

A Week in the Horn 16th October 2015

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News in brief

Africa and the African Union

Turkey hosted the 8th Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Summit in Istanbul this week (October 14-16) on the theme of “**Strengthening Partnerships: Migration and Human Mobility for Sustainable Development.**”

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn has been visiting drought affected communities in the Somali and Afar Regional States this week (See article)

The Secretary of the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee (NDPPC), Mitiku Kassa, told a meeting of UN agencies, NGOs, and Donors on Monday (October 12), that the number of people in need of relief assistance had increased to 8.2 million. (See article)

Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom met an EU Delegation led by Ambassador Walter Stevens on Friday (October 16) to discuss migration and other issues. He also met, earlier in the week, with an Italian delegation led by Ambassador Marco del Panta, Director for Migration at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

State Minister Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos met with Mr Arne Jan Flolo, Senior Advisor and Focal Person for Eritrean Affairs and Peace and Reconciliation Issues in the Horn of Africa at Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Monday (October 13).

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos, met with an Austrian delegation led by Ambassador Alexander Marschik, Director General for International Affairs, in Austria's Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs on Wednesday (October 14).

With Ethiopia and the EU celebrating 40 years of cooperation, the European Union delegation to Ethiopia announced this week it would be providing 540 million Euros of funding over the next five years to support road building in rural areas. (See article)

The First Arab–Ethiopian Exhibition and Conference for Industrial Exports and Investment, APEX ETHIOPIA 2015 opened in Addis Ababa on Thursday (October 15). (See article)

The Economist is organizing its 'Ethiopia Summit 2015' at the Sheraton Hotel on October 28-29, with the theme: "Driving continued growth". (See article)

The Government held discussions with representatives of more than **15 political parties** on the performance of the First Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP I) and considered the Second GTP, on Friday (October 9). (See article)

The Gilgel Gibe III hydroelectric power project **began power generation on Saturday** (October 10). The Dam, the highest Roller Compacted Concrete (RCC) dam in Africa at 243m, will have a total installed capacity of 1,870mw.

The Ethiopian Railway Corporation has taken delivery of 315 locomotives for the new Ethio-Djibouti railway line. With track laying finished, the project is **92% complete**. Remaining tasks, including installation of power lines and signal reception and communications equipment, are expected to be completed this month.

Fitch Ratings has repeated its assessment of Ethiopia's Long-term foreign and local currency Issuer Default Ratings (IDR) at 'B', and defined the outlook as 'stable'. The issue ratings on senior unsecured foreign currency bonds and the Country Ceiling and the Short-term foreign-currency IDR have also been affirmed at 'B'.

The UK Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Greg Dorey opened two joint photographic exhibitions on Thursday (October 15) at the Institute of Ethiopian studies at Addis Ababa University. One commemorates the 50th Anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's State Visit to Ethiopia; the other is of Nick Danziger's 'Between Heaven and Earth' photographs.

The "Ethiopian Community Association in Rome and its Surroundings" held its official debut at a celebration on Sunday (October 11) in Rome. (See article)

A coffee review in the US has given a 95/100 rating to Ethiopian Jimma Agaro coffee describing it as a handcrafted coffee suiting people who value "a coffee delicate and lush, pure yet musky and deep" and providing a "a super complex, sweet and juicy cup."

Eritrea

Ambassador Girma Asmerom, Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the UN, told the Security Council during the interactive dialogue on the report of the Sanctions Committee last Friday (October 9), that the sanctions against Eritrea were unjust and should be lifted. He claimed the Monitoring group had included “forged and fabricated information” in its report; and called on the Council to terminate the mandate of the Monitoring Group.

Following a World Cup qualifying match in Botswana on Tuesday (October 13), ten members of the 24-strong Eritrean national football squad are seeking asylum in Francistown, where the match was held. The Eritrean national football squad has suffered previous defections after matches in Kenya in 2009, Tanzania in 2011 and Uganda in 2012.

Somalia

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has announced that he will be standing as a presidential candidate in next year’s election. He told a group of the Diaspora on line “I want to start a new culture, of course I am a candidate... if I am elected I will continue, if not I will hand over the power to whoever is elected.”

A three-day consultative meeting on the constitutional review process was held in Mogadishu this week (October 12-14). It included top officials of the Federal Ministry of Constitutional Affairs and the Ministers of Constitution of the four regional states (Puntland, Jubaland, South West and Galmudug).

The UN Under-Secretary-General for Field Support told the UN Security Council on Wednesday (October 14) that the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) should be “significantly” strengthened, and its efforts reprioritized. (See article)

The UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Somalia said this week that Somalia’s humanitarian partners were developing contingency plans and pre-positioning aid supplies and boats in areas most likely to be affected by flooding as a result of the El Nino phenomenon. ORCHA said an initial \$30 million was needed to strengthen preparedness and provide any immediate response.

The U.S. Agency for International Development this week awarded a \$74 million contract to implement the Growth, Enterprise, Employment and Livelihood project (GEEL) in Somalia, to expand the access of small-and-medium-sized enterprises to investment opportunities, increase availability of business services, and support improved business policy and regulation.

South Sudan

The UN Security Council extended for two months the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) on Friday (October 9) under resolution 2241 (2015). (See article)

IGAD issued a statement calling on President Salva Kiir to suspend his order creating 28 states in South Sudan, and to follow the mechanisms provided in the peace agreement signed with the SPLM-in-Opposition leader, Riek Machar, in August. (See article)

The Ugandan government announced on Monday (October 12) that the withdrawal of troops of the Ugandan People's Defense Forces from South Sudan had commenced. (See article)

Uganda has appointed Lt. General Koreta, former deputy chief of staff, to head of its Ceasefire Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) team to South Sudan.

Sudan

Minister of Minerals, Ahmed Sadig Al-Karouri, is visiting the Russian federation this week, leading an advance-delegation of the visit of Vice-President Hasabo Mohamed Abdel-Rahman to Moscow. In August, the Russian company, Sibanye, signed the largest ever mineral investment contract to extract gold in the Red Sea and the River Nile states.

The African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) on Monday (October 12) welcomed the decision of the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) prohibiting the recruitment and use of children in its ranks. It described it as "a significant step towards phasing out this negative phenomenon in the Darfur conflict."

The Tripartite Mechanism of the African Union, the United Nations and the Sudan Government will resume discussions early next month (November) on an exit strategy for the hybrid African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) from Darfur.

Prime Minister Hailemariam visits drought affected areas

This week, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn has been visiting some of the country's drought-stricken areas in the Afar and Somali Regional States. On Thursday, the Prime Minister met with residents of Shinile in the Somali Regional State. He disclosed that the Government had begun to allocate funds to help people withstand the effects of the drought now affecting various parts of the country. He stressed that the Government was committed to consolidate all possible support and assistance to mitigate the impact of the drought, caused by the El Niño phenomenon. During his visit to parts of the region, the Prime Minister met with various Somali communities, including representatives of religious institutions, women and youth groups and others. Residents of the Siti Zone briefed the Prime Minister on the severity of the drought. Livestock deaths were already occurring in some parts of the region adding that further support from the government was a critical necessity. The residents underlined that particular attention needed to be paid to assisting breastfeeding mothers, pregnant women and children. Prime Minister Hailemariam said the Federal Government, in collaboration with the Government of the Somali Regional State, has been extending support to those affected and would continue to do everything possible to ensure adequate funds and support reached people in need.

Earlier in the week, the Secretary of Ethiopia's National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee (NDPPC), Mitiku Kassa, told a meeting of UN agencies, NGOs, and Donor representatives on Monday (October 12), that due to the El Niño phenomenon, the number of people in need of relief assistance had now increased to 8.2 million. A Government-led inter-agency assessment last month, he said, had identified a further additional 3.6 million people in

need of food assistance as well as 300,000 children in need of specialized nutritious food. He said the Government had committed some 4 billion Ethiopian Birr (US\$192 million), to addressing emergency food and non-food needs, following the failed spring *belg* and poor summer *kremt* rains. Ato Mitiku said the El Niño conditions had brought Ethiopia a great challenge, but the Government and Regional States were making ready to meet the needs of the people alongside their partners in the international community.

The Prime Minister said that, as the drought appeared likely to persist for at least six months, the Government is committed to making all efforts possible to mitigate its effects for as long as necessary. If international assistance is available, we would, he said, be very grateful. If not, the Government is ready to deal with the situation. John Aylieff, Acting Humanitarian Coordinator and Country Director for the UN's World Food Program however said it would take "the collective effort of the entire international community to support the Government". The drought affected areas include southern Tigray, eastern Amhara, Afar, parts of the Somali region, the eastern SNNP, East and West Hararge, and the Arsi and West Arsi, and lower Bale zones of Oromia Regional State. The number of *woredas* which have been prioritized for nutrition interventions doubled from 97 in July to 142 in September. The head of OCHA said "Donors have been generous, but if we are to meet the significant needs before us today, and more in the months ahead, we need far more support."

The Mid-Year Review of Ethiopia's Humanitarian Requirements Document of August 18, listed \$432 million in funding requirements, with contributions so far totaling \$258 million. However, the overall adjusted requirements for 2015 now amount to \$596.4 million. In addition, the on-going effects of El Niño may further affect weather patterns in the next few months. The National Meteorological Agency is predicting strong rains along the Omo, Shabelle and Awash rivers, which may have a further impact on harvests in some areas and cause flooding. The Humanitarian Requirements Document, in addition to food and nutrition needs, outlines emergency requirements in health, agriculture and education sectors which will also be considerable.

EU and Ethiopia: 40 years of partnership

The European Union is an important and major actor in contemporary global political, economic and security matters. It built peace in the western Balkans following the disintegration of the Yugoslav Republic, facilitating dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo, and cooperated with other international actors to try to resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict. It is the world's largest trading bloc, determining rules governing globalization, and its member states provide more than half of the Official Development Assistance distributed globally. Under its Common Security and Defense Policy, the EU operates civilian and military missions across the world. The Operation EUNAVFOR Atalanta off the coast of Somalia, for example, has greatly contributed to the tackling of piracy and protecting of the humanitarian shipments of the World Food Program to Somalia. The EU and its Member States provide around half of the global funding for emergency relief. The EU was instrumental in negotiating the Kyoto Protocol on climate change and it strongly supports the UN's current efforts to create an international climate agreement cutting emissions and limiting global warming.

Cooperation between Ethiopia and the European Union over the last four decades has provided a long-standing partnership of very substantial development assistance. The Ethiopia-European Union development partnership formally started when Ethiopia signed the Lomé Convention in 1975 and the European Commission then opened its delegation in Addis Ababa. At the beginning of 1976, the delegation of the European Economic Commission (EEC) was established in Addis Ababa and, in 1979, an Ethiopian permanent mission to the EEC was opened in Brussels. Officials of the then European Commission for Development visited Ethiopia in 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1980. Ethiopian officials carried out similar visits to Europe. During this period, the relationship focused on the humanitarian sector, and the European Commission for Development provided 55 million Euro of food aid to the country to cover emergency situations.

Since then the Commission has played a very significant role in supporting Ethiopia's economic development both financially and technically. Ethiopia is one of the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific member countries that benefited substantially from European Union development assistance under the Lomé Convention and the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. This cooperation has helped Ethiopia to implement major programs and projects which have contributed largely to the improvement of the lives of very significant numbers of people. During the military regime in the 1980s, Ethiopia's foreign policy was focused on acquiring military supplies at the expense of economic and commercial relations, and its extreme ideological dependency on other areas meant relations with the EU declined. It was not until the change of government in 1991 that the new government was able to take advantage of the opportunities that the EU and its member states offered and its markets.

Subsequently, after 2000, the Ethiopian Foreign and National Security Policy and Strategy document detailed the shift of cooperation from purely a matter of aid, loans or technical assistance to focus on an expanded trade and investment partnership. This also laid down the need to work to acquire EU aid and credit to help the country finance developmental projects and plans, and ensure proper utilization of obtained finance.

As a result, in recent years, the trade, investment and developmental assistance partnership with the EU has shown significant progress. The European Union has become a key partner of Ethiopia's socio-economic progress. The EU is Ethiopia's major trading partner in both exports and imports and it has assisted to develop a number of programs related to development of trade, including the Micro and Small Enterprise Development Program; the Economic Partnership Agreement Impact Assessment Studies and the World Trade Organization Impact Assessment Project. The EU took **43% of total Ethiopia's exports in 2011**. This compares with China at 13%, and Saudi Arabia, USA and Sudan taking 7%, 5% and 5%, respectively. Similarly, in 2011 21% of Ethiopia's imports came from the EU. The figures for other important trade partners were Saudi Arabia 16%, China 16%, USA 12% and India 7%.

During the last 20 years, the EU has invested more than an estimated 24 billion birr in Ethiopia. These investments have allowed huge transfer of technology in key sectors as well as opening up large employment opportunities. There are some 300 EU companies active in Ethiopia generating job opportunities for over a 100,000 people.

The European Union is one of the major donor partners of Ethiopia, contributing about 230 million Euros a year, representing 10% of the country's total annual Official Development Aid. Jointly with its member states, the European Union makes available around 34% of the total aid assistance, amounting on average to 800 million Euros. Ethiopia has also received more than 2 billion Euros from the European Development Fund as well as additional aid from the general budget, largely for food security and food aid. EU has shown firm support for Ethiopia's efforts to eradicate poverty through sustainable development, democracy, peace and security. As part of the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) program the EU has allocated some 644 million Euros to Ethiopia destined for infrastructure, rural development, social service delivery, private sector development and trade, investment, water supply and sanitation, food security, rural energy, governance, health, demining, culture and other related areas. The EU also covers about 17% of the resources of the Promotion of Basic Services and 31% of the Productive Safety Net Program of the country, two of the country's flagship pro-poor development programs which have delivered particularly impressive results.

The European Union is, in fact the country's major development fund partner and as a result of Ethiopia's track record in implementing European Union Development Fund projects, the 11th EDF running from 2014 to 2020 will make available 745 million Euros in development assistance. Ethiopia, of course, has embarked on an ambitious transformation plan to reach lower middle income status by the year 2025. This EDF allocation will play an essential role in attaining this and reaching the goals laid down in the Growth and Transformation Plan II. Ethiopia's poverty alleviation and economic development objectives takes into consideration the developmental cooperation with European Union.

Cooperation between Ethiopia and the European Union is not, of course, confined to development. Ethiopia is a strong partner in fighting terrorism, tackling human trafficking and the problems of migration, as well as promoting peace and stability in the region and more widely. The relationship has passed through several ups and downs in forty years. Today, the excellent working relationship between the parties is constantly strengthened by the involvement of non-state actors and the private sector in the programming, implementation and evaluation of development projects and programs. Indeed, the multi-faceted and multi-dimensional Ethiopia-EU cooperation can be taken as an admirable example in the context of EU relations within the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific partnership. And as Ethiopia emerges as an important, stable and expanding market in Africa, the partnership with the EU will continue to grow.

The Security Council demands more positive action from South Sudan warring parties

The UN Security Council met on Friday (October 9) and agreed that the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) should be extended for another two months. The next day, the South Sudan Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister, Barnaba Benjamin Marial, said that the Government welcomed the resolution, adding that President Kiir and the South Sudan Government was ready to work with the international community, especially the United States of America, IGAD member countries, the European Union, Russia, China, Norway and all other countries involved in the negotiation process. The same day, officials of the SPLM-in-Opposition, led by John Juan Dong, met with a team from the United Nations in Addis Ababa, to discuss the expected role UNMISS could play in ensuring full

implementation of the peace deal signed in August. They also welcomed the extension of the UNMISS mandate, adding that: “We have agreed for the UNMISS mandate to be extended for the next three years until the elections are held in the country after securing the safety of civilians in the region and also to participate fully in the election [monitoring] to make sure that the elections are transparent and fair.”

In fact, the Security Council’s resolution (2241 (2015)) makes it very clear that a great deal more is expected from the warring parties in South Sudan than mere agreement and rhetoric. There are a number of significant obligations for the parties attached to the extension of UNMISS. Three essential elements, for example, are itemized under Article 4 of the resolution which underlines aspects of UNMISS activity but which also demand real action from the warring parties.

The resolution provides for UNMISS to support “the Implementation of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM)/ Mechanism (CTSAMM).” The Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring can only go into proper effect when the parties show real commitment to implementation. Both parties have frequently reiterated their commitment to the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and as frequently the agreement has been violated. A high official from the government side recently said: “The president himself declared a permanent ceasefire and ordered the chief of general staff to implement the agreement. There was nothing we did not do as a government to implement the agreement after we signed it.” The SPLM-in-Opposition has made similar claims. Both sides routinely accuse the other of being responsible for violations. In fact, the latest reports of violations of the permanent ceasefire, investigated and verified by the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, reveal the continued necessity for determined political commitment from both parties. The Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, which checks on reported violations through direct observation and investigation, has an extensive process of fact-checking before each violation is submitted to the Office of the IGAD Special Envoys who also review the cases. The number of incidents has fallen but there is still no indication of a comprehensive end to hostilities.

Another important element of the resolution refers to supporting the planning and establishment of the agreed transitional security arrangements, including the establishment and operation of the Joint Operations Center and supporting the parties to develop a strategy to address disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and security sector reform activities. The JOC will include representatives of the national security forces and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism, which will monitor compliance with the agreement. It will need demilitarization of Juba and resolution of other key topics discussed at last month’s Security Arrangement Workshop held in Addis Ababa. These included the drawdown of forces, the establishment of demilitarized zones, cantonment areas for troops from both sides, and the size of security forces that can be deployed in four towns, including the capital, Juba, after demilitarization. Demilitarization and the shifting of the army, the SPLA, out of Juba, which officially started on September 24, mark a serious step toward implementing the agreement. Equally, there are still some areas un-agreed. According to the IGAD Peace Agreement, other areas are also to be demilitarized. Major General Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok, commander of Kiir’s presidential guard, said when announcing the start of demilitarization of Juba that redeployment of the army outside Juba had started. Reports suggest that the immense effort needed for the demilitarization process including establishing camps for the troops is still in its

early stage. The SPLM-in-Opposition has also yet to sign the minutes of the security arrangements concluded at the Security Workshop held in Addis Ababa earlier this month. The agreed document is also part of the process in the implementation of the deal on security.

Another important element in the resolution requires UNMISS: “to monitor and report on the withdrawal of all State and non-State security actors, allied to either Party in conflict, from the territory of South Sudan”. On Monday this week (October 12) Uganda announced that it was starting to withdraw its troops from South Sudan. Uganda’s Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, James Mugume, said on Monday that UPDF forces would begin their withdrawal from South Sudan on Monday, 12 October. The Permanent Secretary, who welcomed the Security Council’s resolution, added, “Accordingly, in compliance, Uganda today announces the beginning of the withdrawal of UPDF from South Sudan. As one of the guarantors of the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement, and following the requirement of Chapter II, Article 1.5 of August 17 the UPDF has, with immediate effect from today, started to pull out of South Sudan.” He recalled that it was on December 24, 2013, that the President of Uganda said that Uganda was deploying forces in South Sudan to maintain regional security, protect the thriving trade between Uganda and South Sudan and rescue trapped Ugandans, following the outbreak of violence in Juba earlier in the month. It’s not clear how much time will it take for UPDF forces to leave; equally their replacement by an international force will need some time to organize.

The UN resolution also calls on UNMISS to protect civilians, deter violence against civilians, implement a mission-wide early warning strategy, maintain public safety and security of and within UNMISS protection of civilians sites, and support the part of the mission’s protection strategy. It has the job of monitoring, investigating, verifying and reporting regularly on abuses and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including those that may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity, as well as coordinate with, and provide technical support to, international, regional, and national mechanisms engaged in monitoring, investigating, and reporting human rights violations. In this context, the Security Council urges the Secretary-General to make available technical assistance to the Commission of the African Union and to the Transitional Government of National Unity to help setting up a hybrid court as called for in the peace agreement. It requests him to report within six months on this and invites the African Union to share information. It welcomed the work of the African Union Commission of Inquiry and its 27 June 2014 “Interim Report of AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan”, and the African Union Peace and Security Council decision of 26 September to release the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan report and the Separate Opinion.

The Council also requests that the Secretary-General prioritize the complete deployment of UNMISS personnel to the authorized military and police strength, of up to 12,500 troops of all ranks and a police component, including appropriate Formed Police Units, of up to 1,323 personnel, tactical military helicopters and unarmed unmanned aerial systems, requesting the Secretary-General to prioritize the deployment of these.

The Security Council also repeated its intention to consider taking all necessary measures against those “whose actions jeopardize peace, stability and security in South Sudan,” and in the preamble to the resolution, it insisted that those guilty of such acts or entities may be subject to

“targeted sanctions.” The Council also urged all parties to engage in an open, fully inclusive national dialogue aimed at securing peace, reconciliation and good governance.

...and criticism of President Kiir’s announcement of the creation of new states

President Kiir issued a presidential executive order expanding the number of states in South Sudan from 10 to 28, personally reading out the order out on State Television on Friday two weeks ago (October 2). A presidential legal adviser said subsequently that the presidential order would only become effective after a month in order to allow time for Parliament to look at it, and an amendment bill would be tabled in Parliament to change the relevant article in the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan, of 2011, which defines South Sudan as a territory composed of ten states.

The announcement came as a surprise and met with considerable criticism. IGAD has issued a strongly worded statement calling on President Salva Kiir to suspend the order and follow the mechanisms provided in the peace agreement signed with Riek Machar, in August. In its first response to the presidential comment, IGAD said “In violation of the Agreement, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan issued Establishment Order 36/2015 on October 2, 2015 redrawing the State boundaries of the Republic that expanded the number of states from 10 to 28.” In its seven-page statement IGAD described the presidential order as a surprise because the Government had earlier, during the negotiations, refused SPLM-in-Opposition’s suggestions for the creation of more federal states. It had been the SPLM-in-Opposition, said IGAD, which had wanted to increase the number of states to 21 as a condition for the establishment of the Transitional Government of National Unity, but the Government which had rejected it. IGAD said the Government should now wait until the constitution-making process takes place, under the supervision of the to-be formed Government of National Unity.

The presidential order has also been widely criticized by the EU, the Troika, and South Sudanese opposition parties, former detainees and civil society organizations. Both the EU and the Troika countries (the United States, the United Kingdom and Norway), condemned the President’s unilateral decision, describing the decision as a violation of the country’s constitution and of the peace agreement signed with the opposition factions in August. In a statement on Tuesday (October 6) the Troika called on President Kiir to respect the peace deal and use the mechanism agreed by the parties in addressing federalism and creation of more administrative units in a consultative manner. The statement said “This announcement directly contradicts the Government of South Sudan’s commitment to implement the peace agreement it signed on August 26.” It said the peace agreement signed between President Kiir and opposition leader, Riek Machar, plus other stakeholders, was clearly based on the current 10 states, and any unilateral decision by either party to alter its provisions was a clear violation. It noted that “One of the primary tasks of the soon to be formed Transitional Government of National Unity is to initiate and oversee a process to complete a permanent constitution that will address such fundamental issues as the structure of the state.” The Troika strongly urged President Kiir “to defer action on this fundamental matter until the Transitional Government of National Unity is formed and a national constitutional dialogue can take place.”

The European Union also issued a strong-worded statement condemning the decree as a violation of the Peace Agreement. It said “the presidential order to replace the 10 existing states with 28 new states goes against the spirit and the letter of the Peace agreement signed by the Government of South Sudan on August 26.” It called on the President and Government of South Sudan “to refrain from proceeding on this fundamental matter.” It reminded the President that the peace agreement had just been endorsed by top South Sudanese leaders during the recent high-level summit at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The statement also called on the parties to work out agreement on the security arrangements which the parties discussed at a workshop in Addis Ababa, last month. The EU said “The international community has consistently said that there will be consequences for those who obstruct the implementation of the Peace agreement. The EU welcomes in that respect the African Union’s decision to publish the Commission of Inquiry’s report and to move ahead with the establishment of the hybrid court.”

The SPLM-in-Opposition led by Riek Machar said creating more states was a violation of the agreement signed in August. It emphasized that all the details of the Peace Agreement were based on the current 10 states and the Agreement had deferred the process of federalism and creation of more states to the constitutional making process during the transitional period. The presidential order would affect many provisions in the peace deal and open up the Agreement for further negotiations. Increasing the number of states affects the Agreement’s power sharing formula and increases the number of executive organs required and complicates the appointment of new members to state legislative assemblies. It will also affect the membership of the national legislature. The SPLM-in-Opposition, therefore, claims all of these areas would need renegotiation to determine their necessary composition and representation. It also stressed that the creation of the new states needs the agreement of all parties on the number, the reasons for their creation and the timing. The SPLM-in-Opposition said these were all areas which should be handled by the Transitional Government of National Unity during the transitional period, in accordance with the Peace Agreement. In sum, the presidential order decision would have serious implications on major provisions of the Peace Agreement and open up the Agreement for renegotiation.

The decision was also condemned by the former political detainees who also signed the Peace Agreement as a clear violation of the constitution and the Agreement. They called on the President to immediately suspend the decree and respect the Peace Agreement by strictly following the mechanisms laid down there. Opposition parties in South Sudan have been equally critical, and the Chairman of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement for Democratic Change, Lam Akol, who also chairs the alliance of major opposition political parties in South Sudan, urged President Kiir to suspend the decree.

The South Sudan government itself said last week that the decision to create more states was “actually a response to calls of our citizens.” Government Information Minister, Makuei Lueth, said the Peace Agreement should not prevent the President from “performing his duties” and the change in the number of states did not violate the Peace Agreement but rather “enriched it.” The Cabinet Affairs Minister, Martin Lomuro, said equally firmly: “The decision of the President is constitutional. It does not contravene any provisions in the constitution.” He said the President acted within the law to serve the interest of the people, adding that “now peace has come, the

president and the Government felt it was time to respond to this long standing demand of the people.”

More UN support for a Somalia on the path to peace

The United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) told the UN Security Council this week (October 14) that it needed to be “significantly” strengthened to carry out its mission in support of AMISOM. The Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Atul Khare, said its efforts should be reprioritized around the strategic objectives set out by the Security Council within the areas of AMISOM and Somali National Army operations.

Mr Khare said the changes meant a need to redefine the Support Office’s activities for AMISOM, the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the Somalia National Army. He said a three-month strategic review of the Support Office, from July to September, had found that its resources had not kept pace with the “dramatic expansion of its tasks,” which now included support to both high-intensity military operations, as well as highly mobile political engagement in Somalia and beyond. The number of personnel it supported had risen from 8,000 to 33,000, and the area it had to cover had expanded from 100 square kilometers to more than 400,000. He noted that: “UNSOA is working in a significantly non-permissive environment with the backdrop of the scourge of Al Shabaab, and a continuing humanitarian crisis,” explaining that fatalities in AMISOM last year exceeded the combined fatalities from malicious acts in all UN peacekeeping operations combined. In the last 18 months, UN personnel and facilities had been attacked an average of once every 10 weeks. He noted that medical support infrastructure should be extended on a limited basis to provide medical evacuation assistance to the Somali National Police in areas where AMISOM operated.

He noted that the logistical enabling environment was weak, affected by insecurity in the major supply routes, where three quarters of all improvised explosive device attacks against AMISOM occur. UNSOA’s achievements had come at the expense of effective service delivery in critical areas of maintenance services, field defense supplies, tentage, mobility and construction. Clear roles for the delivery of logistical support had been agreed with the African Union Mission, but further support was needed to address critical gaps, strengthening human rights due diligence policy and sexual exploitation and abuse compliance, coordination and joint decision-making frameworks, and environmental stewardship. The Council, in fact, needed to strengthen the Support Office’s accountability framework, he said. He hoped to present proposals to the General Assembly for strengthening the Support Office, which would likely represent a \$60 million annual increase and a one-time cost of \$13 million in investment. He emphasized that critical support would need to come from the Council, the General Assembly, Member States and the African Union.

Meanwhile, in Washington, the former Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Maman Sidikou, who retired earlier this month, expressed his optimism at the pace of peace and state building initiatives in Somalia. The progress made by AMISOM in removing Al-Shabaab elements from strategic towns and ports in Somalia, and the strong support for elections in 2016 provide a window of opportunity for building peace. Ambassador Sidikou cited the formation of regional

states, terming this as an important step that will transform the interim regional administrations into the constituent states of a Federal Somalia. Ambassador Sidikou said the constitutional review process was now moving into top gear with three institutions driving the process: the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs, the Oversight Committee of Parliament and the Independent Constitutional Implementation Review Commission.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud made the same point to the recent High-Level Meeting on Somalia, saying this demonstrated the fact that Somalia with the help of various neighbors was making huge progress towards peace. The President said the federal government was taking bold steps towards building a more integrated accountable and transparent security sector on the basis of sound and enacted human rights principles as the driving force, within the recently announced reform agenda. Equally, the process of troop integration, led by the National Integration Commission, was doing enormously encouraging work towards creating one national army, with one national identity and an inclusive character, operating in the interest of all Somalis. The President said that in the next 12 months, the National Integration Commission would finalize integration in Jubaland and work with the Puntland, Galmudug and Southwest administrations to integrate more troops into the Somali National Army.

He noted that the National Leadership Forum had met in Mogadishu and approved the National Consultation Forum and the process by which Somalia will determine the 2016 electoral process. He stressed: “We are committed to a broad and inclusive process that makes certain whatever outcome is decided is representative of Somali society today and promotes the participation of women and minority groups. It must be transparent: people must have confidence in the legitimacy of the outcome, and the outcome must be able to be implemented nationwide with the resources we have available.”

A three-day consultative meeting on the constitutional review process was held in Mogadishu this week (October 12-14). It included top officials of the Federal Ministry of Constitutional Affairs and the Ministers of Constitution of the four regional states (Puntland, Jubaland, South West and Galmudug). The meeting, the first to include full representation from the regional states, produced a roadmap for an inclusive and participatory process for the constitutional review process, emphasizing the need for enhanced public participation in the process to ensure that the views of all sectors of the country were taken into consideration. After the meeting, the State Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Hassan Mahmoud Jimalle, said the two levels of government, at federal and state level, had agreed on a joint strategy for public consultations to resolve some of the key contentious issues in the provisional constitution. The review of the constitution is expected to be concluded early next year to pave the way for parliamentary debate and approval by about March 2016, well in advance of the Elections scheduled for 2016. The provisional constitution was adopted by the Parliament in 2012.

The 8th Global Forum on Migration and Development Summit in Istanbul

Turkey hosted the 8th Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Summit in Istanbul this week (October 14-16) on the theme of “**Strengthening Partnerships: Migration and Human Mobility for Sustainable Development.**” Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with the current global attention on migrants, some 900

delegates from 150 countries were present. Turkey's Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, led the opening ceremony and told delegates: "Migration is not something that should be blocked, but it is a process that should be managed well." Turkey hosts some 2 million refugees and had very considerable experience in managing migratory flows. For this Summit it has focused on deepening the discussion on the protection of the human and labor rights of migrants; further exploring the impact of migration on public policies, particularly at the sectoral level; and taking the results into other regional and international agenda-setting processes including the G-20 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Turkey's Foreign Minister Feridun Sinirlioglu urged countries to act together to solve the ongoing refugee crisis gripping Europe, and Turkey. He said: "The pressing need to address the plight of migrants and what we must do together, through enhancing international collaboration, cannot be decoupled from this prevailing reality." He went on: "we have an obligation to help move the policy debates in our capitals, and also at the international level, towards devising effective policies that will genuinely address the root causes that trigger the patterns of mass migrations we observe today." The UN said in June the number of forcibly displaced people worldwide has "for the first time in the post-World War II era, exceeded 50 million people".

The opening ceremony was followed by a Common Space where representatives from governments, civil society and international organizations could examine and expand areas of common ground in the migration and development debate under the overarching theme of **"Working Together in the Post-2015 Development era: Advancing human security and human development of people on the move."** The Forum represents a unique opportunity to discuss migration and development issues and to keep up the momentum on dialogue, action and cooperation to serve the common interests of the international community and of the migrants themselves. There were three Roundtables on: **"Human mobility and the well-being of migrants"**; **"Migration as a factor in development"**; and **"Enhancing international cooperation on emerging issues in migration and mobility"**.

Among those attending were UN Deputy Secretary General H.E. Jan Eliasson who delivered a keynote address; the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres; EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos; and the UN Alliance of Civilizations High Representative, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser.

Mr Eliasson told the Summit that: "Our ability to respond to migration and refugee movement has been tested as never before." Referring to refugees, he went on: "This challenge is not only a crisis of numbers, it is crisis of solidarity. This is a global phenomenon, a global challenge and a global concern." He noted that while Turkey had been at the heart of the refugee crisis, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq had also been paying the high price of "the horrific war in Syria which must come to an end." In addition, Mr Eliasson also underlined that it was equally important to recognize other countries were hosting major refugee flows. **Ethiopia** and Kenya, for example, were currently sharing the burden of hosting close to 1.1 million refugees from their region between them, "and their efforts have to be praised." The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, also praised Ethiopia and Kenya for providing shelter to more than 700 000 and 400,000 refugees respectively. He lauded Ethiopia for its open border and asylum policy which he described as "a pillar of refugee protection."

The Economist's Ethiopia Summit 2015 to be held in Addis Ababa

The Economist is organizing its 'Ethiopia Summit' at the Sheraton Hotel on October 28-29, with the theme: "Driving continued growth". With attendance expected to run to several hundred participants, the summit will bring together senior government officials, leading policy makers, business leaders and multinational executives interested in investing or expanding in Ethiopia and taking part in its growth and economic development and in available business and investment opportunities. The Economist Summit aims to explore business and investment potential and opportunities in Ethiopia and to discuss the challenges facing the country's development as well as looking at the way the Government is responding to these. *The Economist* says the Summit is taking place at an "optimum time" since the Government has just completed the first Growth and Transformation Plan and "is pressing on its GTP 2 plans." The Summit will, therefore consider a range of relevant questions including: What will the second GTP framework look like and what do the next 5 years hold for Ethiopia? What are Ethiopia's future growth prospects? Is the state-led development model sustainable? What are the challenges currently faced by the private sector? And what opportunities exist for private equity firms looking to enter the Ethiopian market?

Michael Oakes, head of programs at The Economist Events, noted "this is a very exciting time for Africa." Speaking about the positive future of the African continent, he said "We talk a lot in *The Economist*, in Europe and the Americas, about the next billion consumers and how much influence and potential there is going to be in Africa." Speaking specifically about Ethiopia, he added that **Ethiopia, with its huge population and consumer market, represented 10 percent of that**, so "this country is obviously going to play a very important role in Africa's growth." He said "The positivity we have felt in this city especially, on the economics and business side things, is really going to be captured at the summit we will be holding this month."

The Economist, explaining the rationale for selecting Ethiopia as the subject for an Economist Summit, notes that the country intends to reach middle income status in the coming decade, that "real GDP growth is forecast to average 7% a year in 2015 - 2019," and "Ethiopia offers enormous growth potential across a number of different industry sectors." Giving detailed explanations, based on the findings of the Economist Intelligence Unit, about some of the major sectors driving development, it lists agriculture, manufacturing, services, energy and foreign direct investment. It points out that "Ethiopia saw agricultural exports grow by 9% in the first three quarters of 2013/2014" and a rise in the manufacturing sector by 11.4% in the same period. It also "estimated its forecast that the agricultural sector is expected to grow by 7.7 percent (or more) in the forecast period." The Economist Intelligence Unit has indicated that foreign direct investment growth reached almost US\$1bn in 2013/2014. It said this "added further fuel and momentum to what is now one of the African continent's fastest growing economies." It forecasts Ethiopia's GDP per capita is expected to grow by 37 percent between 2015 and 2019.

The speakers and presenters at the Economist Ethiopia Summit are expected to include Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, and other ministers and senior corporate leaders. Speakers will also include Dr Arkebe Oqubay, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister with the rank of Minister; Tewolde Gebremariam, Chief Executive Officer of Africa's most successful airline, Ethiopian

Airlines; and various leading business leaders among them Brian Herlihy, Chief Executive Officer and Founder of BlackRhino and Tewodros Ashenafi, founder, chairman and Chief Executive Officer of SouthWest Energy as well as Andualem Admassie, Chief Executive Officer of Ethio Telecom.

Among panelists will be Sindiso Ngwenya, Secretary-General, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Gabriel Negatu, Regional Director for East Africa for the African Development Bank, who will be discussing “Ethiopia and the wider region – growth through collaboration.” There will be sessions on “Ethiopia’s economic horizons – future prospects for growth”; “Investment opportunities in one of Africa’s top performing economies”, addressed by the Director General of the Ethiopian investment Commission; and on “Financing Ethiopia’s ambitious plans.” “The telecom sector – can you play a part?” and “Innovation – Key to socio-economic development” will be considered, as will “Building on Ethiopia’s agricultural roots”. The Summit Chairman, Xan Smiley, *Economist* Editor at Large, will hold a ‘hard talk discussion on “Back to Basics – doing business in Ethiopia.” The energy sector will also be among the areas given close attention with sessions on “the prospects for oil and gas in Ethiopia” and “Energy – A realm of possibilities”.

Day two will provide an Ambassadors Panel and look at the manufacturing sector. In the following discussions global executives, local business leaders and policy makers will share their views on how to encourage this and why development has been slower than hoped. The final session will provide a panel discussion on “meeting the new consumers’ needs” and look at challenges that serving the needs of the growing number of consumers means for businesses and the wider economy.

The Economist Group runs the world renowned *Economist* magazine together with The Economist Intelligence Unit and Economist Events. The aim of this Ethiopia Summit 2015 is that the best past experiences can be identified, revised and strengthened, that challenges and problems will be discussed and tackled and the wide range of discussion will provide for ways forwards to be presented and detailed. The Summit will provide a real opportunity for business opportunities to be discussed and for extensive networking between local and international business leaders, while the potential and reality of the country’s economic, manufacturing, business and investment potential can be explored. At the end of the Summit there should be some answers to the questions above: What will the second GTP framework look like and what do the next 5 years hold for Ethiopia? What are Ethiopia’s future growth prospects? Is the stated development model sustainable? What are the challenges currently faced by the private sector? And what opportunities exist for private equity firms looking to enter the Ethiopian market?

The 1st Arab-Ethiopian Exhibition and Conference for Industry and Investment opens

The First Arab–Ethiopian Exhibition and Conference for Industrial Exports and Investment, APEX ETHIOPIA 2015, opened in Addis Ababa on Thursday (October 15). More than 300 participants including high government officials, industry leaders, invited guests and stakeholders from African and Arab countries, heard presentations from Ethiopia’s Minister of Industry, Ahmed Abitew; the Secretary General of the Arab Union for Industrial Exports

Development, Ambassador Abdelemoniem Mahmoud; the Special Advisor to Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Dr Arkebe Oqubay; and representatives from the African Union Commission, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Ethiopia's Minister of Industry, Ahmed Abteu, who congratulated the organizers for successfully establishing APEX ETHIOPIA 2015, expounded developments in Ethiopia and detailed the opportunities and best experiences of industry and trade in Ethiopia. He said Ethiopia was moving from its first Growth and Transformation Plan into the Second Plan. It had one of the fastest growing economies in the world, and "its long-term vision is to make the country a leading light manufacturing hub in Africa". He assured participants that the Government was prioritizing Industry and Trade in the Growth and Transformation Plan II, and said expansion of infrastructure was one of the mechanisms to achieve government objectives. He said enabling environment and good governance were keys to facilitating investment in various sectors. He gave details of the infrastructure developments as well as Ethiopia's growth, the international ratings it has achieved and investment opportunities and incentives it offers investors.

Mr Galal Abdel Fatah, Chairman of the Arab Union, in his opening remarks emphasized strengthening the partnership between Arab and Africa in industry. He noted the huge capacity of Arab investment and the massive opportunities in Africa. These, he said, could provide a win-win situation for both Arab and Africa. He also referred to Ethiopia as an exemplary country for the promotion of business and investment flows. He said "Ethiopia has open arms for foreign investment," noting that partnerships in the manufacturing, energy and many other sectors could be mutually and substantially profitable.

Dr Arkebe Oqubay, Special Advisor of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, who recently published 'Made in Africa' on the country's industrial policy, made it clear Ethiopia has been choosing different role models and learning from the best experience of various nations. Ethiopia has learnt from Germany in terms of higher education and technical cooperation, from Japan in introducing Kaizen policies to advance leadership and improve productivity in the manufacturing sector, and from the US in aviation. Dr Arkebe also discussed Ethiopia's concept of Policy Independence and noted that it had learnt from the experience of others, but protected itself from inappropriate external influences when necessary. It had not, therefore, privatized the telecom sector or opened banking to foreign investment. Policy Independence, he said, gives a country the right to make mistakes, learn from them and grow in the way it wants.

Dr Abdalla Hamdok, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) similarly suggested that the goal for sustainable growth of Arab investment and African development should be "strengthening industrialization and trade ties between the two sides." He said trade policy and the national development strategies of countries should support each other.

In its four days of sessions (October 15-18), APEX ETHIOPIA 2015, will be deliberating on the 2015 Economic report on Africa, and hearing sessions on Industrial Export Development, Trade Finance and Export Credits as well as on the best experiences of successful foreign investments in Ethiopia, including Huajian Shoes, Sher Ethiopia, the Netherlands Company, and Naztech

Petroleum Investment, the Sudanese Company. A Ministerial panel discussion will be chaired by Ahmed Abtew, Minister of Industry of Ethiopia and Dr Abdu Daoud Suleiman, State Minister of Industry of Sudan. The conference includes exhibitions of industrial exports and other displays at the Addis Ababa Exhibition center.

The importance of engaging opposition parties

Prime Minister Hailemariam chaired a two-day long meeting last week with representatives from government and the EPRDF with some 20 opposition political parties, each represented by 20 participants. It was the first of what is expected to be a series of meetings organized to provide the opportunity for the ruling EPRDF and the opposition parties to evaluate and consult on various aspects of policy.

This occasion focused on two key issues. The first was an evaluation of the first Growth and Transformation Plan which ended earlier this year. The second issue was consultations on the Second GTP which is now being launched. It will run from 2015/16 to 2010/21. The Deputy Commissioner of the National Plan Commission, Getachew Adem, presented details of the GTP I performance to the meeting. He talked of the financial sector of the Plan in general and progress in savings in particular. He thought the savings' culture of the country has been significantly enhanced during the Plan period, as a result of the efforts to make people aware of the value of savings, the increase in the number of bank branches and the national effort to raise funds for the Grand Ethiopia Renaissance Dam. He also mentioned the results registered in the education, agriculture, manufacturing and industry sectors.

There was general agreement that the progress in education during the GTP I was commendable, and also on the need that much should be done to improve the quality aspect of education. Speakers also pointed out that there had been some considerable limitations of capacity visible in certain areas of the Plan's implementation. The Prime Minister said the Government was well aware of the dangers of this and it was throwing its full weight behind the effort build up the capacity of civil servants in terms of skill and to ensure that they had the right attitude to their jobs.

The Deputy Commissioner also explained the Government's plans to give special attention to the development of more industrial parks during the Second GTP in order to increase the role of manufacturing industry during the second Plan period. Party representatives raised the importance of also focusing on strategies to resolve the problems of good governance, corruption and other such issues that had become apparent during the GTP I. These needed to be resolved during GTP II as they were hindrances to the growth of the country. The Prime Minister agreed that the Government needed to give considerably more attention to these matters. He also said it was important to increase public participation in helping deal with these issues and getting the support of other political parties.

Many of the political party leaders and members expressed the idea that participation in the evaluation of GTP I would help them contribute to the attainment of the goals set for GTP II. They called on the ruling party to invite them to work on issues of mutual interest for the development of the country even though they have no seats in Parliament.

This meeting underlined the fact that the ruling party in Government is increasingly keen to work with opposition parties. It stresses that without engaging opposition parties the developments in the country cannot be considered. Yes, the ruling party won 501 seats in the House of Representatives and the remaining 46 seats were won by parties more or less allied to the EPRDF. However, the Government, and the EPRDF, is very aware that there is a very real need for other legitimate political parties which can play the role of questioning the Government and holding it accountable to the public. The Government does not want, in any way, to deny the important and necessary role that even the most nascent opposition political parties can play in developing the political tradition of the country. The participation in this sort of consultative forum is one such example. Building a strong opposition party may still be some way away but even the smallest party with a national vision and unwavering commitment to accomplish its aims can shine a spotlight on serious issues and ensure the Government remains answerable to the people.

Equally, opposition parties must also be properly conscious of the very fact that, irrespective of their complaints on various issues, their involvement in the country's transformation is mandatory to participating in building up the necessary democratic culture in the country. It is to be greatly regretted that three opposition parties, including the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum (Medrek) and the Semayawi Party (Blue) rejected the invitation to participate in the meeting. Unlike the parties which accepted the invitation, they demanded an earlier and separate meeting to focus on the political sphere and related issue of political freedoms in the country. This, they suggested, was necessary before they would be prepared to discuss the country's development plans, despite the fact that they are, of course, inevitably involved in major development areas including the financial and banking sectors and major projects like the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of this and future consultative fora to create platforms for discussion. These would continue to include all opposition parties and allow them to express their ideas for implementing the country's socio-political, economical and democratic agendas. Engaging all political parties is certainly important to helping the country chart its way forward.

Dr Tedros meets Fellows of the Ethiopian Diaspora Fellowship

Dr Tedros, Minister of Foreign Affairs met and held discussions with the first round of young Diaspora Fellows from the Ethiopian Diaspora Fellowship, on Thursday this week (October 15). The Ethiopian Diaspora Fellowship is a nonprofit organization founded by Diaspora Members in the USA and the Executive Director of Ethiopian Diaspora Fellowship, Ms Rediat Tekeste, explained the vision and objectives of the organization.

Its main objective, she said, was to help equip young Diaspora professionals with concepts of leadership, service, and creative skills, and make them agents of positive change. The Fellowship linked these talented professionals with organizations and people in Ethiopia, providing transformative six-month fellowships. The Fellowship did this by providing members of the Diaspora with fellowships in Ethiopian businesses and organizations. It matched fellows with

peer-to-peer members and also had the objective of increasing knowledge and culture sharing opportunities, empowering a new generation of emerging Ethiopian and Ethiopian Diaspora leaders.

The Minister welcomed the first six of the young Fellows and commended the founders for this exciting and incredible initiative, undertaken to bridge the gap between second generation members of the Diaspora and their country of origin. The Minister said the Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were exerting maximum efforts to reach out and engage the Diaspora constructively in participating and contributing positively to the development of the country. The six Fellows shared their experiences of Ethiopia over the last three or four months with the Minister, and exchanged views on the most meaningful and effective ways to mobilize the untapped resources of the 2nd generation Diaspora. They agreed to work together for its realization.

Dr Tedros told the young Fellows that they were ambassadors for Ethiopia. He encouraged them to share their experiences in Ethiopia with their peers and colleagues in the Diaspora, he also encouraged the founders of the Ethiopian Diaspora Fellowship to expand their contacts and their services outside the US and reach to the UK, Australia, Canada and other places. They should, he said, eventually transform themselves into a global movement and organization. The Minister mentioned the Government's ongoing Internship Program, the Know Ethiopia Program and the yearly Diaspora Week. He requested that the Fellowship founders explore ways to be associated with these and utilize the opportunities these programs offered. He reaffirmed his continued support and assistance to ensure the organization's vision was a success and said he looked forward to an enhanced and meaningful partnership with the Ethiopian Diaspora Fellowship.

Ethiopian Community Association set up in Rome

The "Ethiopian Community Association in Rome and its Surroundings" held a meeting on Sunday (October 11), to announce the Association's official inauguration and its commencement of activity. It has earlier, in June registered the name and a seven-member executive committee and a three-member audit committee. This inaugural meeting was also, according to the Association President, Ato Ketema Amare, intended to provide the opportunity for members and other stakeholders to get to know each other. The meeting, attended by several hundred members of the community and staff of the Ethiopian Embassy in Italy, discussed ways to strengthen its capacity and performance and broaden its outreach to attract new members. Members also declared their interest and willingness to exercise maximum support for the Government's efforts to develop the country and ensure Ethiopia's renaissance.

Speaking at the opening, Ato Ketema expressed the Association's gratitude for the support provided by the Ethiopian Embassy and others to enable the formal establishment of the Association and its ability to commence activity. He congratulated members on the Association's attainment of an official legal status from the Italian authorities. This, he said, would give them a solid ground for meaningful engagement and collaboration among themselves as well as with the Ethiopian Embassy and also other Ethiopian communities in other parts of Italy. He noted that even at this very early stage the Association had been able to register nearly 500 members. It had also been able to collect some very promising financial support from donations and from

monthly contributions. He said he hoped the Association would be able to establish itself as one of the stronger of such associations being set up in various countries. He told members that the Association would be opening a bank account shortly in order to offer proper accountability and standards of transparency. Biographies of members and contact details were being organized to allow the Association to keep in touch with members and for members to keep in contact with each other.

Ato Melaku Petros, Minister Counselor at the Ethiopian Embassy in Italy, congratulated the members of Community Association, and in particular the Executive Committee, for their hard work and efforts to secure the Association's official status. This, he said, was an important step. Communities that had an acknowledged legal basis had a much greater capacity to provide members with support and to participate in affairs at home including the mega development projects and the democratization process of the country. It would also help members enjoy their rights fully as well as ensure they adhere properly to the rules and regulations of the host nation. Ato Melaku assured the Association's members that the Embassy would provide the Association with support in every possible way.

The members said they intended to strengthen the Association's financial and material capacity and broaden its membership. They requested the Association's leadership to set up a regular platform to exchange business ideas among members including the marketing of unique Ethiopian commodities such as powdered [roasted and ground] Ethiopian coffee, spices and other agricultural products. They also suggested the continuation of an established consultation mechanism between the Association and the Embassy to expedite maximum participation in Ethiopia's developmental processes. The occasion was accompanied by the serving of Ethiopian food followed by a cultural music show.