

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs



A Week in the Horn



Contents

TICAD V Ministerial Preparatory Meeting: “Hand in Hand with Dynamic Africa”



The Tokyo International Conference on African Development - TICAD V - Ministerial Preparatory Meeting was held here in Addis Ababa, March 14th-17th with two days of meetings between senior officials preceding the ministerial sessions which opened on March 16th in the presence of Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros, Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, and a number of ministers from African countries, as well as representatives from the African Union Commission, the United Nations, the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, and of civil societies and the private sector. There were delegations from 46 countries and more than 1000 participants.

The preparatory meeting aimed to achieve two major objectives. The first was to deliberate on the draft documents prepared at TICAD IV follow-up senior officials meetings in Marrakech and Ouagadougou, and produce a document fully reflecting the priorities and concerns of Africa. The second aim was about using the TICAD platform in helping African efforts to forge a common African position on the post-2015 development agenda.

At the opening session, Prime Minister Hailemariam, Chairperson of the African Union, noted the coincidence of the African Union's 50th and TICAD's 20th anniversaries as “a unique opportunity to take stock of the progress we have made so far in our partnership and of the strategies for a better future.” He described TICAD as an important platform for dialogue on issues of Africa's development in the post-cold war period when Africa's economy had been particularly fragile and political instability kept many nations of Africa on the brink of collapse. He thanked Japan for taking the initiative to establish TICAD in 1993 as a forum for policy coordination in support of Africa's development and as a means of drawing the attention of the world to Africa. Underlining the dynamic change Africa had achieved over the past decade, turning the continent into a new pole of growth, Prime Minister Hailemariam highlighted the “critical importance of forging international partnerships to achieve sustainable development and prosperity.”



Dr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union stressed that Japan had continued its support to the development of Africa, adding that “Japan’s increasing ODA which reached US\$205 billion in 2010 and the preparation of the TICAD follow-up meeting only a month after the Fukushima nuclear accident exemplifies Japan’s unwavering commitment towards Africa’s development.” Referring to the Post-2015 agenda, Dr. Mwencha underlined the importance of aligning TICAD’s plan of action with the flagship projects of the AU such as the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADAP), the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa (AIDA), the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

Japan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fumio Kishida, noted the steady growth of TICAD and its twin principles of ‘ownership’ and ‘partnership’ over the past twenty years. He cited the establishment of NEPAD and of the AU as a demonstration of the growing strength of the principle of ownership which advocated that Africa should be the sole owner of its own development processes. This had been consistently championed by TICAD. He also pointed out that TICAD’s honoring of its promises had been a major element in the success of the process: “the pledge Japan made to double its ODA to Africa and to assist in doubling the amount of Japanese private investment to Africa has already been achieved after five years”. He pointed to TICAD’s important role as a platform for focusing world attention on Africa and strengthening partnerships as other successes. Looking to the future, Minister Kishido expressed his optimism that TICAD would continue to provide opportunities to further brighten Africa’s “rays of hope illuminating all who live in the African continent.”

The plenary sessions of the ministerial meeting, held under the overall theme “Hand in Hand, with Dynamic Africa”, covered the “Inclusive and Resilient Society: the Contribution of TICAD to the MDG Process”, “Peace and Stability in Africa: Pressing Issues” and “Trade and Investment in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges”. The discussions of the “Inclusive and Resilient Society” underlined the TICAD process could help Africa meet the MDGs by boosting economic growth in order to reduce extreme poverty. Other matters emphasized as important for building resilient African societies included infrastructural development through public- private partnerships, the creation of youth employment, empowering of African small scale farmers, ensuring human security, addressing emerging challenges including climate change and cohering global development initiatives in such forums as TICAD , G-8 and G-20.

Under the theme of “Peace and Stability” participants called for TICAD V to support African Union institutions such as the AU Peace and Security Council and the APRM, underlining the need to adopt a comprehensive approach to peace and security, intertwined as it is with governance, economic growth and development. The discussion also emphasized the imperative of focusing on maritime security to ward off the problems of piracy and unleash the potential of the “blue economy”. The “Trade and Investment” session also highlighted the importance of aligning TICAD’s priorities with the African Union goal of boosting intra-African trade. Innovative concepts including the “triangular partnership” between Africa, the South and the North, were also discussed as were various new ways of financing African investment. Discussions were described as “enriching” and participants agreed the meetings greatly contributed to align the TICAD process with African development priorities for greater advocacy in the Post-2015 agenda.



The Ministers, after thorough deliberations of the work of the senior officials, approved the Yokohama Declaration 2013 and the Yokohama Action Plan 2013-2017 to be tabled as Ministerial draft for final adoption by the Heads of State and Government at the upcoming TICAD V Heads of State and Government Meeting in June 2013. The Declaration “Hand in hand with a More Dynamic Africa” concentrates on key strategic approaches to accelerate growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction, and stresses the principles of supporting Africa’s own efforts, mainstreaming women, increasing opportunities for youth, and promoting human security. The Yokohama Action Plan is geared into enhancing drivers for growth by promoting trade and investment in the priority areas of infrastructure and agriculture, and the active engagement of the private sector to stimulate the creation of regional value-chains, employment, and the exchange of technology and know-how as well as strengthen sectors with strong potential such as tourism, to support Africa’s sustained economic growth.



Bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the TICAD V ministerial meeting

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn met with Mr. Yutaka Kase, Vice Chairman of Japan's Business Federation (KEIDANREN) and the Chairman of the Federation's Committee for Sub-Saharan Africa, and a delegation from the Federation. The Prime Minister praised Japan's unwavering development support to Ethiopia's development through the Japan International Technical Cooperation forum (JICA) and other multilateral fora, and described the policy dialogue between the office of the Prime Minister and National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies going on for several years as beneficial to Ethiopia's development endeavors. He stressed Ethiopia's commitment to the development of its private sector and highlighted the important role this could play in the overall development of the country, adding "we believe that comprehensive development cannot happen without greater private sector involvement" and emphasizing that "we are committed to supporting the private sector's activities in our development initiatives." The Prime Minister noted that the country's investment regime was conducive to foreign investment and invited Japanese investors to invest in Ethiopia. He assured the delegation that the government was continually refining its investment regime to keep it in line with global standards and the demands of Japanese investors. Mr. Kase highlighted Japan's commitment to Africa and said the Federation would be supporting the Ethiopian investment seminar due to be held during the TICAD Heads of State and Government meeting in June.



Dr. Tedros with Japanese Foreign Minister, Fumio Kishida

On the opening day of the meeting, Dr. Tedros met with Japan's Foreign Minister Mr. Kishida. Dr. Tedros pledged Ethiopia's continuing support for upcoming TICAD meetings. He noted "Japan's strong commitment to the African continent has made a pivotal contribution to the success of the meetings", adding that "Japan's principled stand on Africa's ownership of its own development agenda and its transparent approach has also contributed to the success of the meetings." On bilateral relations he said Ethiopia was keen to raise its historic bilateral relations with Japan to an even higher level while also maintaining its strong multilateral relationship through TICAD. He highlighted the fact that despite a global recession, and the devastating nuclear accident it had sustained, Japan had exhibited its firm commitment to the Ethiopian people by maintaining the amount of ODA it provided. Mr. Kishida thanked Ethiopia for successfully hosting the ministerial preparatory meeting and expressed Japan's desire to further deepen its relations with Ethiopia.



The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Telephone: (+251) 11 151 7345
Fax : (+251) 11 151 4300

mfa.gov.et

He underlined Japan's desire to strengthen its multi-sectoral relations with Ethiopia and added that Japan wanted to work with Ethiopia on regional matters as it "values the positive role that it plays in the Horn of Africa". Dr. Tedros briefed his Japanese counterpart on the promising developments in Somalia and between the Sudan and South Sudan, assuring Minister Kishida that Ethiopia would continue to support the priorities of the Government of Somalia. He noted the recent signing of the security arrangements implementation matrix between the Sudan and South Sudan was a vital step to boost the confidence of the leadership of the two countries, adding that the agreement on the oil flow would "open more opportunities to jumpstart the negotiations on the remaining contentious issues." Mr. Kishida affirmed the Japanese government's commitment to facilitate greater Japanese investment in Ethiopia.

Dr. Tedros also held discussions with the Guinean Foreign Minister, Professor Dr. Sano Koutoub Moustapha, focusing on ways to open bilateral relations between the two sisterly countries and on possible areas of cooperation. Dr. Koutoub expressed the Republic of Guinea's desire to forge a greater partnership with Ethiopia. He proposed that "experts from both countries work to devise a general cooperation memorandum of understanding" that could eventually lead to the establishment of a joint ministerial commission. He noted the importance of high level visits as a way of fostering relations. He said that "as an emerging democracy, Guinea wants partners to cooperate on technical and economic matters of mutual interest". He added that "Ethiopia's massive educational expansion offers a unique opportunity for technical cooperation". Guinea was the biggest producer of bauxite in the world and home to large reserves of gold and other minerals, but it lacked the requisite skilled manpower due to "the poor attention given to the educational sector in the three decades of military rule before the 2010 democratic elections." Dr. Koutoub underlined the importance and the benefits for the two countries in establishing a greater partnership as part of global South-South cooperation initiatives. He expressed his country's desire to have Ethiopian Airlines flights to Conakry as it has no national flag carrier, saying that opening of a route to Conakry would highly benefit Guinea and bolster relations between the two countries.

Dr. Tedros welcomed Dr. Koutoub's call for partnership in areas of mutual interest, noting that further inter-regional cooperation would go a long way towards fostering a united Africa. He said that although Ethiopia's focus had been on forging good relations with neighbors it also had "a strong commitment to strengthen our relations with other African countries for we believe that building a strong and united Africa is indispensable to the future of the continent." On education, Dr. Tedros said that with "more than 32 universities and 20 million students at all levels of education", Ethiopia's experience could offer the two countries a golden opportunity to cooperate. He also mentioned the successful experiences of the health sector as a potential area of cooperation, suggesting that Guinea could learn a lot from Ethiopia's health extension works now "being taken as a model by many African countries." Dr. Tedros welcomed Dr. Koutoub's proposals to establish a joint ministerial commission and air transport links between the two countries.



UAE's Foreign Minister on a visit to Ethiopia



UAE Foreign Minister with State Minister Amb. Berhane Gebrechristos

The Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan arrived in Addis Ababa on Wednesday (March 20th) for a two-day official visit. Yesterday, he met with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn who highlighted the value of the visit for bilateral relations of the two countries. The Prime Minister told Sheikh Abdullah of Ethiopia's decision to open a new embassy in Abu Dhabi, in addition to its consulate in Dubai, to further strengthen the relationship. The Prime Minister expressed Ethiopia's desire to deepen bilateral relations in the areas of trade and investment, noting that Ethiopia was one of the fastest growing green economies in the world and it needed "more foreign direct investment in our efforts to transform from an agrarian to an industry-led economy" He explained that "Ethiopia offers huge opportunities to UAE investors interested in agriculture, renewable energy and sugar" and expressed his desire to see increasing UAE investment in Ethiopia.

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan underlined the UAE's interest in working with Ethiopia in the sectors of energy development, research, food security and tourism. He said the UAE had experience in energy development investment in Morocco, the UK and the North Sea and "we are ready to invest in Ethiopia too". He pointed out that as the UAE was a food importing nation there was huge potential for the two countries to cooperate in this area. In discussion of regional matters, Sheikh Abdullah expressed his admiration for Ethiopia's efforts in bringing peace to Somalia, saying "we appreciate the sacrifice you have paid to bring stability in Somalia" and expressing the UAE's readiness to work with Ethiopia on all matters of peace and security in the region. The Foreign Minister told Prime Minister Hailemariam of the UAE's desire to increase the number of Ethiopians working in the UAE. Prime Minister Hailemariam said that Ethiopia was ready to send more Ethiopian workers to the UAE as soon as a labour agreement between the two countries was signed. He said "we are happy to see Ethiopians working in UAE as long as their protection is guaranteed and there is a legal framework put in place to govern their employment relations there."

Earlier, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Berhane Gebrechristos, met Sheikh Abdullah. Describing bilateral relations between the two countries as excellent, he expressed Ethiopia's desire to further bolster the relationship, noting "we want the UAE's government to encourage investors to come here". He expressed his hope that the recent opening of Julphar Pharmaceutical in Ethiopia would encourage further UAE investment. Speaking on regional matters, Ambassador Berhane appreciated the seamless working relationship between the two countries. He said "we have common positions on a number of regional matters and we want to continue to work more closely in the future." On bilateral matters, Sheikh Abdullah underlined the importance of signing agreements on the avoidance of double taxation, trade and investment as well as the establishment of a joint commission. He added "in the last few years the UAE has been working to forge stronger ties with Africa and we believe that Ethiopia is one of the important countries with whom we should work closely."

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos signed two agreements – a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of a Joint Committee for Cooperation in Economic, Political and Social Fields, and the second to enable the UAE's Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) to open a representative office in Ethiopia. Ambassador Berhane said "the opening of a Dubai Chamber representative office here in Ethiopia will help promote and expedite the burgeoning investment and trade between the two countries ... the chamber will be a bridge between the private sectors of both countries". Sheikh Abdullah described the signing of the agreements as an important step that would serve to deepen the relations between Ethiopia and the UAE.

During his visit, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan also had an audience with President Girma as well as holding discussions with other ministers and senior officials in the areas of finance and economic development, transport and labour and social affairs.



UAE Foreign Minister meets with President Girma Wolde Giorgis



The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Telephone: (+251) 11 151 7345
Fax : (+251) 11 151 4300

mfa.gov.et

The 9th India-Africa project partnership meeting in New Delhi...

The 9th India-Africa project partnership meeting opened on Sunday (March 17th) in New Delhi, India, under the theme: “Creating Possibilities, Delivering Value”. Organized jointly by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Indian EXIM Bank, this 9th meeting brought together over 900 delegates from more than 45 African countries. The CII Director General, Chandrajit Banerjee, emphasized the significance of the event to consolidate economic and social cooperation between India and Africa while the CII President, Mr. B. Muthurman, noted that the India-Africa project partnership meeting had helped to turn South-South cooperation into a reality, visibly altering global economic flows. He said the meeting would help to find mutually beneficial ways to bring about real economic alignment and common growth, emphasizing that the proven commitment and leadership in the developing economies of the South enabled a wide range of benefits in terms of innovation, technology, human resource development, better environment protection, technology transfer and suitable utilization of resources. He noted that agricultural investments that can supplement the production capacity of both smallholder farmers and larger units were becoming major investment attractions in Africa. He said the conference should help to jointly consider key steps to help broaden South-South cooperation, come up with mutually acceptable win-win solutions to challenges and help the Least Developed Countries join the list of developing economies.

India’s Minister of Commerce, Industry and Textiles, Anand Sharma, told the meeting that South-South cooperation, including India-Africa cooperation, was the result of the two regions’ shared experiences and joint struggles in search of a better future. He said the meeting provided a forum where the two regions could jointly identify opportunities of cooperation to be exploited. He welcomed the significant cooperation that existed between India and many African countries in the areas of investment, trade, development assistance whether through loans or grants, and in people-to-people relations. He expressed the Indian Government’s readiness to do everything possible to encourage a significant presence of Indian businesses in Africa. The session noted that Indian businesses had a growing interest in broadening their presence in Africa especially in areas of agriculture investment and agro-processing, metal supplies, health sectors including hospitals and drug and pharmaceutical supplies as well as oil and gas exploration, mining, consultancy, hotels, textiles and agro-industrial developments.

A 30 person delegation from Ethiopia, led by the State Minister for Industry, Ato Tadesse Haile, attended the three-day conference. Among those in the delegation were the Director of the Ethiopia Investment Agency and the Director for the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association, as well as other senior officials and representatives of private business.

... the Ethiopian delegation shared best practices in health and infrastructure...

During plenary sessions on “Achieving Affordable Healthcare in Africa” and “Infrastructure: Partnership for Growth,” representatives from the Ministry of Health and the Ethiopian Railway Corporation gave an account of progress in these areas.



The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Telephone: (+251) 11 151 7345
Fax : (+251) 11 151 4300

mfa.gov.et

In his presentation on the health sector, Ato Abdujilal noted that achieving the MDGs in the health sector, including improving maternal health and reducing mortality, reducing child mortality and improving control of communicable and non-communicable diseases, were among the Government's priorities as identified in the Growth and Transformation Plan. A "Health Sector Development Program" was under implementation and was now in its fourth phase. There had been over 15,000 healthcare posts constructed across the country in the past five years, aiming to provide people in the rural areas with access to modern medical facilities within a 5 kilometer radius. Over 38,000 health extension professional experts had been deployed. The Government had the target of building 3,200 health centers, four for each rural district as well as 825 rural hospitals in the short term. Ato Abdujilal noted the introduction of new initiatives including improving accessibility of healthcare facilities and availability of quality drugs, health facilities and equipment. The right mix of health policies, strategies and measures taken had enabled the country's healthcare service coverage to reach 90% of the required level. He also underlined the positive contribution of the private sector and the growing partnership of foreign investment in the health sector, stressing the Government's readiness for the widest possible partnership with foreign investors to enable more affordable and improved pharmaceutical supplies. The country currently imported 75-80% of drugs and 100% of medical equipment from outside but local manufacturers were also importing significant portions of active and additive ingredients for pharmaceutical production. He said that non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease were a considerable burden for the country and stressed the potential for specialized investment in these areas.

The Director of the Ethiopian Railway Corporation, Dr. Getachew Betru explained the Government's commitment to maximize the road and railway interconnectivity within the country and across the region with Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia. He referred to implementation of the Government's plan to build over 5,000 kilometers of railways in the next three to five years in eight selected corridors. These include the Addis Ababa-Djibouti, the Addis Ababa-Kenya, the Addis Ababa-Sudan, the Addis Ababa-South Sudan, the Addis Ababa-Bedele, the Addis Ababa-Woldiya and Mekelle and the Tadjoura railway projects. He said that a significant element of the Addis Ababa-Djibouti project had been completed, as well as 25% of the work on the Addis Ababa city light railway project. The Addis Ababa-Djibouti, Addis Ababa-Bedele, and Addis Ababa-Woldiya and Mekelle projects were the first priorities and should be completed in a very short period of time. He noted that feasibility studies and all work related to surveys, conceptualization and cost-benefit analysis were being completed ahead of implementation of the projects. Dr. Getachew, who welcomed external financial contributions to these projects, said an interconnected Africa should be everyone's dream to help South-South cooperation achieve a more meaningful alignment to strengthen North-South cooperation.

Representatives of financial institutions present noted the feasibility of possible projects, the presence of strong contractual arrangements and the transparency of tenders, the minimum uncertainty and the availability of strong regulatory frameworks, and expressed interest in financing African infrastructural projects.



...and presented a session on investment prospects

At a special session on Tuesday (March 19th), the Ethiopian delegation presented specific details of potential investment opportunities and conditions in Ethiopia. Ato Tadesse, State Minister for Industry, said Ethiopia considered India as one of its top strategic partners. It is its second largest investment and the third biggest trade partner. He noted that total trade volume between the two countries had grown by an average 21% per year for the last decade. Last year's total trade volume was US\$600 million and it is expected to reach US\$1 billion in the next 3 years. The total capital of registered Indian investment in Ethiopia is now over US\$4 billion of which about US\$2 billion is in operation. Ato Tadesse said all indications were that those involved enjoyed a wide range of benefits including a smooth business atmosphere, abundant market opportunities and subsequent financial profits. He noted the Government's policies and strategic measures being taken to create an even more conducive environment for investment. The Government had made every effort to put in place a stable, predictable, harmonized and strong regulatory framework capable of accommodating the interest of investors. Ato Tadesse said it was prepared to consider the possibility of further harmonization of the regulatory framework based on benchmarked practices of best performing countries, and was ready to carry out improvement measures aimed at enabling further investment inflows. He also noted the relative political and macro-economic stability in Ethiopia, the relatively minimal corruption and the functional democratic system of governance, all of which were critical for investment expansion.

The State Minister underlined the country's double-digit growth for nearly a decade and the increasing numbers of people moving into middle income categories, the increased demand of products and services, the Government's continuous allocation of 70% of its annual budget for infrastructural development as well as the country's geographic proximity to Middle East and Asian markets, its progress in power production and delivery potential. The Government's commitment in ensuring a strong Private-Public Partnership (PPP) also provides significant opportunity for investment in addition to the most attractive incentives and investment guarantees. All these, he said, were confirmation that doing business in Ethiopia was characterized by stability. He suggested that textile and garment, leather products, chemical industries, manufacturing of medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, metal and engineering sectors, agro-processing industries, agriculture investments including sugarcane, floriculture and horticulture, infrastructure construction, international standard hotels, tertiary level hospitals and the education sectors all offered lucrative investment opportunities.

The Head of the Ethiopian Investment Agency also underlined Ethiopia's opportunities for investment, stressing the easy procedures for acquiring an investment license, the speedy one-stop-shop service, the attractive incentives including a loan service equivalent to 70% of the initial capital for investments in Government priority sectors, the investment guarantees secured through investment protection and promotion agreements, the minimum financial requirements to start up business and other benefits. He noted that it took only 3 hours to issue a new investment license, and registration and renewal processes were very easy. He also stressed the availability of Ethiopian Airlines flight and cargo facilities to facilitate business activities.



Ethiopia's Ambassador to India, Genet Zewde, also emphasized the tremendous business opportunities in Ethiopia for Asian investors, and expressed her readiness to provide all necessary support for any company or individual investor interested in doing business in Ethiopia. The President of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations noted the organization, as a legitimate representative of the private sector, was working hand-in-hand with the Ethiopian Government to enable a strong Public-Private Partnership. She expressed the readiness of her office to facilitate partnerships between the Ethiopian private sector and foreign investors.

A day earlier, Ato Tadesse, Ambassador Genet and other members of the delegation held discussions with representatives of Black River Investment Association, involved in agro- and food-processing industries in Africa. The Association has offices in over 12 countries worldwide and among those participating in the talks were AB Food Parks Plc, Daddla Plc and Sunil Plc. Daddla expressed its aim of establishing a milk processing complex, with a daily production capacity of at least one million liters, on about 45 hectares of land in five selected locations in the rift valley between Debre Zeit and Hawassa. AB Food Parks is beginning the process of investing in poultry farms. Company representatives welcomed any mechanisms of assistance from the Government to help them find Ethiopian partners, individuals and groups to work with. They recommended the Government should encourage the widest possible cultivation of alfalfa grass as it would help attract more investment in dairy and meat processing. Ato Tadesse Haile said the Ministry had recently restructured itself to become more accommodating to the growing needs of investors. He emphasized its priority for agro-processing, pointing out that Ethiopia's livestock population was the largest in Africa and the 7th largest in the world. Other advantages included the availability of animal feed, proximity to huge markets for agro-processed items in the Middle-East and Asia, and a growing domestic market. The Government's encouragement of cooperatives and associations also provided additional prospects for supply lines for milk or live animals to any processing complex. The State Minister expressed the Government's readiness to scale up alfalfa grass cultivation. He said the Government will encourage the study and cultivation of the grass for domestic livestock feed. Ambassador Genet Zewde noted the Government's incentives for proposed agro-processing projects including customs duty privilege for capital goods and construction materials, tax holidays and investment loans. Stability and availability of cheap, trainable labor were other advantages. She said that the Ethiopian Investment Agency could provide lists of trusted people to work with and expressed the Embassy's readiness to help in any way possible to address any challenges investors might face.



Human rights in Somalia “improving”

The UN’s Independent Human Rights Expert on Somalia, Shamsul Bari, visited Somalia earlier this week and held meetings with President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon and other officials. Speaking to the media after their meeting, President Mohamud began by sending his condolences to the victims and the families of the latest car bomb explosion in Mogadishu, and then turned to the issue of human rights in Somalia pointing out that Somalia was now looking to join the UN Human Rights Commission. This meant, he said, that it must try to improve its record and promote human rights in everything. He said he was committed to improving human rights’ conditions, and already started reforms in the security and judicial sector. He also said the Government would soon be holding a judicial conference in Mogadishu to be attended by Somali and non-Somali experts with the aim of reforming the justice system and advancing human rights. He said “I assure you, my fellow citizens, that our number one policy pillar is security, and human rights are a part of that pillar. We are committed to that and we will prevail.”

The UN’s Independent Human Rights Expert gave Somalia a vote of confidence on Wednesday during a meeting with the Prime Minister in Mogadishu. Mr. Shamsul Bari said he had been disheartened by the human rights situation on previous visits to Somalia but now the situation had changed. He was quoted as saying “My heart is much lighter and full of hope on this visit. I’m hopeful because the rule of law and justice are taking root. People can relate to the government. There’s a bright future ahead.” Prime Minister Shirdon who welcomed Mr. Bari to Mogadishu reiterated the Government’s commitment to upholding human rights. He emphasized a number of steps it was taking including the establishment of an Independent Task Force on Human Rights with a limited, three-month mandate to investigate the killings of journalists and sexual violence against women, set up in February. Working in close consultation with Mr. Bari, the government is aiming to adopt a Somali-owned Human Rights Roadmap later in the year. It will also be setting up a new Directorate General for Human and Minority Rights and Rule of Law.

A few days earlier, the Prime Minister announced that the government would be taking urgent action to provide clean water and medical supplies to prisoners in Mogadishu Central Prison. This came after the Prime Minister visited the prison where high seasonal temperatures had brought an outbreak of diarrhea and cholera, resulting in two deaths and nearly forty hospitalizations in the prison which suffers from overcrowding. The Prime Minister said he was very disappointed to see prisoners in such deplorable conditions. He said the situation was now under control and the Government was providing immediate assistance in terms of clean water and medical supplies. However, he said, “in the longer term, we will be asking our international partners to support us as we embark on urgently needed renovation and expansion of prison facilities.” The Prime Minister said the growing numbers of prisoners was part of a process of normalization as the machinery of government was being restored after years of inactivity and the security situation improved and the judicial system started operating again. He said the Government was now taking action to expand the existing prison system by renovating additional prisons in Afgoye and Lafoole. The Minister of Justice, Abdullahi Abyan Nur, accompanied the Prime Minister, and said that the Government was implementing workshops in Mogadishu Central Prison to help ensure that when prisoners were released they had acquired some basic skills.



News in Brief

Germany's President in Ethiopia on a four day official visit

The President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Joachim Gauck, arrived in Addis Ababa on Sunday (March 18th) for an official four-day visit to the country. He was welcomed at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa by Ato Mekonnen Manyazewal, Minister for Industry, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Germany's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ms. Lieselore Cyrus. An official state dinner was held in his honor at the National Palace shortly after his arrival. During the visit, President Joachim Gauck held talks with President Girma Woldegiorgis and Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, the Chairperson of the African Union, on bilateral relations between Germany and Ethiopia. President Gauck also met with Dr. Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission at the headquarters of the African Union and reaffirmed Germany's firm stand to continue working with the AUC in peace and security matters. He said the fact that Germany is covering the entire 240 million euro cost for the new AUC Peace and Security Complex underlined its resolute intent to cooperate with the African Union in these areas. He stressed the importance of maintaining close working relationships with civic society organizations in Africa's efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Dr. Dlamini Zuma assured the President that Africa would strengthen its relations with Germany in the areas of trade and in continental and international political matters, and praised Germany's assistance to Africa's efforts in industrialization. During his visit President Gauck also met representatives of civic organizations and religious leaders. He held talks with students and staff at the Addis Ababa Technical and Vocation School and visited the historic rock-hewn churches of Lalibela.

Panel Discussion on Pan-Africanism at the AU Commission

The Secretariat for the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU organized a half day conference on Pan-Africanism and AU's quest for political unity in collaboration with the Africa Union Commission on Wednesday this week (March 20th). The conference was held in the African Union's conference center. Professor Mekonnen Haddis gave a welcoming speech noting that the 50th anniversary was not just a momentous milestone in the history of the continental organization but also a clear manifestation and testimony of the desire and commitment for unity and integration. This collaboration also provided an additional impetus to shape the collective path into the future. A keynote address was delivered by Dr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the Africa Union Commission, who talked passionately about Pan-Africanism and the struggle waged by Africans to have a continental organization that promoted unity. Three papers were presented by scholars from Addis Ababa University, the Institute of Security Studies and the Africa Union Commission.



News in Brief

Dr. Wafula Okumu, working with the AU Border Program, presented a paper on the AU's role in promoting peace and highlighting some of the challenges it faces as it seeks to achieve an ambitious agenda of developing and integrating one of the more marginalized regions of the world. Dr. Solomon Ayele, a senior researcher at the Institute of Security Studies, presented a paper on Africa's struggle for self-determination in the sphere of Peace and Security, best expressed in terms of what Ali Mazrui called the Pax Africana, a peace that is protected and maintained by Africa herself. Professor Tessema Taa, from Addis Ababa University presented a paper on Pan-Africanism and the OAU/AU origins and vision. The conference was attended by members of the diplomatic community, officials and experts from the AU Commission, scholars from Addis Ababa University, the Institute of Security Studies, and invited members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The discussion was wide-ranging and candid, providing insights about Pan-Africanism and the AU's role in promoting peace and stability, democracy, good governance and economic prosperity.

South Sudan to join the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement

South Sudan has said it is on the way to join the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement, which Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi have signed. South Sudan's Water and Irrigation Minister, Paul Mayom Akech has been quoted as saying "South Sudan does not recognize - and underline does not recognize - the content of the 1959 agreement." The minister added that at the time South Sudan did not exist and could not say anything, but "today we say, we have nothing to do with this agreement." The minister told a local radio station that South Sudan had joined the Nile Basin Initiative and had already gone a long way towards joining the Cooperative Framework Agreement which he described as an entity within which all the Nile Basin countries come together and discuss how best they could utilize water resources. Egypt sent a high level delegation led by Prime Minister Hisham Kandil to South Sudan last week. The Egyptian Prime Minister signed Memoranda of Understanding with Vice-President Riek Machar on education, health, agriculture and investment. There was no MoU signed on the Nile waters.

DAG Co-Chair praises Ethiopia's poverty reduction efforts

The Co-Chair of the Donors' Assistance Group, a consortium of donors, Geert Geut, told reporters this week that the Donors' Assistance Group appreciated the Ethiopian government's efforts to reduce poverty. Responding to questions on whether the Government's Growth and Transformation Plan was overly ambitious, he said Ethiopia was one of the poorest countries in the world. It faced numerous challenges to its development. He consistently admired the Government's commitment to reducing poverty through such a grand plan. He said that the Donors' Assistance Group believed that the policies devised by the government had set Ethiopia on the right path towards alleviating poverty. He pointed to the recent fall in inflation as encouraging proof of the positive results of Government policy.



News in Brief

First ever Ethiopian cultural centre in New Delhi, India

During the India-Africa project partnership meeting this week, the Ethiopian Embassy in India opened the first Ethiopian cultural centre in India. The center was inaugurated on Tuesday (March 19th) in the Embassy compound by State Minister of Industry, Ato Tadesse Haile, the Ethiopian Ambassador to India, Genet Zewde, and other officials in the presence of officials from the Indian Government, Ambassadors, diplomats and members of the Ethiopian community in India. Ato Tadesse said the centre was a manifestation of the historic people-to-people relations between Ethiopia and India and expressed his belief that it would enable a more productive exchange of culture and education and contribute to economic and political relations. Ambassador Genet said the centre would introduce and promote the various cultures of Ethiopia to the people of India. It includes a Conference Hall, Meeting Hall, a permanent display of Ethiopian traditional artifacts and paintings, a restaurant and a coffee house. A weekly cultural dance performance will be among scheduled programs. The aim is also to provide a common gathering venue for African ambassadors in India as well as for the Ethiopian community in India. Ambassador Genet said the centre would serve as a living symbol of African culture and heritage in New Delhi and in India.



The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Telephone: (+251) 11 151 7345
Fax : (+251) 11 151 4300

mfa.gov.et

About

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

A Week in the Horn is essential reading for policymakers, the diplomatic community, corporate leaders, academia and interested citizens of the region.

A Week in the Horn is published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, a leading diplomatic institution in Africa.

Published online, accessibility of *A Week in the Horn*, allows its influence to extend well beyond the region and the continent.



Credits

Prepared and published by:

Foreign Media Relations Directorate, Public Diplomacy and Communications Directorate-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia.

Special Contributors:

The Secretariat for the commemoration of the OAU/AU's 50th Anniversary

Media Contributions:

Audio-Visual Department

Design Editor:

Frezer Haile

Subscribe

Now you can get *A Week in the Horn* by email.

Simply subscribe by sending an email to mfa.press@ethionet.et with 'subscribe - *A Week in the Horn*' in the subject line.

Note that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will never share your email address with a third party without your express permission.

Visit us

For more news and information go to www.mfa.gov.et

Email us

Send us your opinions, thoughts and feedback to -

mfa.digitaldiplomacy@ethionet.et

For letters to the Editor put 'For Editor' in the subject line.

Follow us



.com/mfaethiopia

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Telephone: (+251) 11 151 7345
Fax : (+251) 11 151 4300

mfa.gov.et