

A map showing the Horn of Africa region. Eritrea is highlighted in yellow, with its internal administrative regions outlined in black. To the east is the Red Sea, colored light blue, with several islands visible. To the south and west are other countries in shades of gray. The text 'Eritrea: an invisible conflict' is centered over the map.

Eritrea: an invisible conflict

A historical black and white photograph showing a group of men in front of a traditional thatched-roof hut. On the left, a man in a white wrap and a man in a white shirt are seated. Standing next to them are two Italian colonial soldiers in full uniform, including pith helmets. In the center, another soldier in uniform is seated, looking at a large map or document spread on a table. To his right, another soldier in uniform stands, and a man in a white wrap stands behind him. On the far right, another Italian soldier in uniform stands. The background is filled with dense, dry brush and the thatched structure of the hut.

Eritrea has a long history of colonial rule.

Eritrea's borders were established during the "Scramble for Africa" in the 19th century; it was ruled by Italy until 1941, when the country was taken over by the British.

Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia in 1950.



Eritrea gained independence in 1993, following a 30-year war with Ethiopia.

Hostilities continued with Ethiopia for many years to come.



The People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PDFJ) is the ruling party; other groups are banned from elections.

Isias Afwerki (the current Prime Minister) has been in power since 1993.

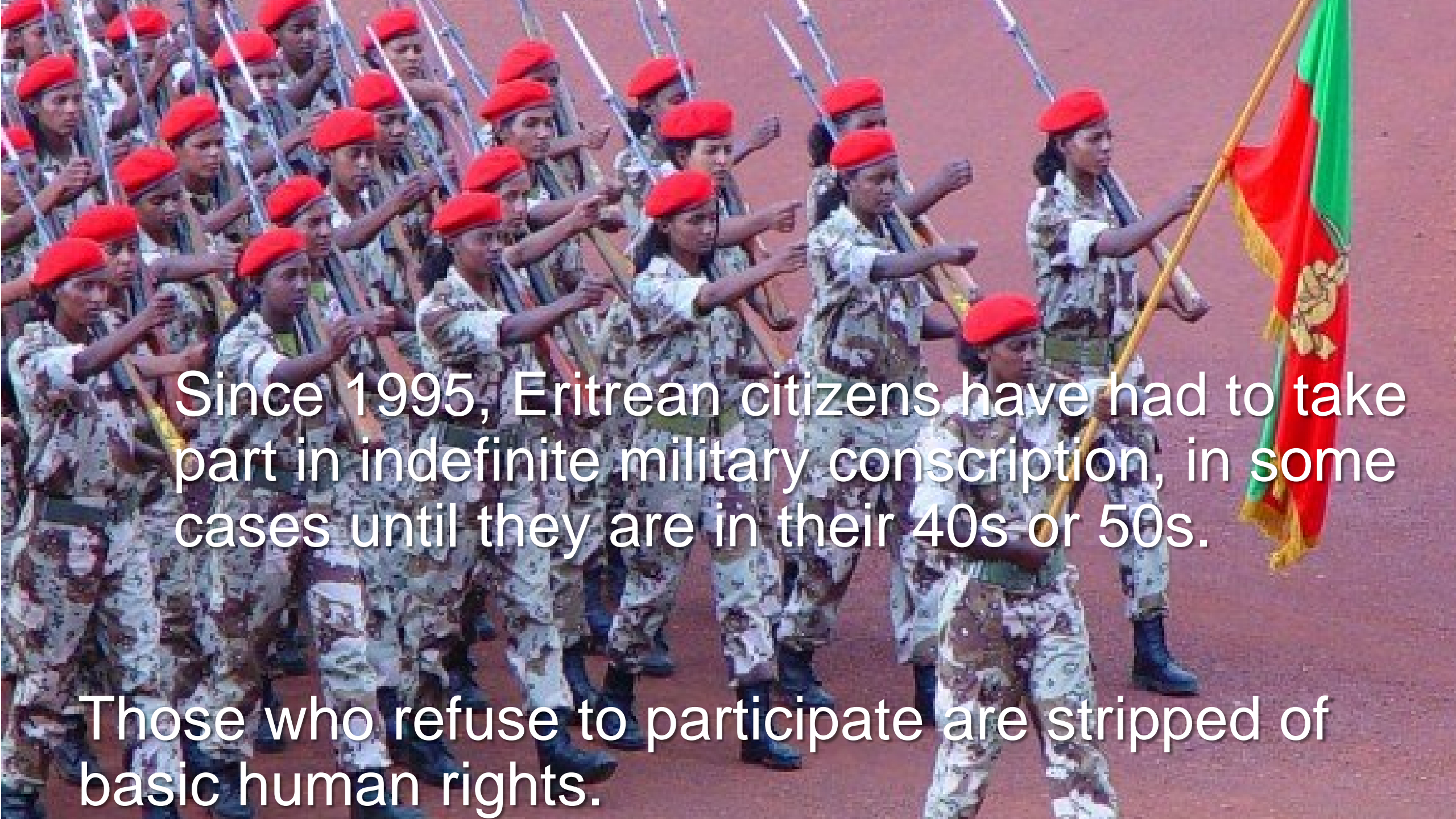
A group of people, mostly men, are seen from behind, looking towards a banner. The banner is white with red and blue text. The background is a solid dark red color.

DOWN... TO THE DICTATORSHIP
OF P.F.D.J. OF ERITREA!

Eritrea has a very poor record on human rights.

The UN Commission of Inquiry established by the Human Rights Council found the government's "totalitarian practices" and disrespect for the rule of law manifested "wholesale disregard for the liberty" of its citizens (source: Human Rights Watch).

There is no real freedom
of the press.



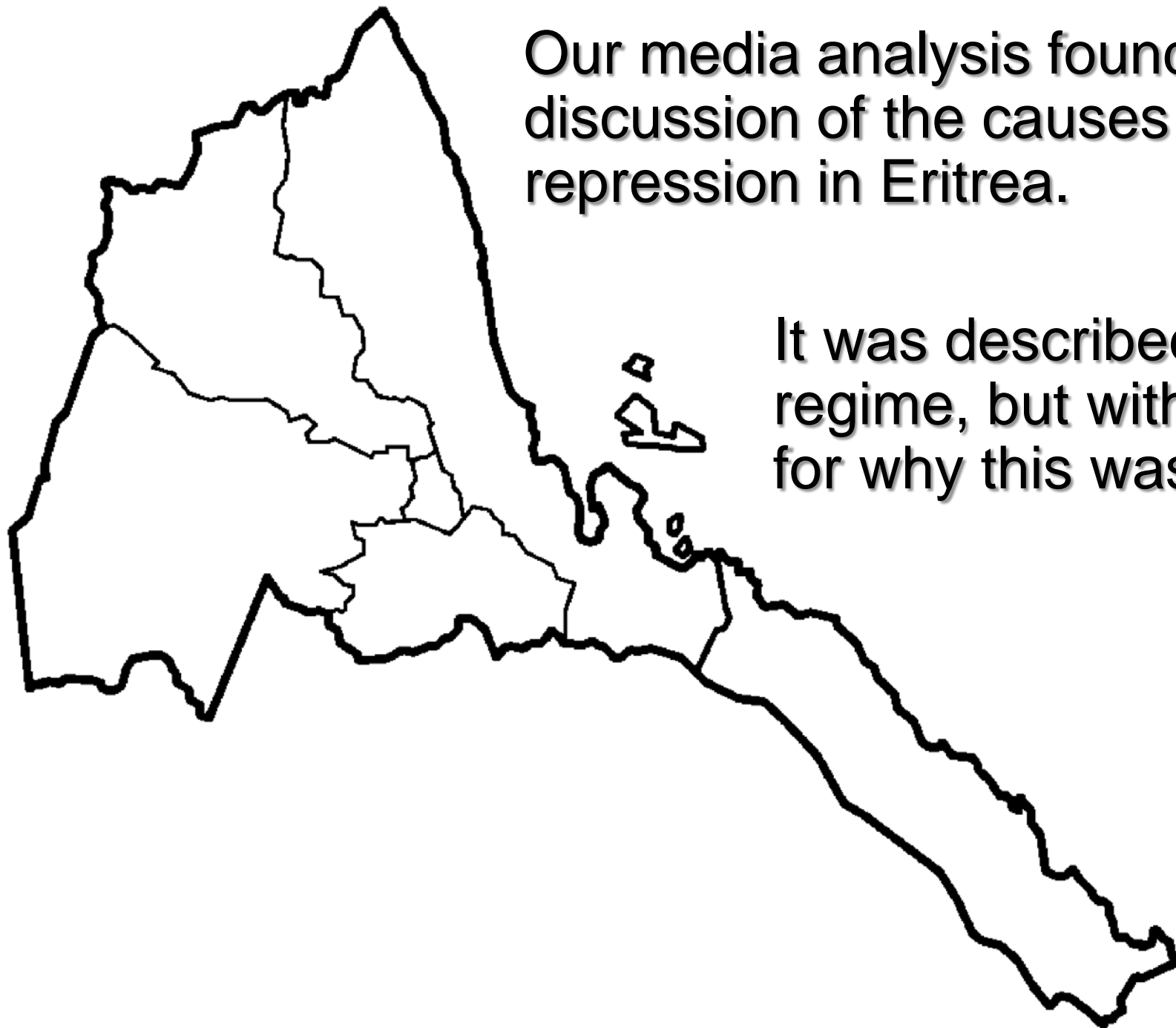
Since 1995, Eritrean citizens have had to take part in indefinite military conscription, in some cases until they are in their 40s or 50s.

Those who refuse to participate are stripped of basic human rights.



In 2015, the largest number of refugees seeking protection in Italy were from Eritrea (40,000 people).

Most seek asylum in Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway (source: Open Migration)



Our media analysis found little to no discussion of the causes of conflict or repression in Eritrea.

It was described as a repressive regime, but with no explanation given for why this was the case.

The only exception was an article called ‘Outside looking in: What’s it like to be an Eritrean abroad?’ ([Guardian](#), 27 July 2015), in which comments were encouraged.

“The cultural, linguistic, ethnic and historical closeness of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples could have become an asset for both Eritreans and Ethiopians. But the hard-heartedness of the two regimes in power is making it a liability for both peoples, and especially for Eritrean refugees.”

“Eritreans have become opportunists who can never stand for justice and democracy. Specially those in diaspora who support the evil regime.”

“Son of ex-freedom fighters. Born in Britain. Passionate about the history and fate of my people - on both sides of the border.”



Images

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