

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs



A Week in the Horn



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Dr Tedros Adhanom,
Minister of Foreign Affairs

As #Ethiopians and as always let us continue to be champions of #Peace, #Cooperation and #MutualBenefit

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News in Brief



An Ethiopian delegation led by Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn which included the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, the Minister of Industry, Mekonnen Manyazewal, and the Minister of Mines, Sinkinesh Ejigu, amongst others, participated in the fifth annual TICAD Summit in Yokohama, Japan.

A statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Spokesperson this week underlined that Ethiopia has been consistent in its policy of promoting a foreign policy based on mutual respect and mutual benefit with all its neighbors over the past two decades.

In a statement on Sunday (June 2nd) Ethiopia's Minister of Water and Energy quoted the report of the International Panel of Experts on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), presented to the Governments of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan on June 1st, as saying the project design was consistent with international standards, that the dam would not cause any significant harm to the lower riparian states and that it would offer immense benefits to all three countries. (See article)

Egyptian Opposition politicians meeting with Egypt's President Morsi on Monday (June 3rd) proposed various hostile acts against Ethiopia, including backing rebels and carrying out sabotage, to stop the building of the dam on the Nile. President Morsi did not react to the suggestions, but noted that Egypt respected Ethiopia and its people and would not engage in any aggressive acts against it. (See article)

A two day Brazil-Ethiopia-Djibouti-South Sudan Trade and Investment Seminar was held in Addis Ababa (June 6th-7th) to provide an opportunity for business and investment networking between governments, private and public companies. (See article)

The Finish Embassy in Addis Ababa organized an Ethio-Finnish Aid for Trade and Business Forum, under the theme of "inclusive partnership for sustainable growth" on Wednesday (June 5th).

The Ethiopian Permanent Mission in Geneva and the Committee for the Coordination of Support for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in Switzerland held a gala that raised over one hundred thousand francs.



The new United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) formally set up in Mogadishu on Monday (June 3rd) under the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Nicholas Kay. It will incorporate the work of the UN Support Office for AMISOM, and will be headquartered in Mogadishu with offices in Hargeisa and Garowe.

At a meeting to discuss Somalia on Thursday (June 6th), the UN Security Council welcomed recent progress but underlined that gains in security and other sectors 'remain fragile'; the UNSC urged the international community to continue to support the efforts of the Somali Government to tackle outstanding issues vital for the country's long-term stability.

Puntland President Abdirahman Sheikh Mohamed 'Farole' met with Somali President Mohamud in Nairobi this week. Discussion covered the federal structure, politics and Jubaland.

A delegation from the Egyptian Ministry of Defense arrived in Mogadishu on Tuesday (June 4th) to study ways to rehabilitate Somali National Army facilities and aid the rebuilding of the army headquarters and military hospitals.



The United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva held an interactive dialogue on the Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Eritrea's Human Rights (See article)

More than ten human rights activist groups held a meeting in Geneva on Wednesday (June 5th) to discuss the human rights situation in Eritrea, following the presentation of the Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Eritrea's Human Rights. (See article)

Eritrean Embassy in the UK organizes the 5th Annual Eri-UK Friendship Forum in London in connection with the 22nd anniversary of Eritrea's independence.



News in Brief



Sudan's Minister of Finance and National Economy, this week, defined the country's economic problems as a serious balance of payments deficit, a poor response to the government's programs, high food prices, the gap between official and unofficial exchange rates, high rates of inflation and declining rates of growth.



The 36th anniversary of the Djibouti national armed forces was marked in central Somalia this week by the Djibouti troops based in Belet Weyne, in a ceremony attended by the Hiiraan region administration officials, Ethiopian security officials and the local population.

The Djiboutian government's Centre for the Purchase of Medicines and Essential Materials donated 650 cartons of streptomycin sulphate and 150 of vitamin B complex on Tuesday (June 4th) to help Somaliland fight tuberculosis.



South Sudan President Salva Kiir has told UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon that it was time for the international community "to take action" to resolve conflict over the disputed region of Abyei.

USAID launched a three year Project on Good Governance in the Republic of South Sudan (PROGRESS) on Monday (June 3rd) to strengthen institutions, and promote transparency and accountability, targeting the rule of law, finance and petroleum management, to develop core governmental institutions at the national and state levels.

This week, General Johnson Uliny, a militia leader fighting the South Sudanese army for two years in Upper Nile State, responded positively to the recent presidential amnesty. Last month General Bapiny Monytil and his deputies, Karlo Kuol and Tut Gatluak with 3,000 of their forces accepted the amnesty.



President Kenyatta said after meeting Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud in Kenya on Wednesday (June 5th) that the two countries would direct their respective security forces to work closely in eliminating al Shabaab threats, and called for the support of IGAD, UNHCR and the international community. The two presidents said the planned conference on refugees, to be held in August in Nairobi will work out on modalities for early repatriation and resettlement of refugees in their country.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta was briefed by top security officials Tuesday (June 4th) at his first National Security Council (NSC) meeting in Nairobi.

Britain has offered to pay £14 million in compensation to over 5,000 Kenyan victims of torture and brutality carried out during the Mau Mau anti-colonial uprising in the 1950s.



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The fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) ...

The Summit of the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) opened on Saturday (June 1st) at the Yokohama Conference Center. Dozens of African leaders and ministers from over 50 states were present at the three day meeting, including Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of Ethiopia, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, President Joyce Banda of Malawi, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, President Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti, President Sheikh Hassan Mahmoud of Somalia, President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, President Moncef Marzouki of Tunisia and President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, as well as senior officials on international organizations, including the UN Secretary General, Ban ki-Moon and the President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim.

The Summit was held under the theme: "Hand in Hand with a Dynamic Africa", and the opening session was co-chaired by Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Prime Minister Hailemariam. In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Abe, referring to the 20th Anniversary of the TICAD process and the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU, noted that Africa has accomplished an admirable job in the past fifty years even though it had been, at times, "a bumpy road." He underlined Japan's role, noting that in the 1990's when the international community had almost forgotten Africa in the distractions of the post-Cold War world, Japan alone had believed in the development of Africa, launching the TICAD process. Prime Minister Abe emphasized the importance of increasing private sector investment and of Private-Public Partnerships to further boost the economic growth and overall development witnessed in the past decade. He announced that Japan would be providing \$32 billion in support of Africa's growth through public and private initiatives means. He also announced the launch of the Abe Initiative: the African Business Education Initiative for Youth which will be offering graduate and post graduate studies to 30,000 Africans in the coming five years.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn said TICAD had special meaning for Africa because of the timing of the process when others were ignoring the continent. Japan, he said, was the only country to take the initiative to mobilize the international community in support of Africa. In this context, he underlined the crucial role of international partnerships in implementing the flagship projects of the African Union, noting that Africa deserves all possible support to be able "to cast off its seemingly perennial role as net exporter of primary commodities and net importer of industrial products." He also underlined the need for the development of the private sector and of small and medium-scale industries."

Discussion in a plenary session on the anniversaries of TICAD and the OAU/AU let leaders reflect on the historic problems of development. President Museveni listed major bottlenecks that had hindered Africa's development: human resource development, the absence of well developed infrastructure, weak regional integration, value addition to exports, land fragmentation, lack of supply of agricultural inputs and failure in industrialization. President Marzouki attributed Africa's underdevelopment to the absence of robust democracy and governance institutions, saying no development could be sustained without democracy and functioning governance institutions.



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The importance of deepening the involvement of the private sector, strengthening private-public partnership programs, expanding industries to add value to African primary products, economic diversification and modernization of agriculture and regional integration were emphasized as the key policy matters that needed to be addressed to realize Africa's renaissance. There was emphasis on the "blue economy", the untapped potential of fisheries and maritime businesses, to reduce the vulnerability of coastal states. The vital role that Japan's technological assistance could play in Africa's development was underlined; and Japanese officials raised the inclusion of NEPAD projects into the TICAD process as a demonstration of Japan's commitment to partnership, respecting Africa's ownership of its development agenda.

The Summit discussed five thematic issues in different panels: the Private Sector, Trade and Investments as Engines of Development; Strengthening Sectoral Bases for Growth; Towards the post-2015 Development Agenda, Driving African Development through Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment; and Enhancement of Peace Building.

Both the UN Secretary General and the President of the World Bank noted the transformational power of the private sector, trade and investment in terms of employment creation, especially for young people. The discussants emphasized the need to increase the role of the private sector in Africa's economy, suggesting the need to address the problem of policy predictability, of widening African markets, reducing costs of production through infrastructure development, resolving the lack of a skilled and competitive labour force, the lack of finance, the specific challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, the lack of sufficient public-private dialogue and the failure to encourage entrepreneurship.

Discussion on the post-2015 development agenda noted TICAD's role in galvanizing support to meet the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 over the remaining 940 days left. It also underlined that any common African post-2015 position should be in tune with the priorities of NEPAD and with Vision 2063 along with TICAD's action plan 2013-2017. One focus of the upcoming development agenda should be on issues such as poverty, hunger, water and sanitation women and youth empowerment and health to carry forward the gains under the MDGs. Attention must also be paid to emerging challenges including the environment, sustainable energy and control of population dynamics.

In his closing remarks, Prime Minister Hailemariam said the Summit had enabled participants to reflect on the remarkable progress Africa is making and the support Japan had provided to the process, acknowledging the need for TICAD to evolve with the priorities of Africa. Welcoming Prime Minister Abe's pledge to provide \$32 billion to support infrastructure and human development, he called on Japanese investors to make their presence properly felt in Africa, and for the immediate implementation of the action plan which would help make deep inroads in fighting poverty. Prime Minister Abe repeated that Japan was committed to supporting African countries and communities as they strive to build resilience; and added that Japan wanted to provide support centering on human resource development and the independence of African countries. "The goal is a win-win relationship," Prime Minister Abe concluded.



On the final day, TICAD adopted the Yokohama Declaration and Yokohama Action Plan 2013-2017. The Yokohama Declaration 2013 commemorates the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU and the 20th anniversary of TICAD, noting the remarkable achievements made through the TICAD process across Africa and the challenges that remain. It acknowledges that quality growth can only be achieved through concerted action in achieving the three core themes of a “robust and sustainable economy”; an “inclusive and resilient society”; and “peace and stability”. TICAD’s role as an open and inclusive forum to raise global awareness about Africa’s development challenges and opportunities and its contributions to Africa’s development by emphasizing private investment and human security are noted. The declaration includes renewed commitment of the signatories to the twin principles of Africa’s Ownership and International Partnership. The document recognizes the gains made through the TICAD Process in sharing and adapting Asian development models to Africa and the promotion of South-South cooperation. The declaration also emphasizes the strategies of: promoting private sector led growth; accelerating infrastructure development; empowering farmers as mainstream economic actors; promoting sustainable and resilient growth; creating an inclusive society for growth; consolidating peace, stability and good governance; building a new international development framework; making the African voice heard in the post 2015 Development Agenda to achieve quality growth. Another important area of the Declaration is the commitment to support Africa’s own initiatives, including the Programme for Infrastructure Development of Africa, (PIDA), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADAP), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and Accelerating African Industrial Development (AIDA).

The Action Plan aims for six percent growth in the agriculture sector and a doubling of rice production by 2018 from its 2008 level. It covers the specific areas of boosting economic growth; accelerating infrastructure and capacity development; empowering farmers as mainstream economic actors; promoting sustainable and resilient growth; creating an inclusive society for growth; consolidating peace, stability, democracy and good governance; and the follow-up mechanism. These are defined as the six key strategic approaches for the direction of development in Africa in the coming five years of the Action Plan. They will operate under the three core pillars identified in the Declaration: pillars for development: "robust and sustainable economy", "inclusive and resilient society", and "peace and stability". The participants at the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V), Japan, African nations and other partners agreed to aim for the realization of these goals through joint and concerted actions.

...and a joint Ethio-Japan Investment Forum held in Tokyo

Following the conclusion of the TICAD V summit, an Ethio-Japan Investment Forum was held in Tokyo at the headquarters of the Japan External Trade Office (JETRO). Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom; Minister of Mines, Sinkinesh Ejigu; and State Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Abraham Tekeste, and Ethiopia’s Ambassador to Japan, Markos Tekle, were among those attending the seminar and the exhibition of Ethiopian products.



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The Forum, organized by JETRO, Wafa Marketing and Promotion, an Ethiopian company engaged in investment promotion, and the Ethiopian Embassy in Japan, included more than 40 Ethiopian businessmen and officials and another eighty or so Japanese businessmen.

The Chairperson of JETRO, Hiroyuki Ishige, explained the support afforded by JETRO to Japanese investors in Africa. He announced JETRO's plan to increase the number of offices in Africa to step up its efforts to encourage investments. Ambassador Markos noted that Ethiopia and Japan were enjoying a high level of partnership which he said offered real opportunities to increase Japanese investment in Ethiopia. State Minister of Finance Abraham detailed the overall economy of Ethiopia and the encouraging investment climate. He noted Ethiopia's political stability, sound macroeconomic policies, expanding education opportunities producing a huge skilled labor force, and the more than 85 million population with a growing middle class. It all offered growing market opportunities and unique opportunities to invest.

In his address, Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros, said Japan was a strategic partner of Ethiopia and they had a successful partnership. However, he pointed out that the trade and investment relations between the two countries could be improved. He invited Japanese investors to take part in the dynamic growth in Ethiopia where there was a dynamic economy, rising incomes, an emerging middle class, stability and attractive investment incentives, including a one-stop-shop service to ease the problems of doing business in Ethiopia.

Zemedeneh Negatu, Managing Partner of Earnest and Young Ethiopia office, also explained the investment opportunities, saying that Ethiopia was a country with some of the least business risks in Africa. He said Japanese businesses could also use Ethiopia as a hub for the much larger market of COMESA. Minister Sinkinesh also gave a presentation on the mining investment opportunities and detailed the functions of the ministry in conducting geological surveys and under-writing concessions for exploration. She also briefed the audience on the mining potential of the country and the exploration activities that are being carried out. The seminar, which was accompanied by an exhibition of Ethiopian produce, including coffee, oilseeds, gemstones and handmade textiles, was closed by Prime Minister Hailemariam.



The International Panel of Experts submits its Final Report on the GERD

Last weekend, the International Panel of Experts submitted its Final Report on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) to the three Governments of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan. The construction of the Dam began with the laying of the foundation stone of the project on April 2nd, 2011. Shortly afterwards, in order to encourage transparency, trust, cooperation and understanding in Sudan and Egypt regarding the construction of the project, Ethiopia took the initiative to establish an International Panel of Experts on the Dam.

The Panel was given the mandate “to review the design documents of the GERD, provide transparent information sharing and to solicit understanding of the benefits and costs accrued to the three countries, and impacts, if any, of the GERD on the two downstream countries so as to build trust and confidence among all parties.”

The Panel was made up of ten experts, six from the three riparian countries involved and four other internationally recognized practitioners in the field. Prior to the commencement of the Panel’s work, the Water Ministers of the three countries involved met in Addis Ababa, and after thorough discussions agreed on the terms of reference, procedures and activities of the Panel. The international experts for the panel were selected by the three riparian countries which also agreed that they would cover all associated costs.

Over the past year the Panel reviewed the design and feasibility studies of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, conducted site visits in an effort to observe the process of the construction, held six meetings in the three riparian countries, discussed all the issues that surfaced during those meetings and also held consultations with the contractors and consultants associated with the project. The Panel, following agreement on the findings of their study, signed and submitted their report to the Ministers of Water and Energy of the Governments of the three riparian countries on June 1st.

The Ministry of Water and Energy, in a press release on June 2nd, said that according to the report the project design of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam was consistent with, and fulfilled, international design standards and principles. It also noted that the report said the construction of this Dam would offer immense benefits to the three riparian countries involved; and that the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam would not cause significant harm to the two lower riparian countries along the Nile. Additionally, the Panel, in its report, identified added benefits that the Dam would provide. It also requested further study to be conducted in order to identify issues, if any, that could arise in the future.

The Ministry of Water and Energy said the Government would “meticulously” review the contents of the report, adding that it was “committed to facilitating a forum by which the three riparian countries can further cooperate and work together going forward.” It also extended its appreciation and thanks to the Governments of Sudan and Egypt for the successful end to the Panel’s activities. It thanked the International Panel of Experts for their efforts over the last year in cultivating trust and transparency between the three riparian countries; and affirmed that Ethiopia would continue to strengthen cooperation and friendship with all riparian states on the basis of mutual benefit over the Nile.



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However, some responses in Egypt were regrettably hostile. President Morsi held discussions with a number of politicians on Monday this week on the issue. Part of the discussion was broadcast live on television, apparently accidentally, but it included a number of suggestions being made on how the dam project might be stopped, including support for Ethiopian rebels, sending intelligence and military teams to intervene in Ethiopia's domestic affairs, spreading rumours Egypt was preparing to buy new planes and threatening military action and other similar alternatives. President Morsi himself did not react to the suggestions of the politicians, but emphasized in concluding remarks that Egypt respected Ethiopia and its people and would not engage in any aggressive acts against it. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs subsequently called in the Egyptian Ambassador in Addis Ababa to inquire further about the threats proposed by politicians at the meeting. Egyptian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Mohamed Idris, met with foreign ministry officials on Wednesday to discuss developments. Officials asked for a formal, swift clarification from the Egyptian government on the comments made at the meeting. In a subsequent statement, the Foreign Office spokesperson said recent comments of Egyptian politicians had been unhelpful. The statement reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to establishing win-win relations with countries like Egypt. Ethiopia recognizes fully that it can benefit very much more from cooperation than hostility. The statement deplored the suggestions that the Renaissance Dam construction was a national threat to Egyptian people. It described the idea of sabotage or damage to the Dam or the country through every available avenue as irresponsible and unhelpful. Ethiopia is determined, the statement said, to establish mutual relations with Egypt that promote cooperation between the peoples of Ethiopia and Egypt.

This week, Ethiopia's Minister for Water Resources, Alemayehu Tegen, repeated that there was no reason for Egypt to worry about the Dam. The Minister said construction of the Dam posed no threat to Egypt or Sudan: "We do not have any plan to harm downstream countries, Sudan and Egypt. If Egypt has some issues to discuss with Ethiopia, we are very ready to discuss them." The Minister also made clear that the decision to divert the river which started on Tuesday last week, was unrelated to the completion of the Report. He said the diversion of the river was according to the construction schedule set earlier. The Minister re-emphasized that "river diversion does not stop or impede the flow of water to the downstream countries. River diversion means the rerouting of the river flow to facilitate the construction in the riverbed, nothing else."



The UN Human Rights Council hears details of human rights in Eritrea

The Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea was submitted to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on June 4th, 2013. The Special Rapporteur, Ms. Sheila Keetharuth, the first Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea, was refused entry into Eritrea, and based her detailed report on information gathered from a variety of sources including Eritrean refugees interviewed during a field mission to neighboring countries in April and May this year. In the report, the Special Rapporteur provides an overview of the most serious human rights concerns in Eritrea, including cases of extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearances and incommunicado detention, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and inhumane prison conditions. According to the Special Rapporteur, the situation in Eritrea is also alarming with regard to mass round-ups, forced conscription and indefinite national service as well as the country-wide arming and military training of the civilian population. The report said decade-long conscription and “excessive militarization” were leaving Eritreans with little option but to risk flight, with more than 4 000 escaping every month. UNHCR has registered more than 300,000 Eritreans refugees in neighboring countries. “Even children as young as seven or eight years of age are crossing borders unaccompanied, citing dysfunctional family circumstances caused by the absence of one parent or even both as a result of conscription, detention or exile or forced military training as the reasons for flight.” The report also highlights severe curtailment of freedom of movement, of opinion, of expression, of assembly, association and the right to freedom of religion as serious concerns.

The Special Rapporteur provided a number of recommendations to Eritrea and for the international community. These are aimed at improving respect for human rights in the country. She recommends that the Government of Eritrea should fully respect all obligations under the international human rights treaties to which Eritrea is a party as well as ratify and implement other international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. She urges that the regime in Eritrea should implement the Constitution, ratified in 1997 by the Constituent Assembly and subsequently ignored, and review the national legal framework to bring it into line with international human rights standards. She also recommended putting an immediate end to State-sponsored violence, covering killings, disappearances and all cases of arbitrary arrest, torture and other ill-treatment.

The Special Rapporteur also recommends that the international community should keep Eritrea under close scrutiny until meaningful change is evident in the country. At the same time it should increase efforts to constructively engage with Eritrea and neighboring countries with a view to improve the situation of human rights in the country. In addition, the Special Rapporteur suggests promoting official channels of migration out of Eritrea in order to reduce clandestine channels, and to promote inter-country cooperation to counter human smuggling and trafficking. Victims should be treated humanely and space provided for long-term solutions to help refugees, including local integration in first-asylum countries, and resettlement in third countries. International solidarity to share the responsibility to care for refugees and migrants should be strengthened.



Following the presentation of the report, the UN Human Rights Council held an interactive dialogue on the human rights situation in Eritrea. All the countries who took the floor in the subsequent discussion supported the Rapporteur's report and deplored the refusal of the Government of Eritrea to cooperate with the mandate holder. Several countries emphasized that Eritrea could not use the failure of the Eritrea-Ethiopia border demarcation as an excuse to violate human right obligations on a serious and systematic basis, because respecting human rights inside a country "does not depend on external factors."

The United States said that the African Group had led the creation of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea last year and the need to maintain it could not be greater. The Government did not respect the rule of law, there was no separation of power, and its Constitution had yet to be implemented. Switzerland said that it deeply regretted the fact that the Government of Eritrea had not cooperated with the mandate holder. It expressed particular concern that very young, unaccompanied children were forced into exile in neighboring countries, placing their lives at great risk. Djibouti which asked the Government of Eritrea to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur, requested here to look for any information regarding the disappearance of Djibouti prisoners of war in her next report.

Estonia which called the human rights violations in Eritrea "systematic and widespread, affecting almost all members of society", expressed particular concern over the numbers of children. Germany said the human rights situation in Eritrea was "dire", and the list of violation of multiple rights "appalling." The European Union asked how a reform process in Eritrea might be best supported by the international community. Australia called on Eritrea to abide by its obligations under international law, and Mexico, while suggesting Eritrea was going through a post-conflict situation, underlined this did not justify ongoing violation of human rights. Eritrea should cease mandatory and indefinite military conscription, restrictions on the freedom of movement, and the practice of executing persons who tried to cross the border.

Amnesty International which assessed that since independence at least 10,000 political prisoners had been detained, including people trying to flee the country, asylum seekers, and family relatives of persons who had been able to escape, called on the Council to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur. In the subsequent general debate on Human Rights Situations that Require the Attention of their Governments, the situation on Eritrea was also raised by a number of other states, including Austria, the Czech Republic and France.

Eritrea, in its concluding remarks, thanked all the delegations for their constructive comments. It said it was surprised to hear concerns expressed about the mandatory military service in the country because the international community had failed to take action in relation to the security threats facing Eritrea which necessitated a rigorous defence mechanism. Eritrea said that it was hypocritical of delegations to express concerns about the human rights situation in Eritrea, when their own countries had violated the human rights of Eritrean people by imposing sanctions on Eritrea and strangulating its economy.



In her concluding remarks, the Special Rapporteur reiterated that her mandate was an opportunity for a frank dialogue with Eritrea. However, there needed to be a shift from the language of denial to one that allowed for a breakthrough to find solutions. There was a need to implement on the ground any further action on rights contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to implement the 2008 recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Refugee children, especially unaccompanied minors that crossed borders, had a right to special protection. There should be calls for all on the removal of legal barriers that prevent the establishment of civil society organizations, and their right to function freely and safely should be guaranteed. Rule of law and ensuring that certain very important conventions were ratified were key priority issues.



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The First Brazil-Ethiopia-Djibouti-South Sudan Trade and Investment Seminar

A two-day Brazil-Ethiopia-Djibouti-South Sudan Trade and Investment Seminar opened on Thursday (June 6th) in Addis Ababa, and continued today. Organized by the Embassy of Brazil in Ethiopia, the Seminar is intended to provide an opportunity for business and investment networking between governments and companies from Brazil, Ethiopia, Djibouti and South Sudan. It will encourage strategic information-sharing on potential investment opportunities and available incentives, market potential and trade flows between entrepreneurs and policy makers of the four countries. Those participating in the Seminar include representatives of Brazilian companies already operating in the region and others interested to invest. Those attending from Ethiopia included officials of the Ethiopian Ministries of Trade, Industry, Foreign Affairs and Agriculture, and representatives of the Ethiopian Sugar Corporation, the Ethiopian Investment Agency, the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Agriculture and Agro-processing Industry, the Ethiopian Leather Industry, the Ethiopian Dairy Institute, the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and a number of private companies. Other participants include officials of the trade, foreign ministries and chambers of commerce of Djibouti and South Sudan as well as representatives from the World Bank and UNIDO.

The opening speech of Brazil's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Isabel Heyvaert described the Growth and Transformation Plan of Ethiopia and a similar plan for development in Djibouti as "excellent". She also pointed out the growing interest of Brazilian businesses to invest in sugar cane plantations and the bio-energy sectors in the three countries. She underlined the growing interest of Brazilian investors to engage in South Sudan which has the potential of huge national resources and of transformation of its agricultural sector. The Ambassador also pointed to the strategic location of the three countries and their geo-political role as additional reasons for increased cooperation.

Ethiopia's State Minister of Trade, Ato Yaekob Yala, in his opening remarks said that cooperation between Ethiopia and Brazil had yet to pick up momentum. Brazil isn't yet one of the top ten trading and investment partners despite the potential. He said that enhancing promotional activities by both sides and expediting steps to sign trade and mutual promotion deals as well as protection of investments will help to boost cooperation. The State Trade Minister pointed out the vast opportunities available to be customized in Ethiopia and the exemplary implementation capacity of Brazil through training and experience sharing, and emphasized Ethiopia's desire for broader socio-economic cooperation between the two countries especially in the priority areas identified in the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP). These include sugar cane plantation and sugar production, agro-processing, textile and garment, leather, mining and mineral exploration, pharmaceuticals, hotel, tourism, trade related infrastructure such as green energy generation, and rail and road construction which will contribute to sub-regional market integration. Ethiopia's rapid economic growth, its large population and growing demand for consumer goods, the proximity to huge Asian and Middle East markets, its membership of COMESA, and AGOA, the EBA in Europe underline the opportunities for strengthened socio-economic engagement between the two countries. Attractive incentives are also provided by the Government as extra encouragement.



State Minister for Industry, Sisay Gemechu, also stressed the significant emphasis given in the GTP for the development of micro and small enterprises as well as medium and large industries through the establishment of strong public-private partnerships. He noted the significant emphasis given to hydro-power generation was due to the Government's belief that enhancing the country's power generation and transmission capacity would help expand domestic industry to the extent that it would eventually take a sustainable lead share in the economy, as well as contribute to infrastructural interconnectivity, market and regional integration.

The Director General of the Ethiopian Sugar Corporation, Abay Tsehaye, briefed the seminar on the Government's plans for investment in sugarcane plantations and sugar production. It aimed to make Ethiopia self-sufficient in sugar and become one of the fifteen largest sugar producers in the world within a decade. He detailed the plans for expansion of existing projects and the building of ten new projects, four of which would be operational by 2015. This would allow for self-sufficiency in sugar production as well as significant exports. It would also enable the transformation of the communities in which the new projects are being set as the projects are typically labour intensive. He noted the sector offered broad opportunities for Brazilian business partnerships, adding that Ethiopia was well endowed with suitable soil types and climate for production. Ato Abay invited Brazilian and other businesses to become actively involved in the sector through the establishment of joint ventures in sugar-trading and joint investment in plantations and sugar-production projects.

Other speakers included the Secretary General of COMESA, Sindiso Ngwenya, who described COMESA as an evolving political and economic landscape with over 360 million population, almost half of Africa's population and whose members owned a combined GDP of US\$1.2 trillion. He pointed out the significant opportunities the region of COMESA could have for more South-South socio-economic cooperation, adding that Ethiopia, Djibouti and South Sudan constituted about 30% of the total population of COMESA. He emphasized the importance of adopting modern techniques to support value addition on products and stronger and effective implementation capacity as well as infrastructural interconnectivity.

Director General of Americas Affairs Directorate General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atskeselassie, described Brazil as one of the most important of emerging markets and expressed his belief that this was the time to exploit the vast potentialities of more substantive socio-economic cooperation between Brazil, Ethiopia, Djibouti, South Sudan and other countries of the region. He said Brazil's practice of transforming its agricultural manufacturing industries through the maximum exploitation of knowledge, effective implementation of the right mix of development policies and strategies and creation of social responsibility capable of boosting corporate productivity could be used as features of awakening in other developing countries. He said there was a potential to enhance cooperation with Brazil not just as a development partner but also as a country from which the sub-region could take lessons of resilience. These could be made a reality through an enhanced cooperation in education and knowledge transfer, investment and trade as well as development financing. Ambassador Taye called for more Brazilian investment in Ethiopia, paraphrasing a popular saying of the former Brazilian President, Lula: the most aspiring and just thing to do is investing in poor people and emerging countries.



The President of Ethiopia's Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association pointed out the strengthening of Ethiopia's private-public partnerships through the establishment of a well-established public-private sector dialogue. She expressed the Chamber's determination, as legitimate representative of the Ethiopian private sector, to facilitate joint partnerships between interested Brazilian businesses and Ethiopian counterparts. Her members were interested in customizing best practices and experiences of similar Brazilian companies. This would help achieve the Government's aim of ensuring strong private sector involvement. More details on the opportunities, incentives and other policy packages for socio-economic engagement were shared by representatives of Ethiopian, Djiboutian and South-Sudanese institutions of industry, trade, investment and commerce.

The Country Representative of the World Bank, Mr. Guang Chen, noted the strengthening of South-South cooperation was beneficial to all stakeholders as it complements stronger North-South cooperation. He pointed out the potential of all-round cooperation especially in technical assistance and education between Brazil and Ethiopia, Djibouti and South-Sudan, noting that Brazil's good experience in managing resources effectively could be taken as a lesson by the countries of the sub-region. He said a continuous dialogue on how to avoid any possible trade and investment barriers to socio-economic relations could bring about significant improvement. Mr. Chen emphasized the mutual benefits for Ethiopia and Djibouti, for example, in focusing on developing their corridor to improve the efficiency and reduce the cost of port services. The Office of UNIDO also expressed its appreciation and support for the priority areas for investment identified by the Ethiopia, Djibouti and South Sudan governments which were in line with UNIDO's three identified areas of support: poverty reduction, trade capacity building and energy and environment while noting that the nature of identified priority areas for investment included green energy development projects of sub-regional and regional infrastructure as well as market integration and other pro-poor developments for sustainable and inclusive growth.



About

A Week in the Horn, established in 2007, is a weekly online publication dedicated to regional developments in the Horn of Africa. Its aim is to promote good will and brotherly relations between states in the region by highlighting events and publicizing news stories. It features detailed commentary, analysis as well as intelligent discussion of weekly developments throughout the region.

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