

## **A Week in the Horn 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013**

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### **Sudan and South Sudan agree on implementation of peace deals**

At a Summit in Addis Ababa (4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> January), the Presidents of the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan agreed to the implementation of several outstanding agreements pertaining to Abyei and to cooperate over the disputed areas along their border. The meeting of President Omer Hassan al-Bashir of Sudan and President Salva Kiir of South Sudan in Addis Ababa, at the invitation of Prime Minister Hailemariam, followed a round of shuttle diplomacy by the Prime Minister. He, and Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom, had been in both Khartoum and Juba the previous week to try to move the mediation process forward. Both Presidents had assured Prime Minister Hailemariam of their commitment to engage in substantive discussions on the implementation of the previously agreed peace agreements.

They accepted the invitation to Addis Ababa to hold further discussions on the implementation of the agreements signed between them in September last year. Those agreements, signed under the September talks mediated by Ethiopia and the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), chaired by former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, called for a jointly-monitored demilitarized buffer zone in the disputed areas on their common border, the reopening of the border for general trade, the resumption of South Sudanese oil exports through northern pipelines and an end to the support of rebel groups in one another's territories. Prior to last weekend's Presidential Summit, the two sides had already agreed to the establishment and implementation of the demilitarized buffer zone along their common border.

According to an AUHIP statement issued after the talks, the two presidents agreed late on Saturday (5<sup>th</sup> January) to the “speedy, unconditional and coordinated” implementation of deals reached in September to demilitarize their shared borders and allow oil exports to flow from South Sudan's oil fields north through Sudan's pipelines. Mr. Mbeki said “We are very, very pleased indeed with the outcome of this because it has indeed opened the way for the implementation of all of these various agreements, [and] they have also agreed that action should

be taken immediately, as soon as possible, to implement all the existing agreements unconditionally."

AUHIP mediators will now present officials of the two sides with the timetable for oil exports and the withdrawal of military forces from border areas, Mr. Mbeki said. AUHIP has taken responsibility for drawing up "a Matrix with time-frames, for the speedy, unconditional and coordinated implementation of all agreements" by Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January. The two Presidents agreed that, as part of this process, the forthcoming extraordinary meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, scheduled for Addis Ababa that day (13<sup>th</sup> January), would aim to ensure the establishment of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone without any further delay. Mr. Mbeki noted that "the two presidents agreed that steps should be taken without any further delay to demarcate those parts of the border which have been agreed."

Although neither President Al-Bashir nor President Salva Kiir made any statement after their meeting last weekend, AUHIP which mediated the discussions announced that agreement had been reached on the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration, Abyei Area Council and the Abyei Area Police Service. The AUHIP noted that that the Presidents will reconvene to determine the final status of Abyei following the drawing up of the Matrix and constitution of administration, council and police services for the Abyei area. They are expected to meet on the sidelines of the AU Assembly at the end of the month. They will also look to consider matters relevant to the formation of the Abyei Area Referendum Commission. The two sides agreed that the work of the Joint Committee on the Establishment of a Demilitarized Zone would resume without delay. Agreement on the demilitarized zone has been a condition for the resumption of oil exports.

AUHIP said President Salva Kiir reiterated that the directives he had issued prior to independence addressing the disengagement between the SPLM/SPLA and the SPLM-N had been carried out. He said he would commit this in writing to AUHIP in response to a letter he had previously received. President Al-Bashir and President Kiir also confirmed that any complaints concerning any of the issues in dispute should be dealt with by the Joint Political and Security Mechanism in accordance with the processes established in the security arrangements.

AUHIP said with reference to the demarcation of the border, the Presidents had directed that all necessary and agreed measures be taken without further delay to demarcate the agreed sections. Similarly, they accepted that agreements previously signed relating to the processing of disputed areas should also be implemented without delay. In line with the opinions of the Border Team of Experts, the Presidents will meet following the end of these discussions to determine the manner in which the issue of claimed areas should be dealt with.

In a joint press conference with Thabo Mbeki after the Summit, Prime Minister Hailemariam said that the summit had covered all issues between the two countries, including Abyei, the border and the implementation of previous agreements, especially the joint cooperation agreement, and security arrangements. He underlined that the Summit had agreed that AUHIP was to prepare a Matrix with specific timeframes for implementing the agreements on the ground. He also stressed the keenness of both President Al-Bashir and President Salva Kiir to implement the agreements and said he felt quite comfortable about their seriousness to implement what had been agreed. He said he was convinced the summit had achieved its objectives.

The AU Commission welcomed the agreement. A statement from the Chairperson of the Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, said she was confident that the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan would "persevere in their efforts and continue to demonstrate the statesmanship and spirit of mutual cooperation that the situation requires, in the interest of their two peoples and countries, the region and Africa as a whole." Dr. Dlamini Zuma commended Prime Minister Hailemariam and former President Thabo Mbeki for "their relentless efforts and outstanding

commitment in discharging their mandate.” She reaffirmed the AU’s determination to continue to assist Sudan and South Sudan in whatever way possible to overcome the challenges confronting them. The agreement was also welcomed by Kenya’s President Mwai Kibaki who commended the result of the discussions. Kenya holds the chair of the AU’s Peace and Security Commission, and President Kibaki said Kenya was keen to ensure the implementation of the roadmap for peace between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan.

### **The Foreign Minister in London: “a productive visit”**

Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, met with UK officials on Thursday (10<sup>th</sup> January) during his first working visit as Foreign Minister to the United Kingdom this week. The Minister met with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, William Hague; the Secretary of State for International Development (DFID), Justine Greening; and the Minister for Africa, Mark Simmonds and other FCO officials for discussions on both bilateral and regional issues.

Both sides expressed their satisfaction at the expanding partnership between the two countries. Minister Tedros made clear his appreciation of the quality of UK support for Ethiopia’s capacity building programme, which attaches key attention to the priority areas set by Ethiopia so that the country fully retains ownership of the process. The UK, for its part, expressed its appreciation at the effective way that Ethiopia uses financial support and the proficiency of its various development programmes. All three ministers were also keen to discuss business engagement and investor opportunities in Ethiopia. Ethiopia receives more aid from the UK than any other countries, and most recently, Ethiopia and the UK signed a 14.9 billion birr grant agreement to help Ethiopia intensify its fight against poverty, expedite the Growth and Transformation Plan and make the most effective use of its natural resources (See below under News and Views).

Other issues of mutual interest discussed during the talks included *inter alia* the peace and security of the sub-region, the situation in Somalia, Eritrea and the peace process in Sudan and South Sudan. The UK government noted with appreciation Ethiopia’s significant role in helping to bring peace to the sub-region including its involvement in the peace process between Sudan and Somalia. Both sides agreed on the importance of immediate implementation of the recent agreement signed by the Sudan and South Sudan in Addis Ababa. They also agreed on the importance of the international community’s assistance in building institutions in Somalia, including the system of justice and the national army.

Minister Tedros emphasized that Ethiopia and the UK have enjoyed excellent long-standing relations for over a century, and noted that the relationship has grown steadily closer, particularly in recent decades. He invited both the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and for International Development to visit Ethiopia. They accepted the invitations.

The Foreign Minister also met with representatives of the business community and led a round-table discussion with over 30 UK companies who already invest in Ethiopia, or which are keen to do so, among them Diageo, Tullow Oil and Nyota Minerals. The Minister told the business leaders that though this was his first official trip to the United Kingdom as Foreign Minister, he had lived here for many years when studying medicine so it felt like coming home. He stressed that Ethiopia was determined to make the business climate better for investors. He said feedback from the meeting would be passed on to the relevant authorities in Ethiopia. The Government would take any of the issues raised seriously and incorporate them into future plans for the business sector. He noted a number of developments that would facilitate investment including avoidance of double taxation, investment protection and other agreements. These will, he said, create an even better climate for business.

The Minister gave a detailed briefing on the policy and regulatory frameworks and on expanding businesses and investment in Ethiopia. He also engaged in an interactive session in which

participants raised questions and commented on a wide range of issues including delays at Djibouti port, foreign exchange shortages and the lack of skilled manpower. Those present requested an update on the progress of the Grand Renaissance Dam, and made it clear they appreciated Ethiopia's energy potential. On foreign exchange, the Minister explained that the problem had been caused by sudden, large-scale demand: in January, over \$800 million of foreign exchange had been requested, compared with a figure of \$910 million during the whole of the last year. The Minister said the government would be working hard to respond to the rapidly increasing demand. He assured participants of the commitment of his office to engage with them in the coming months and years with a view to fully supporting their investment interests and activities.

The Minister will be meeting members of the diaspora community on Saturday [12<sup>th</sup>] to brief them on recent developments and encourage them to further support development and take advantage of investment opportunities.

### **Somalia's Parliament elects committees and goes into recess.....**

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud addressed a special sitting of the Somali Parliament on Monday (7<sup>th</sup> January), its last before Parliament was prorogued until 20<sup>th</sup> March. It had been in session since 20<sup>th</sup> August 2012 when members were sworn in. The President said he was proud of the fact that Somalia had a new working Parliament, and he encouraged MPs to go and visit their respective regions and engage with their local communities to support peace and development during their break. He told MPs that the Government would continue to prioritize security at the top of its agenda. He encouraged the executive branch and the Parliament to work together in line with the Provisional Constitution. He also stressed the importance of implementing the concept of Federalism as laid out in the Provisional Constitution: "we have no other option, and we cannot change course now, because this is what we agreed, and [we must] accept and implement its tenets and spirit." The President also reiterated the need to expand government administration and control over the regions. He said he was about to appoint new administrations in areas liberated from Al-Shabaab but he added that the Government would not interfere in areas where the local community is said to be comfortable with the existing administration.

The next day, 8<sup>th</sup> January, President Mohamud invited Somali MPs to a dinner at the Presidential Palace where he praised MPs and thanked the members of the House for their ardent responsibility. The leadership shown, he said, deserved to be a model for other branches of government. He also hailed the close cooperation between the Parliament and the Executive. The Speaker of the Federal Parliament, Mohamed Osman Sheikh Jawari, noted that members had completed a significant amount of legislative work in their session of over four months. Major legislative work included approval of the Prime Minister, of the Council of Ministers and of the federal budget, as well as selection of various working parliamentary sub-committees.

Two weeks ago Parliament convened to deliberate on the size and composition of the house committees and their leadership. It has now agreed on a total of fifteen committees whose role is aligned with that of the various ministries. Chairmen have also been appointed for each committee with the Digil and Merifle (Rahenweyne), Hawiye and Darod clans each taking three chairman positions, the Dir receiving four, and the minority clans (the .5 of the 4.5 clan formula) holding two chairmanships.

The committees cover: Internal Regulations, Ethics (Disciplinary) and Immunity, (Chairman - Sheikh Abdiqadir Sheikh Ali - Dir); Justice, Social Affairs and Religious Affairs (Aden Sadiiq Mohamed - Darod); Interior and National Security (Fowzia Mohamed Sheikh - Digil and Merifle); Truth, Reconciliation and Property Restitution (General Abdi Ma'alim Adan - Digil and Merifle); Budget and Finance (Sheikh Mohamed Deer - Digil and Merifle); Foreign Relations, Planning and

International Cooperation (Abdiqadir Osoble Ali – Hawiye); National Defence (Isse Arab – Dir); Human Rights, Women and Humanitarian Affairs (Khadija Mohamed Diriye – minority clans); Health, Education, Labour, Youth and Sports (Mohamed Warsame Mohamed – minority clans); Agriculture, Rural Development, Livestock and Environment (Sa’iid Mohamed Ali – Dir); Supervision, Review, and Implementation of the Provisional Constitution (Maryan Aarif Qasim – Hawiye); Information, Broadcast and Culture (Abdi Hashi Abdullahi – Dir); Roads, Transport and Telecommunications (Osman Dhubow – Darod); Economic and Energy (Abdullahi Jama Hussein – Hawiye); Natural Resources (Abdiqadir Aden Nur – Darod). All fifteen committees and their members were unanimously endorsed by the 158 members of the parliament in attendance.

### **.....Somalia’s Foreign Minister in Italy.....**

On Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> January, Somalia Foreign Minister, Fowzia Yusuf Haji Adan, on a visit to Italy met and held talks with Italian Foreign Minister, Giulio Terzi. Discussions covered bilateral relations and issues of development and aid cooperation as well as ways of strengthening Somalia state institutions following the recent successful transitional process to help achieve stability and development. The two ministers discussed the major challenges facing the new Somali authorities in their effort to build solid state institutions. The Italian Foreign Minister expressed his country's readiness to provide the necessary support for Somalia in the judicial, security and development sectors, both bilaterally and through European Union aid. Mr. Terzi also announced that the Italian government was ready to train 200 Somali police this month. The Somali Foreign Minister expressed her government's strong desire to build a "united state on a federal basis" ensuring key rights and freedoms in the country. Another area of discussion was the agreements signed between Italy and Somalia prior to the collapse of Somalia's central government in 1991, and the ministers reportedly agreed to re-institute all such inter-state agreements between the two countries.

Somalia's Foreign Minister is on a tour of Europe and visited London, where she met UK Foreign Secretary William Hague before going on to Rome. The Foreign Minister has recently been conducting a review of Somalia's global assets as a prelude to trying to recover millions of dollars frozen by foreign companies and organizations following the collapse of the central government in 1991. Mrs. Fowzia Yusuf has said the government is planning to demand the return of money held by the Swiss authorities, and of other assets, including ships and planes believed to be in Germany, Italy and Yemen. In the confusion following the fall of Siad Barre in 1991, some foreign governments froze Somali bank accounts to prevent unauthorized use. Other physical assets abroad including former embassy buildings were misused or are unaccounted for. Finance Minister, Mohamud Hassan Suleiman, has also called on the international community to help Somalia recover assets abroad. He said the government would not hesitate to retrieve money illegally deposited abroad in foreign accounts over the last two decades, including bank accounts of previous governments or money originating in financial aid. Mr. Hassan said the government was appealing to its partners to release documents to help track these funds. The government sent an official request to the UN Security Council for assistance to reclaim funds and other assets abroad in November.

### **.....and Somalia’s National Intelligence and Security Agency headquarters reopened**

In Mogadishu the Government celebrated the reopening of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) headquarters on Monday (7<sup>th</sup> January), an occasion also marking the 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Agency. Speaking at the opening, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud described the NISA as an institution that had "earned the respect of [Somali] citizens". He said its desirable discipline and commitment made the National Intelligence and Security Agency a role model for all Somali security forces. The President called on the people of Somalia not to be brain-washed by foreign criminals, such as Al-Shabaab, who were trying to disrupt Somalia. He said the people of

Somalia should know that “Somalia belonged only to Somalis”, adding that they should tell foreign criminals “to go back to your countries”. He said Somalis were certainly Muslims, but it [Somalia] belonged “only to Muslims who are Somalis”. The President expressed his appreciation to countries that had provided support to Somalia at difficult times, and noted that the country would never forget the support given to help ensure peace, stability and development. He said security, one of the government’s Six Pillars Policy Plan, was a current priority and underlined his government’s commitment to restoring peace in Somalia.

Members of Parliament, cabinet ministers, foreign diplomats and AMISOM commanders also attended the ceremony. The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Mahamat Annadif, applauded the Somali National Intelligence and Security Agency for having been a reliable partner to AMISOM since the deployment of the first AU contingent. Congratulating the government and people of Somalia, he said the NISA was a “key security instrument in the search for sustainable peace and security, particularly in the fight against extremism.” He said the re-opening of its headquarters symbolized the re-building of state institutions which had been destroyed by two decades of fighting. Ambassador Annadif reaffirmed AMISOM’s continued commitment to working with NISA as the government moves to stabilize the country and rebuild its institutions.

### **The World Trade Organization Director-General in Addis Ababa**

This week, the Director-General of the World Trade Organization, M. Pascal Lamy, was in Addis Ababa where he met Prime Minister Hailemariam and also held talks with Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros. M. Lamy met the Prime Minister in his office on Tuesday (8<sup>th</sup> January) to discuss Ethiopia’s progress towards accession to the WTO. M. Lamy said Ethiopia was on the right track to join the organization. He and the Prime Minister discussed further efforts that Ethiopia needs to make for successful accession to the WTO and the way Ethiopia’s decision to become a member of the organization lined up with its development policies. M. Lamy subsequently told journalists that WTO members were keen to have Ethiopia as a member of the organization.

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros also met with M. Lamy to discuss the progress of Ethiopia’s accession to the WTO as well as other issues. M. Lamy, after expressing his condolences on the untimely death of the late Prime Minister Meles, expressed his belief that the new leadership would continue Meles’ legacy of national, regional and global importance. He commended the strong commitment shown by Ethiopia to joining the WTO. He said the ongoing negotiations of the accession process would be important in triggering discussions at the highest policy making levels. Discussions on a number of areas were bearing fruit and he hoped to see similar results from the ongoing discussions on remaining issues. He expressed the WTO’s commitment to providing support to the country’s accession process. M. Lamy noted the importance of expediting regional integration as a minimum common denominator to facilitate market growth in the region. He also spoke of the importance for the African Union of having a unified, organized and streamlined position for the next G-20 Summit, and said he was ready to cooperate in helping joint discussions between the African Union Commission, the African Union Chairperson, the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the European Union Commission in order to help produce effective preparation.

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros emphasized Ethiopia’s commitment to expedite the accession process to the WTO and noted the government’s efforts to narrow what he called healthy dissimilarities of views on a few issues. He said the Government was now proposing a roadmap which he hoped would trigger flexibility from the partners’ side. He believed existing differences on the telecom and financial sectors should not be impediments to the ongoing accession process as Ethiopia had expressed its readiness to work on these issues on a short-to-medium term basis. The Government had repeatedly explained that the decision of maintaining the telecom sector within

public ownership for the short-term comes from its belief that it would be much more productive to open it up once the Government had ensured broad telecom service coverage to all rural areas of the country. The financial sector would also be liberalized once the Government had established strong central regulations that were capable of accommodating the needs of large foreign companies, had maximized its foreign currency source bases and realized the emergence of competitive domestic lenders. Dr. Tedros noted the government's continuing efforts to maximize the private sector's networking capacity and to expand the market share of local manufacturing, adding that the Government has a plan to produce 50% of its needs locally.

Dr. Tedros thanked the WTO Director-General for sharing his views. He noted that he would consider the important suggestions made regarding IGAD regional integration and the AU's position for G20 meetings. He appreciated the support that M. Lamy as Director-General of the WTO, offered to encourage Ethiopia's process of accession, both personally and officially. He expressed his belief that M. Lamy would continue to provide this support during the remaining period of his tenure. M. Lamy's term of office as Director-General of WTO finishes at the end of August this year.

### **Celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the OAU/AU**

It was 50 years ago that 32 African Heads of State gathered here in Addis Ababa and signed the Charter of the Organization of African Unity. The aim was to promote the unity and solidarity of African States and to ensure the welfare and well-being of their peoples. Ethiopia played a historic role in the establishment of the OAU by helping to narrow the differences between the various groupings with divergent views on how to promote unity among African States. It is worth recalling what Emperor Haile Selassie stated at the Addis Ababa Conference on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1963:

*"What we require is a single African organization through which Africa's single voice may be heard, within which Africa's problems may be studied and resolved....Let us, at this Conference, create a single institution to which we will all belong, based on principles to which we all subscribe, confident that in its councils our voices will carry their proper weight, secure in the knowledge that the decision there will be dictated by Africans and only by Africans and that they will take full account of all vital African considerations".*

Emperor Haile Selassie's speech and arguments played a major role in persuading the leaders of the independent African States gathered in Addis Ababa to sign the OAU Charter. His role was a major reason why Ethiopia was chosen to serve first as the Headquarters of the OAU and then of the African Union. Ethiopia also played a pioneering role in realization of the political independence of the continent, as a torch-bearer of independence, following its defeat of a colonial aggressor in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century at the famous battle of Adwa. It continued to play a pivotal role in promoting and expounding African interests as a pioneer in the long and arduous liberation struggle for the continent.

The OAU was established with the cardinal objective of promoting the unity and solidarity of African States, coordinating and intensifying their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa, defending their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, eradicating all forms of colonialism from Africa and promoting international cooperation. The OAU successfully discharged its primary mandate of liberating our continent from the last vestiges of colonialism and apartheid. It also provided a unique framework for Africa's collective action in its relation vis-a-vis the rest of the world.

At the same time, however, it became apparent by the end of the century that there was a need to strengthen the OAU, to create an organization that was more efficient and effective in addressing

the needs of the continent and able to fully meet the challenges of the new millennium, in the face of the changing global order and the need to accelerate Africa's integration. This was the driving force for the transformation of the OAU into the African Union in 2002, with the objective of, among other things, achieving greater unity and solidarity among African States and the peoples of Africa as well as accelerating the political and socio-economic integration of the continent.

Over the last ten years, the African Union has exerted tremendous efforts to promote peace, security and stability, to advance democratic principles and institutions, to support popular participation and good governance and to protect human rights as well as accelerate the integration of African economies and ensure sustainable development in Africa. It has also played a crucial role in raising Africa's profile on the international stage by promoting and defending common African positions on issues of interest to our continent and its peoples.

The result was that the political and socio-economic situation of the continent has significantly improved. There is a sense of real hope and optimism for the realization of the Renaissance of Africa. The late Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, who delivered a keynote address at the inauguration of the new African Union Conference Centre and Office Complex on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2012, aptly expressed this:

*"Africa is rising indeed. The African Renaissance has begun and it is within our means to keep it going. It is within our means to create a new pole of global growth in Africa, to fully stabilize our continent and to make sure that it takes its rightful place in the global scheme of things."*

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the OAU/AU. In line with the decision of the 16<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, the Golden Jubilee of OAU/AU will be celebrated in its birthplace, Addis Ababa, on 25<sup>th</sup> May this year. The Assembly requested that the African Union Commission make the necessary arrangements for this celebration in close collaboration with the host country, Ethiopia and all member States.

The Golden Jubilee Celebration is an opportune moment to pay a special tribute to the generations of Pan-Africanists and the Founding Fathers of the OAU who strove to promote unity, solidarity, cohesion and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and African States. In accordance with the decision of the 18<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the Assembly, the Golden Jubilee of the OAU/AU will be marked with the theme of "Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance", highlighting both the ideals of Pan-Africanism and Africa's aspirations for peace, democracy, development and unity.

In this connection, the Assembly requested that the African Union Commission coordinate activities for an inclusive and participatory process of reflection on the last fifty years of efforts towards African unity. The intention is to define Pan-Africanism for the coming generation. The Assembly has also encouraged Member States and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), in coordination with the Commission, to organize various activities including media events, debates and competitions in schools and universities, public opinion surveys, sessions in local and national legislatures, and other activities to celebrate the year of Pan-Africanism and enhance the awareness of the new generation of Africans about the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance. The activities will include round-table discussions to consider the tremendous sacrifices paid during the pre-independence colonial era and the achievements obtained during the post-political independence of the continent. These discussions will include presentations of papers highlighting the socio-economic development of Africa, the challenges surmounted and the opportunities seized by the African people during the last five decades.



For its part, Ethiopia has established a National Committee tasked with the responsibility of organizing the Golden Jubilee Celebration. In addition, a Secretariat has been set up in the Foreign Ministry to coordinate the day-to-day activities of the National Committee. Preparations are already well underway to mark this historic event with a series of activities and the Celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the OAU/AU is expected to be officially launched later this month.

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## **News and Views:**

### **Dr. Tedros meets UK officials in London**

Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros, met senior UK officials yesterday (10<sup>th</sup> January) on his first working visit as Foreign Minister to the United Kingdom. The Minister met with Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, William Hague; the Secretary of State for International Development (DFID), Justine Greening, and the Minister for Africa, Mark Simmonds and other Foreign and Commonwealth officials for discussions on both bilateral and regional issues. Both sides expressed their satisfaction at the expanding partnership between the two countries. Minister Tedros made clear his appreciation of the quality of the UK support for Ethiopia's capacity building programme which attaches key attention to the priority areas set by Ethiopia so that the country fully retains ownership of the process. The UK, for its part, expressed its appreciation at the effective way that Ethiopia uses financial support and the proficiency of its various development programmes. The two countries' representatives also discussed issues of mutual interest including, inter alia, the peace and security of the sub-region, the situation in Somalia, Eritrea and the peace process between Sudan and South Sudan. Later in the day the Foreign Minister met with representatives of the business community and led a round-table discussion with over 30 UK companies which already invest in Ethiopia or which are keen to take advantage of the many opportunities available in the country. These included Diageo, Tullow Oil, Nyota Minerals, UK Chambers of Commerce, British American Tobacco, African Bamboo PLC, the Eastern Africa Association, the Business Council for Africa, TVET, G4S, Mott MacDonald, Sagewood Ltd and others. The Minister gave a detailed briefing on the policy and regulatory framework for expanding businesses and investment in Ethiopia. He also participated in a discussion session where participants raised questions and gave comments on a wide range of issues; the Minister assured them that his office would be fully committed to engage with them in the future to help fulfil investment activities. On Saturday, the Minister will be meeting with members of the Diaspora to brief them on recent developments and encourage them to further support development and investment opportunities in Ethiopia.

### **Ethiopia, UK sign 14.9 billion birr grant agreement**

Ethiopia and the UK signed a 14.9 billion birr grant agreement on Monday (7<sup>th</sup> January). The agreement was signed by Sofian Ahmed, Minister of Finance and Economic Development and Melanie Robinson, Director for the Department for International Development (DFID) in Ethiopia. Minister Sofian noted that the grant would help Ethiopia intensify its fight against poverty, expedite the implementation of the Growth and Transformation Plan and utilize its natural resources efficiently. Ms. Robinson stressed that the UK would continue its support to Ethiopia. The grant is to be utilized for the construction of roads, and support for educational projects, for potable water supplies, healthcare and other infrastructural developments throughout the country.

## **Inflation drops to 12.9 percent**

The Central Statistics Agency has announced that the inflation rate in Ethiopia fell in December to 12.9 percent, year-on-year, the lowest level for 2012. This was a fall from 15.6 percent in November. The consumer price index fell 0.7 percent, month-on-month, in December after a 0.5 percent drop in November. The Agency said food price inflation fell to 11.8 percent year-on-year in December, down from 13.4 percent in November. The Agency noted that there had been a drop in the price of grains and cereals as the most recent harvest began to reach the markets. The non-food inflation rate also dropped to 14.6 percent in December from 19.4 percent the previous month. The economy is expected to maintain a growth rate of 11 percent this financial year, 2012/2013, the eighth consecutive year of double-digit growth. The government had hoped to achieve single-digit inflation by the end of last year. It now expects to achieve this in the next few months.

## **IGAD staff members support the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam**

The staff of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has contributed \$100,000 in support of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The Executive Secretary of IGAD, Engineer Mahboub Maalim presented a cheque to the Ethiopian Ambassador to Djibouti, Ambassador Suleiman Dedefo, at a ceremony held at Djibouti's Hotel Kempinsky. Engineer Mahboub Maalim said the "Renaissance Dam is a significant step towards regional integration and development." He added that "The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam can be termed as the flagship of a new age not only for Ethiopia, but also for our region." Ambassador Suleiman praised the IGAD staff for their initiative noting that "IGAD's contribution is so important not only as a substantial amount but also as a gesture that heralds that we can independently address our needs and necessities". Ambassador Suleiman recalled Ethiopia's decision to go ahead with the project using local resources, and with close cooperation of the peoples of the IGAD region. That, he said, would reduce the region's dependency on countries outside the area. Ethiopia has emphasized it hopes to develop regional manufacturing capability through this and similar regional projects. Other speakers, on the occasion, also emphasized integration among IGAD member states as a key to prosperity in the region; and the Executive Secretary of IGAD paid tribute to the late Prime Minister Meles's vision and leadership in the region.

## **Ethiopia hosting Conference on Child Survival next week**

Ethiopia is hosting a conference on child survival under the theme 'African Leadership for Child Survival—A Promise Renewed' next week (16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> January) in Addis Ababa. Ministers of Health from 54 African countries have been invited together with global experts to ensure that child survival is placed at the forefront of the social development agenda across the continent and to renew the focus of African leaders on heading their own country's efforts and sustaining the gains made in child survival over the last two decades. The conference is a sequel to the 'Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed' conference in June last year in Washington, D.C. This was an initiative of the Governments of Ethiopia, India, and the United States, together with UNICEF, convening the 'Child Survival Call to Action'. More than 160 governments signed a pledge to renew their commitment to child survival and to eliminate all preventable child mortality within two decades. Next week's conference here in Addis Ababa will further boost the commitment of states demonstrating a declining rate of infant mortality. According to UNICEF, since 1990, the number of child deaths in sub-Saharan Africa has dropped by 39%. Many African countries are now within reach of the 2015 Millennium Development Goal of reducing the under-five mortality rate by two thirds. Nevertheless, even with availability of proven, inexpensive, high-impact intervention for maternal, newborn, and child health, problems remain. High rates of childhood illness and death persist in a number of countries. In Sub-Saharan Africa, one in eight children still die before reaching their fifth birthday. Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros, whose

leadership while previously Minister of Health raised Ethiopia's profile on child survival in the continent, will be addressing the Conference.

### **Somali President Mahmoud meets a delegation from the World Bank**

The President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, met and held discussions with high-ranking World Bank officials at Villa Somalia, on Thursday (10<sup>th</sup> January), regarding Somalia's engagement with the World Bank. The World Bank delegation, led by Country Director, Ms. Bella Bird, met the President and the Minister of Finance, Mohamud Suleyman, and other senior government officials. President Mohamud explained that after 22 years of absence caused by conflict, the government of Somalia was now ready to engage with the World Bank and other international financial institutions. "Somalia needs to reinstate operations with the World Bank Family; we believe the World Bank can play an important role in the reconstruction of Somalia, as well as the rebuilding of our public financial institutions," said the President. He briefed the delegation about Somalia's 12 years of transition which he described as a long time for a transitional process. "We are committed to bringing forward the best people we have to work with you," he said, "so our financial institutions can begin to function well, but we need your support". The President, who underlined his optimism about future engagements with the international community, briefed the World Bank team about the various recent changes in the country. He noted that many countries had now signed bilateral agreements with Somalia, and more were in the pipeline. Some countries, like Japan, he said, had chosen to directly recognize and support the government. "We applaud this move and would encourage others to follow suit," he said. The President added that he was certain that "other institutions like the World Bank would be pleased to be our partners."

### **Mobile telephone users get Internet access in Mogadishu**

Hormuud Telecom Somalia has expanded its third generation (3G) mobile network service in Mogadishu to provide faster internet access to subscribers using web-enabled phones and laptops. Hormuud's 3G network will be available in Mogadishu initially and will expand to other major cities in southern Somalia within a year. Hormuud's chairman said the new service would provide high speed internet which will benefit students, academics and the public. It will offer access on cellular devices to streaming audio and video content, video chat and high-speed data transfer. Hormuud was the first company to provide mobile internet access in 2011, and this new development provides faster access and improves on the previous technology. It means customers will be able to use mobile money transfers and USB modems for broadband access in certain African and Arab countries. The technology is faster than ADSL and allows internet access in any place with mobile network coverage. ADSL, or asymmetric digital subscriber line technology, provides internet access via telephone lines. The 3G technology allows users in Mogadishu to browse websites at speeds as high as one megabyte per second in the city and its outskirts; and the faster service will improve the flow of information into the city and open up the capital to the world.