

## **A WEEK IN THE HORN OF AFRICA**

### **4<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

#### **Contents**

- **Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn attends China's Victory Day**
- **EPRDF holds its 10<sup>th</sup> Party Congress and discusses the GTP II**
- **The Africa-Japan Forum widens investment possibilities for Ethiopia and Africa**
- **Somalia: "The best defense is a good offense"**
- **African Countries pledge additional troop contributions to UN Peacekeeping**
- **Potential benefits from the 14<sup>th</sup> Edition of AGOA in Libreville**
- **Ethiopia designated as an "excellent role model" for reducing child and maternal mortality**

#### **News in brief**

##### **Africa and the African Union**

The IGAD region had a remarkably successful World Athletics Championship 2015 in Beijing last week, with Kenya topping the medal table with 7 gold, 6 silver and 3 bronze medals, and beating Jamaica, the US and the UK, into second, third and fourth place in the medals' table. Ethiopia came fifth with 3 gold, 3 silver and 2 bronze medals. Eritrea won its first ever gold medal at the World Championships in the men's marathon.

The African Regional Meeting of AU Ministers of Defense on Peacekeeping Operations was held in Addis Ababa on Monday and Tuesday this week (August 31 and September 1) under the theme "Enhancing Africa's Rapid Deployment Capability". (See article)

The three-day Africa–Japan Business Investment Forum held in Addis Ababa closed on Wednesday (September 2). The Forum was addressed by Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn and Mr Kazuyuki Nakane, Japan's Parliamentary Vice Foreign Minister. (See article)

On Monday, August 31, Donald Kaberuka, stepped down as President of the African Development Bank after 10 years in office. He said he left the Bank "as confident as ever about where Africa is heading. Presidents come and go, but the Bank stays. Africa needs a strong AfDB – and we have an AfDB that gets stronger by the day." Mr Kaberuka's successor, Akinwumi Adesina, former Nigerian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, was sworn in on Tuesday.

##### **Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn led a high-level delegation to Beijing on Tuesday (September 2) to attend the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chinese People's Victory Day, marking the end of World War II, and to hold bilateral discussions with Chinese officials as well as meeting business companies. (See article)

Prime Minister Hailemariam met with Chinese President Xi Jinping for talks on Friday (September 4) in Beijing's Great Hall of the People. He also met with Prime Minister Li

Keqiang and the two leaders later witnessed the signing of a number of economic and technological bilateral agreements.

Prime Minister Hailemariam was elected Chairman of the EPRDF at the Front's 10<sup>th</sup> Congress in Mekele, the capital of Tigray Regional State, August 28-30, under the theme "To Live up to Peoples' Trust Utmost Growth and Transformation." Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen was elected Vice-Chairman. The Congress also discussed the draft Growth and Transformation Plan II. (See article)

A Call to Action Summit 2015 on ending preventable child and maternal deaths, co-organized by the Indian and Ethiopian Ministries of Health was held on August 27, 2015, in New Delhi, India. (See article)

State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dewano Kedir, addressed the Africa-Japan Business and Investment Forum on Tuesday (September 1). (See article)

The Ministry of Industry said on Friday (September 4) that agro-processing industrial parks are to be set up in, Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples and Tigray Regional States at a cost of US\$ 2.5 billion in capital investment.

In the World Athletics Championships 2015 in Beijing gold medals were won by Genzebe Dibaba in the women's 1,500m; Mare Dibaba in the women's marathon; and Almaz Ayana in the women's 5,000m. Gelete Burka in the women's 10,000m; Senbere Teferi in the women's 5,000; and Yemane Tsegaye in the men's marathon won silver medals. Hagos Gebrhiwet in the men's 5,000m and Genzebe Dibaba in the women's 5,000 won bronze medals.

Participants at the Africa-Japan Business and Investment visited the first Waste-to-Energy Project in Africa located in Addis Ababa on Wednesday (September 2).

Ethiopian Airlines, "sixth among the 22 most dependable airlines in the world"; winner of the Airline of the Year award; and ATW's Best Regional Airline in the world", exceeded its revenue and profit targets this last fiscal year, earning US\$2.39 billion in revenue and making a profit of US\$175 million.

## **Djibouti**

The United States announced additional funding of more than \$6 million for humanitarian assistance for refugees in Djibouti and Somalia from Yemen, on Tuesday (September 1).

## **Eritrea**

Nineteen year-old Ghirmay Ghebreslassi won Eritrea's first ever gold medal at the World Championships in the men's marathon.

The 54<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the commencement of the armed struggle for independence in Eritrea in 1961 was commemorated on Tuesday (September 1) in Asmara and across the country.

## **Kenya**

Kenya topped the medal table at the World Athletics Championship 2015, in Beijing last week with 7 gold, 6 silver and 3 bronze medals, winning gold in the men's 800m; women's 10,000m; men's 3,000m steeplechase; women's 3,000m steeplechase; the men's 400m hurdles; men's javelin and the men's 1,500m.

A memorial will be unveiled on Saturday, September 12, in Uhuru Park, in Nairobi, to remember the many thousands of Kenyans who suffered torture and abuse at the hands of British security forces during the colonial era (1952–1960) and the struggle for independence.

## **Somalia**

President Mahmoud, on a visit to Abu Dhabi at the weekend, met with Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces on Sunday (August 30). Talks covered latest regional developments and issues of mutual concern.

The AMISOM base at Jannale, Lower Shabelle Region in Somalia, came under attack from Al-Shabaab early on Tuesday (September 1). An AMISON statement said that after an initial tactical withdrawal, they “consolidated and regained full control of the base.” (See article)

Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke appointed General Mohamed Aden Ahmed as head of the armed forces, replacing General Dahir Aden Elmi on Thursday this week (September 3). General Ahmed is a graduate of the military academy in Egypt and trained in Moscow and the US.

A visiting US delegation led by Katie Wheelbarger, Policy Director and Deputy Staff Director on the Senate Armed Services Committee in Mogadishu this week said the US would become more involved in strengthening the military capabilities of the Somali army and in upgrading the capacity of the Ministry of Defense. The delegation held talks with Prime Minister Omar Sharmarke and the Minister for Defense.

Prime Minister Sharmake and Jubaland President Ahmed Mohamed Madobe have agreed to review the composition of the Jubaland Legislative Council and reinstate the Federal Government appointed Committee tasked with rebuilding relations between Jubaland and the Federal Government at a meeting on Sunday (August 30).

The latest UN food assessment on Monday (August 31) says the country’s humanitarian situation remains “alarming” and the number of people requiring emergency aid has risen 17%, to more than 850,000 and those who are “food-stressed” number 2.3 million.

## **South Sudan**

A permanent ceasefire came into force on August 29 in accordance with the provision of the transitional security arrangements in the peace agreement. Despite this, there has been fighting this week in Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile states in violation of the ceasefire. The Government and the SPLM-in-Opposition have accused each other of responsibility for it.

The US State Department said on Monday (August 1) that the recent ceasefire declarations ordering all their respective forces to cease all military operations on 29 August, were welcome. It added that the US would work with the Security Council partners to pursue, as needed, sanctions as authorized by UNSC resolution 2206.

## **Sudan**

Sudanese President, Omer Hassan al-Bashir, held talks in Beijing with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday (September 1). President Jinping, who described President Bashir as an "old friend", said "China and Sudan are like two brothers that are also good friends and partners. Mr Bashir coming to China shows our partnership is strong".

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization and UNHCR have concluded an agreement with the Sudan Government on a skills-building project to enhance self-reliance of refugees in Eastern Sudan. Eastern Sudan hosts more than 1.5 million refugees and receives at least 1,000 a month from Eritrea. The UN has more than 90,000 refugees registered in the region's nine refugee camps and in urban areas in Kassala, El Gezira and Gedaref states. 50% of refugees and asylum-seekers in Eastern Sudan live in chronic poverty, the UN says.

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### **Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn attends China's Victory Day**

A high-level delegation led by Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn arrived in Beijing on Tuesday (September 2) to attend the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chinese People's Victory Day marking the end of World War II. Among the world leaders attending the celebrations were UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the Presidents of South Korea and the Russian Federation as well as the Presidents of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, South Africa and Sudan and Prime Minister Hailemariam and other heads of state and government and high-level dignitaries. More than 12,000 troops and 500 pieces of military equipment marched through Tian'anmen Square and about 200 aircraft flew overhead. Chinese President Xi Jinping who said the Chinese war of resistance against Japanese aggression between 1939 and 1945 was a "decisive battle between justice and evil, between light and darkness, and between progress and reaction," announced that China would cut the number of its troops by 300,000. He said "The victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese aggression is the first complete victory won by China in its resistance against foreign aggression in modern times."

Prime Minister Hailemariam and his delegation, which included Foreign Minister Dr Tedros, have also been holding a series of bilateral discussions with Chinese officials as well as meeting business companies. A conference has been organized under the title 'China-Ethiopia International Production Capacity Cooperation' and the Ethiopian delegation is taking part in five business fora organized in different provinces of China. The delegation is holding discussions with selected companies on investment in manufacturing and industrial zone development in Ethiopia. It is also meeting with various financial institutions and construction companies to discuss issues of development finance and ways for these companies to work in cooperation with the Government on the Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) modality. The delegation will also hold discussions with Chinese Government enterprises and private companies on joint ventures with Ethiopian counterparts for investment in Ethiopia.

The Prime Minister and the members of the delegation also met with Mr Zhang Zongyan, President of China Railway Engineering Corporation (CREC), which is building the Addis Ababa Light Railway system. The Prime Minister encouraged the company to finalize the last stages of the Light Railway as soon as possible and continue with the second phase of the Light Railway soon. He also hoped the company would finish the remaining elements on the Sebeta-Mieso rail link, part of the Addis Djibouti railway, expected to start operations later this year. Mr Zongyan confirmed the company would exert its best efforts to make the Addis Light rail operational quickly, and successfully complete other projects.

Earlier in the week, the delegation met senior officials from the China Communications Construction Company. It welcomed the performance of the company and urged it to start on the industrial park development project, agreed when Chinese Premier Li Keqiang visited Ethiopia in May last year. Other discussions were held with Mr Zha Weimin, Vice-President of the China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation (SINOSURE), and the Vice-President of the China Poly Group Corporation. Mr Weimin assured the delegations that SINOSURE will continue its commitment to support companies that are involved in projects in Ethiopia, particularly those involved in major infrastructural projects. Prime Minister Hailemariam, who welcomed SINOSURE's active involvement in Ethiopia's development, urged it to renew its commitment to continue supporting the country during the second phase of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) which begins next year.

The Prime Minister also met with Mr Ji Weimin, President of CGC Overseas Construction Group (CGCOC) and Mr Liu Zhenya, Chairman of State Grid Corporation of China (SGCC). He urged CGOOC to finish the water projects it was constructing in Addis Ababa city as there were a number of other projects due to commence soon in Adama, Mekele, Bahir Dar and Hawassa, according to the priorities set out in the agreement. He commended the efficient performance in implementing the power grid projects from the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam to Addis Ababa and the Ethiopia-Kenya power line.

### **EPRDF holds its 10<sup>th</sup> Party Congress and discusses the GTP II**

Since the adoption of a democratic constitution in 1995, following a comprehensive dialogue among the country's nations, nationalities and peoples, Ethiopia has enjoyed a pluralistic political platform for the people to take ownership of political power and decision-making. This democratic framework has put in place the necessary legal basis under which political stakeholders observe the rule of law and respect the choices made in free, fair and democratic national elections. An independent National Electoral Board of Ethiopia was set up to organize the pre-election processes, the elections themselves and post-election activities. Over the last 25 years, the NEBE has successfully organized five national elections, most recently in May this year. This was characterized by a record number of registered voters, nearly 36.8 million, an increase of 15% over the number in 2010. 58 contesting political parties were registered for the elections, of which 23 parties contested at national level and 35 parties at regional level. The election was described as "calm, peaceful, and credible". It "provided an opportunity for the Ethiopian people to express their choices at the polls. The result was a landslide victory for EPRDF.

After the election, the successful ruling party, the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) held a series of intensive discussions to consider some of the issues that were raised and criticized by the general public during the election among them governance, the creation of job opportunities for youths and women, and the performance of some of the major development and infrastructure projects. In August, the four component parties of the EPRDF, the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), the Southern Peoples' Democratic Movement (SPDM) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) held their party congresses in their respective regions to discuss the election and also consider their respective performance since the last congresses two and a half years ago, in particular the progress made under the Growth and Transformation Plan 1 (2010/11-2014/15). They also elected their own central committees and council members to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the EPRDF, which was held in Mekele, the capital of Tigray Regional State, August 28-31, under the theme "To Live up

to Peoples' Trust Utmost Growth and Transformation." Attending were political and government officials, ministers, voting and non-voting members of the four regional party delegates, invited guests and representatives from a number of foreign parties including China-CPC, Uganda-NRM, Namibia-SWAPO, South Sudan-SPLM, Rwanda-RPF, Sudan-NCP, Angola-MPLA, Mozambique-FRELIMO, Djibouti-RPP, South Africa-ANC, and Tanzania-CCM. Delegates from these parties delivered congratulatory messages of solidarity on behalf of their respective governments, people and parties, appreciating Ethiopia's peace-keeping role in regional and global perspectives; the great strides in achieving most of the Millennium Goals; the government's well designed policies and strategies and the registration of rapid and all-inclusive economic growth.

In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, the Chairman of EPRDF, said that this year's congress was unique in that it was taking place after the country had conducted a successful and credible Fifth Round General Election, an improvement on its predecessors. Ethiopia, he said, had made great strides to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals. It was also finalizing its GTP I successfully, despite the limitations and challenges, and formulating the GTP II. Overall, it had been registering rapid and all-inclusive economic growth. He said that the people of Ethiopia, believing the Party to be self-correcting and committed to peace, development, democratization and good governance, had expressed their choice at the polls and chosen the EPRDF. This had provided for a calm, peaceful, and credible election, maintaining peace and stability in the country at a time when the party's succession plan was going smoothly. The Prime Minister said the vote for the EPRDF underlined that the people had entrusted the party to "bend our backs and keep us sleepless to live up to our promises" and lead to firm resolutions on governance, transparency, social and economic issues and pertinent political matters.

The Chairman said the objectives of the Congress were to evaluate the party's internal affairs and its performance over the last two and half years, as well as consider the country's performance in meeting its goals during the first Growth and Transformation Plan. This meant consideration of progress on structural transformation, job creation for the youth and women, gender equality and women's empowerment, pertinent political matters such as good governance, dealing with corruption, improved transparency, socio-economic problems, the party's succession plan, the goals and directions of the GTP II, as well as crafting the road map for the next five years to ensure Ethiopia's Renaissance and adding the country to the list of middle-income countries by the year 2025.

The congress discussed the achievements made in GTPI and challenges. This was carried out in seven group discussions, in which participants raised numerous issues and put forward many sharp criticisms and comments. The Congress subsequently recognized the results made in the education and health sectors and in agriculture, which had helped enable the country to register double digit economic growth. It also appreciated the achievements of so many of the Millennium Development Goals. Equally, the Congress also underlined the importance of ensuring quality in education, of scaling up experience in all sectors and accelerating structural transformation, of taking agriculture as the basis of the economy and future transformation. It underlined that attention should be given to export-led economic activities. Much discussion also centred on the need for a paradigm change on governance issues, on transparency and above all on accountability, as well as on the need to maintain the peace and stability of the country.

Detailed discussions also centred on the goals and directions for the Growth and Transformation Plan II, which will provide the roadmap and directions for development over the next five years. The GTP II objectives will be decisive in speeding up the transformation and renaissance of the country. They have been designed to ensure citizens will participate and benefit equally in the development process as well as contributing to building a developmental political economy and a common politico-economic community. Overall, strenuous efforts will be made in the next five years, to reduce the rate of poverty to 16%, and work to eradicate it ahead of the international community's plans to eradicate it by 2030. The rate of unemployment in rural and urban areas will be reduced by half. Efforts will be made to eradicating obstacles to the participation of women in the educational sector, and expand quality of education. Similar concentration will be made for expanding the coverage of qualitative basic health service to reach 100% and lower mother's and child mortality rates even further.

A central element is the "life and death struggle" to effect the transition from a political economy dominated by rent-seeking, to one that is characterized by developmentalism. Quality-oriented supports that enhance the process of development will be provided to combat rent-seeking and dry up the sources that have been identified as responsible for it.

Agriculture, with both smallholder farmers and pastoralists, will continue as the main source of development. The aim is to double productivity and quality of strategic food crops, with special attention to high yield industrial inputs and export products centring around development corridors. Irrigation will be a priority. Main strategic food crop production needs to grow at an annual average rate of 16%. For effective implementation, efforts will be made to follow agricultural development based on development zones. Protection of natural resource will be another priority, with greater efforts to modernize, develop and manage forests, and attention given to scaling up forest products and substituting wood imports by producing wood for industrial purposes. On this basis, the GDP growth could reach 12.2% based on an upper case scenario. Agriculture will continue to be the main source of growth in the GTP II. All-round support will be given to educated youths and local and foreign investors to participate in modern agricultural development, focusing on production of high yield products and strengthening exports. This will involve removal of obstacles over provision of land for floriculture and horticulture in development zones, and challenges in relation to rent-seeking attitudes and practices. Communities in these areas will be assisted to participate in technology transfer and production activities, with people assisted to go into modern animal husbandry and fishing resource development as well crop production. This will be speeded up by designating areas for ranches and quarantine centers to serve as sources of input and technology. Market coordination will be encouraged.

The GTP II's goals include an economy growing at an average of 11%, which will be sufficient to ensure the structural transformation of the economy. Efforts will be made to stabilize the macro-economy, to ensure a healthy and sustainable economy, keep inflation in single digits and stabilize foreign exchange rates to facilitate the competitiveness of foreign trade. By the end of the GTP II foreign trade is expected to account for 41.3% of GDP. The sectoral distribution of economic growth, on the basis of a lower case scenario of an annual average of 8% growth, is expected to be Agriculture - 8%, Industry - 24% and Services - 10%.

The macro-economy plays an important role in sustainable and rapid growth. Under the current economic structure the widening mercantile and services foreign trade imbalance has



reached worrying proportions. Discussions focused on the need to export manufactured goods and scale up tourism and air transport services. Strenuous efforts should be made to raise export earnings by an annual average of 29% during GTP II and earn US\$12 billion foreign exchange by the end of GTP II. Fiscal policy has focused on the effective administration of tax policies, on efforts to raise tax revenue, on allocation of public expenditure on capital investment and on sectors with a key role in fighting poverty. To maintain the high rate of investment registered so far, efforts will be exerted to cover major investment through internal finance by mobilizing internal savings and narrowing the wide gap between investment and savings.

At both federal and regional levels, the base for the manufacturing sector will be widened by expansion and increased effectiveness of micro and small enterprises as well as medium and large industries through articulated job division, dispatch, follow up and control systems. Over the GTP II, asset addition will be increased to an annual average of 24%. By the end of the period, the contribution of the manufacturing industry to the national economy will grow to 8%; this will serve as a springboard for the sector to grow four-fold and reach 18% by the end of the vision period. The development of micro and small industries will continue to be the main focus and efforts will be exerted to organize these in both rural and urban areas, creating up to 6 million new jobs. Support and encouragement will be made available to make quality and prices competitive, and allow for [?] on selected export products.

Focus will also be given to providing for land-leasing transactions based on transparency, offering fair and pro-development processes and accountability. This will mean uprooting the rent-seeking practices often observed in the land management system. This will allow stable land-lease prices, effective construction works, increase job opportunities and growing investment. It will also allow institutions with developed land to grow without problems. By establishing up-to-date land databases and organizing land lease transaction centers both at the Federal and Regional levels, it will be possible to create a streamlined and stable land-lease transaction systems.

Efforts will be made to provide standardized and integrated infrastructural development in urban areas, raising financial capacities by augmenting urban income and encouraging savings. In some cases foreign savings can be secured on loans. An enhanced network of infrastructure will be set up for institutions to use updated information technological skills and ensure benefits and ownership. This will allow provision of quality urban transport, water and sewage, power and communication services. Specific efforts will be made to make urban areas clean, green and attractive as well as comfortable for living and for working. This will be based upon village developmental planning and shall be carried out in line with the green development standard designs and a solid garbage management and disposal system. Extensive work will be done in urban areas to realize equal benefits for women and children. The development of soft net programs under the food reliance program will help people with disabilities, the elderly and children and the vulnerable sectors of society. There will be effective housing development programs to deal with the shortages of urban housing and the ever-rising housing demand. Organizing citizens in associations will encourage the building of residential houses; private investors will be encouraged to increase participation in real estate development. This will be carried out in a manner free from rent-seeking with the genuine and popular participation of the people.

At its conclusion, the Congress elected Ato Hailemariam Desalegn as the Chairman of the EPRDF and Ato Demeke Mekonnen as vice-chairman. It also elected the members of the



EPRDF Council and of the 36-person members of the Political Bureau. In closing the Congress, the Prime Minister called on all the people of Ethiopia and all political parties in the country to work together to ensure the success of Ethiopia's Renaissance journey. He said the Government, led by the Front, was ready to engage with all political parties in dialogue to ensure the success of developmentalism and democratization in Ethiopia.

### **The Africa-Japan Forum widens investment possibilities for Ethiopia and Africa**

The Africa-Japan Business and Investment Forum took place on the first three days of this week (August 31 to September 2) in Addis Ababa. The aim was to strengthen and widen business and investment exchanges in a range of important areas and sectors, boost the dialogue on partnerships and overall Africa-Japan cooperation and to share the experiences and opportunities available between Africa and Japan. The Forum was attended by senior Government officials from all over Africa as well as from Ethiopia and Japan, among them Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn and Mr Kazuyuki Nakane, Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Foreign Minister. Also present were representatives of more than 100 Japanese companies, development partners and other invited guests. In its three days of sessions, the Africa-Japan Business and Investment Forum was able to encourage links and partnerships over a wide range of sectors including infrastructure, industry, agri-business, human resource development, energy, commodities, logistics and technology. Japan has, of course, been an important strategic partner of Africa and has, since the establishment of the first Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993, remained steadfast in its support. Japan-Africa relations have steadily expanded and undergone significant changes with trade, among other factors, showing unprecedented high growth.

This Africa-Japan Business and Investment Forum, organized by one of the top African publishers, IC Publications, together with the leading financial and business media group in Japan, Nikkei B P, opened on Monday (August 31) with keynote speeches by Prime Minister Hailemariam and Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Foreign Minister Kazuyuki Nakane. In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Hailemariam welcomed the delegates to the diplomatic capital of Africa and praised the existing cordial relations between Africa and Japan. He hailed Japan's interest in Africa, and this demonstration of it, as part of the African growth narrative. He also commended the wide range of on-going development cooperation between Japan and Africa, adding that Africa offered ample business and investment potential. So did Ethiopia, he added, and he emphasized how many of the required attributes for investment decisions Ethiopia could offer: a conducive business environment, political stability, sound economic policies, abundant natural resources, a substantial and easily trainable work force, low-cost energy, and a sizable and captive market, and above all, a government prepared to facilitate investment. The Prime Minister reaffirmed the commitment for further strengthening and widening partnerships between Africa and Japan in the future.

Prime Minister Hailemariam also quoted a recent remark of Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe that "a great number of Japanese have acquired an inclination to conjure up images of Africa in bright colors through the entire Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process". He said that TICAD V provided Africa with an excellent chance to strengthen trade and investment relationships between the two sides and he added that further strengthened relationships in business and investment could certainly be expected through the next conference - TICAD VI. Prime Minister Hailemariam noted that the exchange of visits between Prime Minister Abe and African leaders had "certainly strengthened the already excellent relations between Africa and Japan". The Prime Minister

praised Japan's announced intention to support development of the private sector and of human resources as well as infrastructure in Africa under the TICAD framework and through partnerships including the ABE initiative, the Kaizen philosophy and the Industrial Policy Dialogue.

Mr Kazuyuki Nakane, Parliamentary Vice-Foreign Minister, praised the partners in organizing the Forum and noted that the Africa-Japan Business and Investment Forum would provide a major opportunity to strengthen Japan-Africa ties in many ways. He emphasized that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Africa, a visit which included Ethiopia, had further strengthened ties. He commended Ethiopia for the successful hosting of the Third Financing for Development Conference in July and said Japan had organized a forum on the margins of the Conference which had drawn together a number of partners in business and investment. The current Forum, he said, would offer a chance for further interaction and provide a strong platform for enhancement of Japan-Africa relations in many aspects, including the business and investment frontier. Vice Foreign Minister Nakane also expressed the wish that Ethiopia would continue as one of the fastest growing countries in Africa.

The Forum on Tuesday continued with presentations on issues related to developing quality infrastructure for Africa's structural transformation; dialogue on the Africa-Japan partnership; financing for growth; creating a knowledge economy; building and expanding Africa's trade gateways; creating sustainable solutions in the energy sector; and shifting the paradigm from development to agriculture led-growth. Dr Arkebe Oqubay, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia with the rank of Minister, gave a presentation focusing on the 'Africa Rising' narrative, Ethiopia's development experience and Ethio-Japanese bilateral engagement.

Dr Arkebe noted that the 'Africa Rising' narrative offered a mixed picture displaying rapid, double and single-digit growth on the one hand, and the surfacing of structural problems facing the economies of African countries on the other. Pointing out the impressive performances made by many African countries, Dr Arkebe stressed the need to diversify these economies, to make the 'Africa Rising' narrative the real defining feature of the continent. Dr Arkebe detailed Ethiopia's development experience over the last decade and noted that Ethiopia's recent growth experience featured a carefully chosen development path suited to its own peculiar conditions. This development path, he said, is combined with the practical application of policy independence, an active industrial policy, and implementation of the Kaizen philosophy, along with learning from the experiences of other East Asian countries. This had all helped the country reduce poverty by half, increase life expectancy by 19 years, improve the productivity of the agriculture sector and shift the image of Ethiopia from reference to drought and famine to one of the fastest growing economies and a positive prospect.

Dr Arkebe said that as Ethiopia's manufacturing sector currently represents only 5% of the economy and exports an even smaller amount, the Government was prioritizing key manufacturing areas to make Ethiopia an industrial hub in various sectors, opening up pharmaceuticals, creating more jobs, elevating manufacturing enterprises to a new high, to enable the manufacturing sector to expand to 25% of the economy in the next decade. In order to do this, he said, the Government had placed Japan at the top of the list for attracting investors to Ethiopia's industrial parks and other development projects. Dr Arkebe underlined that the Government's keen interest in engaging with Japanese investors arose from the conviction that these were people from whom it could learn quality and improvement of

production. Ethiopia is, therefore, committed, he said, to meeting the requirements and key enabling conditions for investment from Japanese investors. The country, said Dr Arkebe, is now focusing on high quality infrastructure development, development of industrial parks and provision of an adequate trainable workforce. Japan was now looking to Africa to do business, and he underlined that African countries needed to take advantage of learning from the Japanese experience beyond mere trading or enhancement of investment ties.

Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dewano Kedir, also addressed the participants of the Forum, highlighting economic relations and development cooperation between Japan and Africa and particularly Ethiopia. He expressed his confidence that the Africa-Japan Forum would open a further "new chapter in the development of investment and economic relations between Japan and Africa." The State Minister noted the long-standing relations between Ethiopia and Japan and their continuous warm socio-political and economic relationship, with Japanese development cooperation and assistance, being instrumental in Ethiopia's development in a number of sectors including industrialization and agricultural and rural development as well as human resources. He said Japanese investment in Ethiopia was increasing, noting that in "the 2014/15 Ethiopian budget year alone 34 Japanese companies conducted a pre-investment visit to Ethiopia." The Forum, he said, was a vivid demonstration of Japan's interest in strengthening its business links with Ethiopia and the whole continent. State Minister Dewano Kedir also detailed the wide range of investment opportunities available in Ethiopia and reiterated that Africa was emerging as a profitable destination for foreign investment. This, he underlined, indicated the growing friendship and ties between Africa and the rest of the World.

The Forum closed on Wednesday (September 2) with concluding remarks from Ethiopia's State Minister of Trade, Tadesse Haile, who noted that Japan's development served as a blueprint for Ethiopia and for Africa. He said the Forum showed that the Japanese presence in infrastructure and the automobile industry in Africa, as well as in other sectors, would now be further strengthened. The Forum, which brought together government representatives, business leaders and representative of companies, discussed a wide range of business investment possibilities and problems in Africa, including healthcare, economic diversification and the way of doing business in Africa. It mainly focused on looking to innovative solutions to accelerate access to quality healthcare and the investment attractions of the healthcare and pharmaceutical sector, stressing Africa's capacity for developing medical manufacturing and improving healthcare provision in partnership with Japanese private investment. It also considered the proper use of the comparative advantage of Japan to help to industrialize Africa and develop Africa's production capacity to maximize revenue. There was agreement on the importance of urgent reform to bring about real progress in Africa and participants emphasized the pivotal role of the private sector in developing and implementing reforms on the continent.

Participants at the Forum on Wednesday also visited the first Waste-to-Energy Project in Africa located in Addis Ababa. On completion, this will generate 50mw of clean energy. As part of its commitment to a global climate-resilient green growth strategy, Ethiopia has been working to generate renewable energy from solar, geothermal, wind, hydro-power and now from waste. Forum participants identified that these ambitious plans for renewable energy were crucial to tackling climate change: they would enable Ethiopia to attract more investors to invest in the manufacturing sector.

**Somalia: "The best defense is a good offense"**

AMISOM confirmed this week that Al-Shabaab attacked the AMISOM base at Jannale in Lower Shabelle on Tuesday (September 1). The base was manned by troops of the Ugandan contingent with AMISOM. The modus operandi of the operation was very similar to the Al-Shabaab attack on the Burundi forces in AMISOM's base at Lego in June. The results were similar with substantial casualties and the bases being temporarily overrun, in the case of Jannale for an hour or two. The attack at Jannale was strongly condemned by the Special Representative of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Maman Sidikou, who praised the heroism of the peacekeepers who were killed during the attack. The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia, Nicholas Kay, also strongly condemned the attack. He said "these courageous peacekeepers sacrificed their lives in the on-going efforts to bring lasting peace and security to Somalia," adding that "the United Nations remains resolute in our support for the Somali people. Our solidarity with the African Union Mission in Somalia, and Somali security forces in their efforts to defeat Al-Shabaab and build peace and stability, will not waver."

Al-Shabaab has adopted a strategy of launching brief surprise operations that are aimed at completely controlling a target for a short while and causing maximum damage to both human and material resources. This has happened on several occasions in Mogadishu, in the attacks on Villa Somali, the Parliament building and two hotels in Mogadishu as well as at Garissa University, Nairobi's Westgate Mall and Impokotoni in Kenya.

There are a number of appropriate responses to prevent such surprise attacks, but the most crucial and immediate is full coordination among the anti-Shabaab forces in Somalia. In other words, close coordination among the individual member forces of AMISOM operating in the different sectors in Somalia is necessary. Furthermore, proper coordination between the units of the Somalia National Army and the local forces of regional and district administrations and of these with AMISOM forces is equally essential. It is common to hear from different Somalia forces at both national and regional levels that they are kept in the dark about planned AMISOM operations. One reason for this has been because of the danger of infiltration, but this can be overcome by proper coordination, training and rigorous orientation. It is also necessary to tighten up the loose mechanisms of command, communication, coordination and control which operate under multiple sources of Somali authority.

The effort to weaken Al-Shabaab is not solely a matter of military engagement. Politically reaching out to the different clans, communities and local or regional administrations is as crucial, and it is work that has to be carried out. The Federal Government of Somalia, of course, must take the lead on this. It is not an accident that Al-Shabaab used some local grievances over recent events in Merka as its alleged reason to launch operations in Jannale this week. Political outreach to embrace all the peoples of South Somalia, as a central element in the process of liberating the country from Al-Shabaab, has to be a priority. This is a central factor in any political-military operation of this kind wherever it is taking place. Coordination, in fact, cannot be limited to military operations but must be integrated with political developments to ensure that the people can fully own the liberation process and ensure proper inclusion in the process of liberation and politicization.

A central element in this is to implement the saying: the best defense is a good offense. AMISOM should ensure that Al-Shabaab is kept busy expecting more attacks against its own bases and areas of control. This would deny it the ability, the time or the resources to bring together hundreds of fighters to attempt this sort of attack against isolated AMISOM bases.

The strategy of AMISOM should be revised to deny Al-Shabaab the time and space to operate as freely as it has been able to do. Liberating an area or district is relatively easy today in part because Al-Shabaab has little capacity to fight conventionally. It has changed its strategy to withdrawing most of its forces as AMISOM troops approach and waiting until most of the AMISOM forces have moved on, leaving no more than a small garrison which Al-Shabaab can wait to attack.

It is a strategy which has had some successes. It is now time for AMISOM to respond effectively and to deny Al-Shabaab any respect or support such operations might obtain. It is certainly true that Al-Shabaab has been getting weaker since it withdrew from Mogadishu in 2012, but AMISOM and Somali Government military and political achievements do not match any claims that it is about to disappear. Al-Shabaab has certainly declined significantly but it has adapted itself sufficiently to be able to continue to adapt to circumstances and continue to cause serious problems in both Somalia and in Kenya. The more Al-Shabaab is allowed to continue to adapt to the situation, the more it is able to carry out surprise attacks as in Lego and Janaale.

It is also important to remember that Al-Shabaab operates in Somalia but it has also become entrenched on the Kenya and Tanzania coasts. It long ago aligned itself with Al-Qaida and has contacts with Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen, and is said to be in discussions with ISIS. In other words, jihadists in Somalia are coordinating with similar organizations in neighboring countries and at the international level. It is, therefore, imperative for the region, for the AU, the EU, the UN and all stakeholders to coordinate effectively to work to eliminate the threat posed by Al-Shabaab.

A central element in this is coordination of the political track in Somalia, as well as encouraging development and service delivery. Instead of continuing the political bickering between the centre and the periphery, the leader's forum that met earlier this year must be reinvigorated. The inauguration of Ahmed Madobe as the re-elected President of the Interim Jubaland Administration can be expected to bring national and regional leaders together and offers the prospect for mending fences. At the weekend, Sheikh Madobe told the media after a meeting with Federal Prime Minister Omar Sharmake that "we agreed to resolve complaints and we named committees that will discuss solutions to the disputes." The two parties agreed to review the composition of the Jubaland Legislative Council, condemned by the Federal Parliament, and reinstate the Federal Government appointed Committee tasked with rebuilding relations between Jubaland and the Federal Government.

There are a lot of areas to look at in addition to the need for the completion of vision 2016 and the elections within the next year, including state formation. The process of formation of the regional assembly of the Interim South West State in Baidoa is due to start soon. The President of the South West state administration has given repeated assurances that this will be inclusive and broad-based. The launching of the process for the establishment of a state in Hiiraan and Middle Shebelle regions is also due to start shortly. Successful processes, locally led, encouraged by the Federal Government of Somalia and facilitated by IGAD, will provide a real boost towards the establishment of a federal state in Somalia in good time to allow options for the elections in August 2016. In this context, it is important that the consultative meeting, expected to start later this month, is completed, as planned, in November.

**African Countries pledge additional troop contributions to UN Peacekeeping**

The African Regional Meeting on Peacekeeping Operations was held in Addis Ababa on Monday and Tuesday this week (August 31 and September 1) at the Ethiopia Peace Support Training Center. The Regional Meeting, under the theme “Enhancing Africa’s Rapid Deployment Capability”, was attended by Defense Ministers, Chiefs of Defense Staffs and senior officials from 32 African countries, as well as representatives of the ten leading financial contributing countries to UN peacekeeping operations, the African Union, the United Nations, other sub-regional organizations and partners.

The Regional Meeting was organized as part of Ethiopia’s commitment to UN Peacekeeping as Prime Minister Hailemariam detailed during the Peacekeeping Summit held on September 26 last year on the margins of the 69<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in New York. It had the objective of exploring current strategic and operational challenges of UN Peacekeeping operations in the African context, with a view to coming up with possible recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of rapid deployment capabilities. Another aim was to secure new commitments from member states to raise forces for existing and future peacekeeping missions and peace operations.

In his opening remarks, Dr Mulatu Teshome, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, underlined the need to enhance the role and capacity of regional and sub-regional organizations in peacekeeping operations. Noting that the majority of UN peace operations were currently located in Africa, he stressed that Africans should have a major stake in strengthening the role of peacekeeping. He also emphasized the importance of developing a rapid deployment capability in order to promote sustainable peace in the continent.

General Samora Yunus, Chief of Defense Staff of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces, welcoming participants, also emphasized the importance of developing a system of Rapid Deployment Capabilities in Africa through the support and coordination between the United Nations and African Union. He pointed out that peacekeeping missions needed to be flexible, rapid and responsive, with the ability to deploy within a very short period of time to save lives and prevent problems spreading on the ground. He also emphasized that African Regional Standby Forces need to be supported to build up their capability. This was particularly the case as the security environment under which peacekeepers operate is continuously evolving and becoming increasingly challenging and complex. The Meeting also heard from the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, and Lt. General Maqsood Ahmed, Military Advisor for the Under-Secretary General of the UN Peacekeeping Operations.

Participants deliberated on various elements of peacekeeping, including the state of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, strategic and operational challenges facing UN Peacekeeping Operations, UN-AU cooperation in peacekeeping operations, and rapid deployment capabilities in the context of UN, AU and sub-regional organizations. The meeting also provided an opportunity for representatives from African countries and partners to share experiences on ways and means of operationalizing rapid deployment in Africa. The East African Standby Brigade becomes fully operational later this year. Ethiopia’s Minister of National Defense, Siraj Fegessa, gave the closing remarks, and participants endorsed the Addis Ababa Outcome Document on Enhancing African Rapid Deployment Capability.

The Outcome Document agrees on the need to build up rapid peacekeeping/peace enforcement deployment capability to save lives and avert catastrophic crisis in Africa; and on strengthening the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union

on rapid deployment particularly in joint planning, decision making, division of labor, bridging the doctrinal gap and ensuring predictable and sustainable funding including through the UN assessed contribution as recommended by the UN High-Level Panel on Peace Support Operations (HIPPO).

It stresses the need to maintain strong political commitment together with military decision-making for rapid deployment, “considering that military operations without political support cannot achieve the desired outcome”. It also underlines the need for Member States to build their own initial internal deployment capabilities at home for swift and effective deployment within the framework of the African Standby Force. It notes the importance of ensuring that Peacekeeping Operations focus on supporting a host nation’s internal security capacity in order to enable these to build up the host nation’s own sustained peace restoration efforts and long-term stability.

The Outcome Document also stresses the need to generate forces for new and existing United Nations Peacekeeping Operations on the African continent. The Meeting appreciated a number of new commitments and pledges. These included a new pledge by Madagascar to contribute one unit of police and one battalion; additional commitments by Sierra Leone and Burundi to contribute one infantry battalion each, and by Uganda to contribute two more battalions. Cameroon made an additional commitment for two police units and one battalion and Liberia a commitment to provide additional units. Ethiopia gave a commitment to provide training and share its experiences including its rapid deployment actions. Partners expressed their readiness to renew and strengthen their commitment to building up Africa’s capacity for rapid deployment for peace-keeping operations.

The Outcome Document of the Regional Meeting will be delivered by Prime Minister Hailemariam to the Second Peacekeeping Summit. This will be held later this month, on September 28, on the margins of the 70<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly in New York.

### **Potential benefits from the 14<sup>th</sup> Edition of AGOA in Libreville**

AGOA, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is a non-reciprocal trade preference program aimed at stimulating and strengthening Sub-Saharan economic growth and development by enhancing market access to the US for Sub-Saharan countries. It reached its 14<sup>th</sup> edition at the end of August this year and is now set for another decade after the AGOA legislation was extended a couple of months ago by the US Congress. The program had been due to expire after its initial fifteen year validity expired. This, in itself, was a continuation of President Bush’s legislative amendments to allow the Act to continue to 2015. The passing of this bill of extension proved difficult and had to deal with absurd claims such as the ‘shipment of clothing from Africa would transmit Ebola’. It was the subject of such effort that it enlivened the AGOA eligible countries to the extent of accomplishing a sharp rise in overall exports in the first half year of 2015 to more than \$10 billion. As a result, Ambassador Michael Forman, the United States Trade Representative, noting that “we secured a 10-year renewal of a new and improved AGOA” at the opening ceremony of the AGOA forum in Libreville, added that “history shows that it’s a mistake to bet against Africa, and the progress we’ve made together through AGOA encourages us to aim even higher.”

The Forum, held in Gabon’s capital Libreville last week, started on Monday (August 24) and ended on Thursday (August 27). It was held under the theme: “AGOA at 15: Charting a



course for a sustainable US-Africa Trade and Investment Partnership'. The first two days covered a meeting of Senior Officials and an African Trade Ministerial Consultative meeting, aiming to enable AGOA-eligible countries to discuss and harmonize views on the various issues relating to the new legislation and the future of U.S-Africa trade relationship before meeting the US delegation.

Two key issues raised in the Forum were “Building capacity to comply with international SPS standards to increase food security, agro-business investment, and AGOA exports”; and “How to ensure compliance with standard requirements and modalities to broaden benefits from AGOA”. These are essentially precursors of what the future AGOA may hold for Africa and of ways that African countries can best exploit the opportunities provided by the AGOA program if they adhere to the crucial criteria of complying with standards. One of the standard requirements in the program is for Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary measures (SPS). These aim to protect human and animal life from the risks and threats arising from additives, contaminants, toxins or disease-carrying organisms in food, beverages or feedstuffs, and to reduce the risk of any spread or infestation of pests. These standards urge maximizing the opportunities in AGOA by looking beyond the tariff barrier topic and encouraging member countries to make efforts on a range of other non-tariff barriers, more importantly on agriculture and agro-related exports. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, through USAID, already provides some technical assistance to assist in meeting SPS standards. This is particularly important for countries like Ethiopia, most of whose exports under AGOA are directly or partly linked with agriculture. This includes horticulture as well as apparel and leather production.

Ethiopia, one of the AGOA-eligible countries, has a history of working vigorously within AGOA since it started in 2001. This indeed has helped the country increase exports to the US by 150%. It was more than an accident when two years ago Ethiopia drafted a national strategy to enable the country to make better use of the trade opportunities from AGOA and other preference programs. Ethiopia has been utilizing only a few hundred out of eligibility lists of 1,800 products that it could have exported. This compared very unfavorably with some of the top-ranked AGOA members like Chad, Nigeria and a few others, which exploit 90% or more of the opportunities AGOA offers. Now, the current Ethiopian strategy is not limited to complying with the required standards but it also aiming to diversify the number of items in order to improve market competitiveness and to increase investment in other items on the eligibility lists.

During President Obama’s visit to Ethiopia, the management consultancy McKinsey reported that Ethiopia and Kenya, in particular, had the potential to become bigger players in garment manufacturing. Ethiopia’s huge livestock resource is one of the major factors in this. Another is the possibility of taking advantage of the fact that Ethiopia is among the so-called "African cotton belt", which includes countries like Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya and Egypt. Ethiopia also offers tax incentives for investment in the high priority sectors of heavy and light manufacturing in the country.

Looking at this potential, when the Libreville discourses are translated into action, Ethiopia could certainly improve its standing in this trading arrangement between the US and Africa. It could break what *New African* magazine, in its latest issue, calls “the hard yoke of logistical challenges” including the long distance from the US and the intense competition from non-AGOA countries. This seriously distorts the international textile and apparel markets and creates a real strain on countries like Ethiopia whose markets in AGOA are

predominantly in textiles and apparel. This underlines the need for diversification as well as emphasizing the concern over standardization. This in turn requires investing a significant amount of time and energy on implementing the Growth and Transformation Plan II, with its focus on encouraging the manufacturing industry to get properly conscious of the standard requirements and the immense prospects for investing in the AGOA eligible items that the country could produce.

The Libreville Forum also discussed related issues including: “Supporting African women entrepreneurs to participate in global supply chains”; “Lessons Learned under Power Africa for Attracting Power Sector Investment”; and the “Natural Gas Value Chain”. African states were pleased to learn that later this month the US Department of Trade would lead the largest ever US business trade mission to sub-Saharan Africa. Companies participating in the mission will be going to eight countries with Commerce Department presence: Ghana, Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia. Mr Arun Kumar, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Global Markets of the United States of America, speaking to journalists in Ghana while en route to the AGOA Summit in Libreville, urged African countries to increase their awareness and understanding of AGOA in order to reap the full benefit. Ethiopia is finally beginning to employ maximum effort to utilize the best out of AGOA and this mission will provide a promising start.

### **Ethiopia designated as an “excellent role model” for reducing child and maternal mortality**

The Third Global Call to Action Summit 2015 for ending preventable child and maternal deaths was held on Thursday and Friday last week (August 27-28) in New Delhi, India. The Summit designated Ethiopia as an “excellent role model” for reducing child and maternal mortality, and also identified India as another exemplar for ending preventable child and maternal deaths.

Dr Keseteberhan Admasu, Ethiopia’s Minister of Health, delivered a keynote address to the Summit, highlighting the method behind Ethiopia’s striking performance in terms of child survival and indeed the overall health of the people. He underlined the importance of healthcare reforms with community empowerment and ownership through the country’s flagship Health Extension Program (HEP) as well as the importance of the prevailing peace and stability in the country. He said these “spectacular improvements” achieved in the health sector were within the bounds of possibility as a result of sustained political commitment at all levels; innovative solutions to problems such as task-shifting; and the emphasis on building a resilient health system by leveraging domestic and international support. Ensuring equality of access to primary healthcare, coupled with the provision of key priority services and ensuring no one was left out, had, he said, also significantly contributed to this major milestone of achievement in eliminating preventable child and maternal deaths.

Dr Keseteberhan renewed Ethiopia’s commitment to bring an end to all preventable maternal and child deaths. He stressed that redoubling efforts in mainstreaming unwavering political commitment, community ownership, and universal health coverage of high impact interventions would now be at the heart of consolidating the gains made during the Millennium Development Goals. This would accelerate progress towards ending preventable maternal and child deaths.

Ethiopia's Ministry of Health has now developed a 5-year Health Sector Transformation Plan (HSTP), setting ambitious goals to be achieved over the next five years to 2020. Dr Keseteberhan outlined four of the transformational agendas involved. These covered ensuring "Quality and Equity" in healthcare; a "Woreda-Transformation" agenda; a Revolution in Information; and an agenda to cover Development of Caring, Respectful and Compassionate Health Professionals. Dr Keseteberhan, who urged the gathering to join together to end preventable maternal and child diseases within a generation, stressed the urgency of translating mothers' and children's rights into realities.

The two-day Summit brought together Health Ministers from the 24 priority countries that committed themselves to the Global Call To Action for Child Survival in June 2012, as well as State Health Ministers from India, international academic experts, health practitioners, and global leaders from diverse sectors. The meeting served as a lead-in to the United Nations Summit for the Adoption of the post-2015 Development Agenda that will be held as a high-level plenary session at the UN General Assembly later this month.

The Summit, taking note of the decisions of the New York Summit on the redefinition of goals to carry forward the legacy of the Millennium Development Goals, has enabled the 24 priority countries to take stock of progress, share best practices, and forge alliances for ending preventable child and maternal deaths. It also provided those countries with a platform to deliberate upon the importance of possible systems, partnerships, innovations, convergence, and evidence for ending all preventable maternal and child deaths.

The Summit concluded with the issue of a declaration which commended the progress made in reducing maternal, newborn, and child mortality and recognizing the global partnerships, support and resources that had been mobilized to achieve these gains, and had saved over 100 million lives since 1990. The declaration took into account the completion of the Millennium Development Goals by the end of the year, and the preparations to embrace a universal and transformative sustainable development agenda that left no one behind and ensured the health and well-being of all. This allowed those countries to commit to making measurable improvements in reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health through their respective country health plans. It also permits them to work together to ensure women, newborn, children, and adolescents will survive and thrive and transform their healthcare.

To translate these commitments into reality, countries pledged to mobilize the increased resources needed to accelerate the progress made and support for the implementation of the post-2015 Development Agenda. They also committed themselves to developing "a culture of evidence-based decision-making, strengthening accountability and aligning our resources to those with the greatest need." They pledged that they would hold themselves "accountable to these commitments through regular monitoring of progress through this joint platform."

The Summit for ending preventable child and maternal deaths was co-hosted by the Ministry of Health of the Government of Ethiopia and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India, India in association with USAID, UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Tata Trusts.