of the Eritrean community here in the UK as well as those in Eritrea. We believe that there are individuals, Eritrean and non-Eritrean, who are as good as if not better qualified to provide reliable insight regarding Eritrean foreign policy. We believe that had these individuals been invited the discussions in question would have been better served and the outcome could have been more well informed. Indeed, it has come to light now that Chatham House was reluctant to allow not only our organisation, but also the Eritrean Ambassador to attend the meeting. Chatham House's initial reluctance to invite the ambassador makes no sense considering the fact that he would be the best person to provide detailed reasoning behind Eritrea's foreign policy. Further, Chatham House is well aware of the operations of most Eritrean civic societies in the UK such as ours which could have

provided in depth analysis as to the opinion of Eritreans in the UK as well as those in Eritrea.

It seems Chatham House has failed to abide by its own principles in the way it conducted the selection of participants. By only selecting a core group of people whose views are clouded by their drive to demonise the Eritrean government at any cost, Chatham House has surely compromised its integrity. The least your organisation could have done was to invite as many people with differing intellectual views as indicated on the programme brief and reach at an objective conclusion.

Please acknowledge receipt of my e-mail and kindly respond to my letter. If you fail to acknowledge or respond to my letter, I have no other option but to pursue my complaint via different avenue.

I look forward to hearing from you and would like to thank you for your time in this matter.