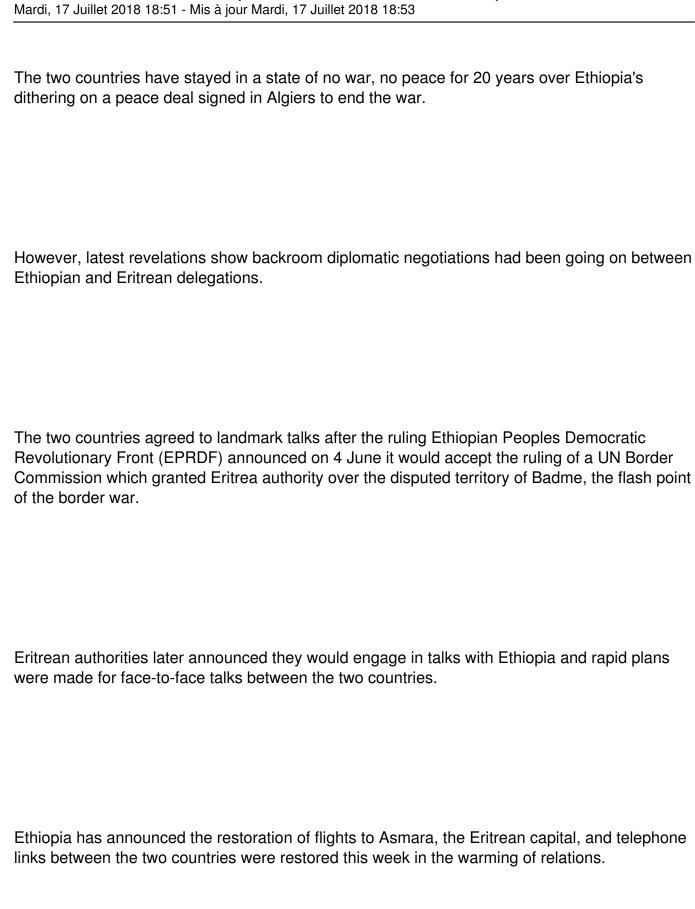


Applauding the leadership and courage of President Isaias Afwerki and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the Chairperson said he looks forward to similar bold initiatives in other conflict and crisis situations on the continent.

| President Afwerki was in Addis Ababa, for a three-day visit following the thaw of relations between the two countries. This was his first visit since the start of the two countries' border war in 1998.          |
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| Amid the excitement over the thawing of strained diplomatic relations between the two sides since the 1998-2000 Ethiopia-Eritrea border war, President Isaias' visit is expected to seal the newfound comradeship. |
| Eritrean Information Minister Yemane Gebreab Meskel said "the visit will cement further and add momentum to the joint march for peace and cooperation for peace and cooperation set in motion by both leaders".    |
| Ethiopian Prime Minister Ahmed paid a working visit to Asmara last weekend and announced a raft of measures earlier this week, among them, the opening of an Eritrean port for Ethiopia's use.                     |
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