

A Week in the Horn

30th May 2014

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News in Brief:

African Union

The African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) celebrated its 10th anniversary last week in a meeting at the Nelson Mandela Hall in the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa. (See article)

Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund told a meeting of African finance ministers and development experts in Maputo on Thursday (May 29) that Africa was "taking off" and becoming a growing investment destination but poverty was still unacceptably high. Governments should build infrastructure and institutions and educate people to share benefits more widely.

Ethiopia

The 23rd anniversary of the May 28 celebration of the overthrow of the military regime of the Derg was held at Addis Ababa Stadium on Wednesday in the presence of President Mulatu, Prime Minister Hailemariam, high-level government officials, members of the private sector and thousands of residents of Addis Ababa and its surroundings. (See article)

Foreign Minister Dr Tedros led the Ethiopian delegation to the 17th Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Algiers on Wednesday and Thursday this week (May 28-29), under the theme "Enhanced Solidarity for Peace and Prosperity." (See article)

Dr Tedros held discussions in Algiers on Thursday (May 29) with Susan Malcorra, Chef de Cabinet of the UN Secretary-General on regional peace and security. Dr Tedros briefed Ms Malcorra on Eritrea's continued efforts to destabilize the region, pointing out there was no sign that it had genuinely changed its behavior.

The State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos last week paid an official visit to Riga, the capital of Latvia, where he participated in the Africa Day Forum and met with Government officials and members of Parliament to discuss expanding bilateral relations.

Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos, on Thursday (May 29) met with Ambassador Ali Bahraini of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Ethiopia. Ambassador Bahraini presented the keys of eight buses to the Ministry in recognition of Ethiopia's positive role in regional peace and stability.

Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos welcomed the new United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, Dr Julitta Onabanjo, on Thursday (May 29). He said Ethiopia greatly valued its relations with UNFPA and the UN system.

Dr Yinager Dessie and Dewano Kedir, State Ministers for Foreign Affairs, met on Thursday (May 29) with a delegation of Italian business persons headed by Luciano Manfrinato, Vice President of Cosenza province.

An Ethiopia-Sudan Business Forum this week (May 25-27) in Addis Ababa culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association and the Sudanese Investors Federation. (See article)

The U.S Secretary of Commerce, Ms Penny Pritzker, heading a business delegation from 21 companies on a visit to Addis Ababa, said the U.S would be opening its first ever trade office in Ethiopia to help provide for an expanded trade and investment relationship. During her visit Secretary Pritzker and Congresswoman Karen Bass met President Mulatu Teshome and private sector leaders.

Ethiopian Airlines on Saturday (May 24) resumed flights to the Nigerian city of Kano, a decade after flights to the city had been suspended. Kano is the airline's 49th African and 81st international destination.

Djibouti

An explosion at a restaurant in Djibouti on Saturday (May 24) killed three people and wounded several others. The head of police in Djibouti city, Colonel Omar Hassan, characterized the act as "criminal". Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility.

Eritrea

Speaking at the official celebration of the 23rd anniversary of Eritrea's independence, President Isaias announced on Saturday (May 24) that a constitution drafting process would be launched. Eritrea's 1997 Constitution was approved by the National Assembly but never implemented.

Kenya

President Kenyatta on Friday, last week (May 23) announced a number of measures to stimulate tourism in Kenya including lower charges and taxes and said the industry would be developing an interactive Kenya Tourism Portal under its Tourism Stimulus Program. It aimed to attract at least 5 million visitors in the next 5 years.

Senior officials met on Monday (May 26) to discuss security cooperation in the war against terrorism, in advance of a two-day consultative meeting on Thursday between senior judges and security officials on national security issues and responses to terrorism within the context of the Constitution and international human rights law.

Kenyan security forces on Monday (May 26) arrested more than 260 people in and around Mombasa following a failed attack on a church and an explosion that injured two people. The new arrests took the number of suspects detained in Mombasa since Sunday to 490.

Somalia

Al-Shabaab terrorists attacked the Somali Federal Parliament building in Mogadishu on Saturday (May 24) while the Assembly was in session. The attack was thwarted by the joint actions of AMISOM forces and Somali National Army forces, and MPs were successfully evacuated. (See article)

Prime Minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed has appointed Defense Minister Mohamed Hassan Hamud as acting Minister of National Security (May 29) following the resignation of former National Security Minister Abdikarim Hussein Guled.

The UN Security Council on Thursday (May 29) voted unanimously to extend the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) for another 12 months, and expanded UNSOM's mandate to include strategic policy advice on peace-building and state-building to the Federal Government and AMISOM.

Somali army commander, General Dahir Adan Elmi "Indhaqarsho" was the apparent target of a roadside bomb attack in Mogadishu on Wednesday (May 28). General Elmi was uninjured and none of his bodyguards were wounded.

The United Nations, the European Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on Tuesday (May 27) issued a joint appeal for resolution of the political crisis in Somalia. They said they stood ready to hold to account anyone who poses an obstacle to progress in Somalia. (See article)

Prime Minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed and the cabinet on Thursday (May 29) approved the names of the 5-member independent committee tasked with reviewing the country's provisional constitution. They were named as Ms Asha Gelle Dirie; Professor Omar Hassan Mahad-Allah; Osman Jama Ali 'Kalun'; Mohammed Abdallah Salah and Hassan Hussein Haji.

A South African Police Officer, Anand Pillay, has been appointed Commissioner of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Police. Commissioner Pillay, who was previously the Police Commissioner in the African Union Mission in Sudan (UNAMIS), takes over from Commissioner Charles Makono from Zimbabwe.

Bogor Burhan Bogor Musse, the 34th king of the Darod clan family was crowned in Qardo on Sunday (May 25). In attendance were the President of Puntland, the Vice-President of the Jubaland Administration, Federal Government ministers and MPs, three former Somalia Prime Ministers as well as traditional leaders from Mogadishu, Kismayo, Jigjiga and Hargeisa.

A Puntland delegation of police officials, led by the State Minister for Security, Mohamud Beldaje Farah, attended a ceremony in Djibouti on Wednesday (May 27) at the conclusion of a 45-day EU funded training course for Puntland marine forces.

South Sudan

South Sudan President Salva Kiir on Saturday (May 24) called for the immediate approval and deployment of an IGAD regional deterrence and protection force to end ongoing violations of the cessation hostilities agreement signed with his former deputy, Riek Machar.

The UN Security Council on Tuesday (May 27) extended the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (NMISS) for another six months, until November 30, 2014, and revised its mandate to give priority to the task of protecting civilians and to addressing the security, humanitarian and political crisis in South Sudan.

The leader of the SPLM-In-Opposition, Riek Machar, on Wednesday (May 28) met with Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta in Nairobi to discuss mechanisms of the ongoing IGAD-mediated peace process. Mr Machar who has been in Ethiopia is also expected to visit Khartoum.

Sudan

The head of Darfur Regional Authority, Dr Tijani Sese, on Sunday (May 24) appointed members of the Justice Committee, and the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, making up the independent Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission called for under the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) signed in 2011.

May 28, Victory Day celebrated throughout Ethiopia

The 23rd anniversary of May 28, Victory Day, which heralded the final demise of the military Derg regime, was celebrated at national level on Wednesday. Offices and institutions of the Federal Government throughout the country and in the Regional States and the City Administrations of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa, held commemorations and other functions, including panel discussions, a photograph exhibition, theater and musical shows with the motto of “A Country Striving to Reach Far Dreaming Far”. In Addis Ababa, May 28, Victory Day, was commemorated at Addis Ababa stadium in the presence of high-level government officials, political and religious leaders, and thousands of residents of the city.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn told a packed stadium that the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia had benefited significantly from the efforts made to lift the country out of the quagmire of poverty. He noted that the existing governance system accommodated diversity, ensured religious freedom and equality, and guaranteed a multi-party democratic system. With pro-poor policies, the encouragement given to farmers and the modernization of the sector, the Prime Minister said productivity had now risen to a point where Ethiopia was food self-sufficient at national level. Now, he added, the Government along with the Ethiopian people, would work to become food self-sufficient at household level. The Prime Minister recalled that Ethiopia used to be cited as an example of famine in the Oxford Dictionary. Now, however, the development efforts of the past 23 years had forced those scholars to erase that entry and to recognize Ethiopia as a country of fast-growing economic development. That, he said, was “a remarkable achievement”. Prime Minister Hailemariam noted that, as a result of the steady widening of political space, 90 political parties were now functioning, running their political agendas. The past four national elections had, he emphasized, witnessed the free, fair and democratic participation of political parties and of the people. He used the occasion to assure the people that the Government and the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front would work diligently to make the fifth national election next year a peaceful, free, fair and democratic election.

President Mulatu Teshome conveyed his congratulatory message to the Ethiopian people a day earlier on Tuesday (May 27), stating that arduous struggles of the Ethiopian people had paved the way for a new chapter of democratization and development. Victory Day had been the springboard for the people of Ethiopia to propose an inclusive Federal Constitution that ensured the universal human and democratic rights of all citizens. He said that after May 28 the country had designed various developmental policies and strategies to extricate the country from poverty, and particularly in the last ten years, the country had registered double digit economic growth, making it one of the ten fastest growing economies in the world. President Mulatu said the successes that followed the change included, but were not limited to, agricultural productivity, housing development, steady industrialization, energy development, improving health care and access and expansion of educational institutions. He also noted that the foreign policy the country pursued has enabled it to build close and harmonious relations with its neighbors and other African countries based on mutual benefit and a win-win approach. He said that with the right foreign policy Ethiopia had been able to change long-standing antagonistic relations with some neighboring nations and peoples and consolidated solidarity and cooperation based on mutual interests. The political stability now generated provided an ideal basis for the country to become one of the leading investment destinations in Africa, improving the flow of Foreign Direct Investment.

Ethiopia’s growth and the changes of the last twenty-three years have been widespread and multifaceted. They deserve and obtain the attention and praise they have received. The dawn of peace and stability that was brought about by May 28 has been remarkable in its outcome, in the economic, political and diplomatic arenas. Much has been said about Ethiopia’s economic awakening, producing developments that have lifted millions out of poverty, put record numbers of children into schools, provided basic health services to huge areas of the country previously unreached, and built a vast network of still expanding infrastructure.

Based on the concepts of good governance, public accountability and supported by a national anti-corruption strategy, the government is developing a culture of accountability and transparency. It has developed an impressive record of national, state and local multi-party elections, and it is encouraging a viable and vibrant private sector through specific policies and incentives for both local and foreign investors. The Growth and Transformation Plan has done much to lay the groundwork for future development. It is based on a balance of investment for expanding local consumption and provision for export, and of encouragement for both the public and private sectors. The government has emphasized energy development, solar, wind, geothermal

power as well as hydro-power on a large scale. Infrastructure development, including transnational and trans-regional railways and roads, has been a priority. It has fostered a pro-business environment to lessen dependence on commodities and encourage value added elements. It has provided a conducive business environment to build confidence in developing the country's growing energy output and the expanding regional economic integration. The results have included major impacts on poverty alleviation through employment creation and income generation. Policies have encouraged peace and security as well as providing for major developments in health, education and people's living standards, as well as growing social activism and political participation. The progress towards most of the Millennium Development Goals has been impressive, based on an impressive set of pro-poor policies. One clear example of the overall effect could be seen in the first sovereign credit rating given to the nation recently, a very respectable "B" grade.

The country's diplomatic gains have been no less significant. Ethiopia launched a new series of contributions to peace and stability in Africa not long after the historic victory of May 28, sending peacekeeping forces to the civil war ravaging Rwanda, even before it had consolidated its own internal stability. Support for the UN peace-keeping missions in Burundi and Liberia soon followed, in what has since become one of Ethiopia's key contributions to peace and stability on the continent. It is now one of the leading contributors of peacekeeping-forces at the UN.

The recalibration of national and international priorities that was heralded by May 28, however, has not been limited to peacekeeping operations. Reinvigorating the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) so it may take a leading and decisive role in the region's stability and integration has also been high on Ethiopia's agenda over the past twenty or so years. Building on the basic premise that underdevelopment and lack of cooperation have been major sources of conflict and instability in the region, the Ethiopian government has worked hard with other member states of IGAD to establish a regional framework capable of dealing with political crises, conflict and insecurity, terrorism and economic integration. The success of building a functional regional cooperation platform in the form of IGAD that protects the interests of member countries and promotes the region's stability and priorities arises out of placing peace and development as the overarching priorities of the region. Ethiopia's role and commitment to realizing this objective has been fundamental to this development. That commitment in turn has its roots in the victory of May 28, a victory that elevated the concepts of development, peace and democracy as major imperatives of the new Ethiopian state. Ethiopia's commitment to help build a stable and peaceful Somalia should be seen from this perspective.

Beyond the region's stability, Ethiopia has also demonstrated its commitment to the unity and development of Africa. It played a crucial role in the transformation of the former Organization of African Unity into the African Union and in strengthening these institutions Ethiopia demonstrated the continuity of its long-standing dedication to and support for Pan-Africanism. Ethiopia was also able to cement its role in African issues in the articulation and prioritization of Africa's needs, helping to chart a future course for the continent's growing economic development with the establishment of the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

The country's leading role in international fora also included spearheading Africa's coordination and negotiations on climate change. Ethiopia, under the then Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, enabled Africa to speak with a single voice on the issue and formulate a single continent-wide position regarding the effects of climate change, possible solutions and a timetable for action. Mirroring its ambitious plan to achieve a zero-carbon economy by 2025, Ethiopia worked vigorously to reduce climate change related impacts on Africa and its people.

With the shift and reorientation from conflict-dominated foreign and domestic policies after May 28 to policies that emphasized development, peace and cooperation, Ethiopia's engagement with its neighbors has been based on the concepts of strategic partnership and cooperation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has consistently worked to build bilateral and multilateral cooperation for development and attract international investment to the country. It has had considerable success. The peace and stability that has prevailed in Ethiopia since the victory of May 28 in 1991 has made the country one of the top destinations for Foreign Direct Investment in Africa, and now it is being courted by major economies and global corporations.

The Non-Aligned Movement's Ministerial Conference in Algiers

The 17th Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement was held this week (May28-29) in Algiers, under the theme "Enhanced Solidarity for Peace and Prosperity". Prime Minister of Algeria, Abdelmalek Sellal, representing President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, welcomed delegates. He noted that terrorism, organized crime and trafficking were threatening international peace and security, but added that the international community was aware of these threats and had decided to cope with them in a coordinated manner. In this regard, he said, it was extremely important for the Non-Aligned Movement to continue its commitment to eradicate these threats: "It is of the utmost importance that our Movement continues its commitment of solidarity to work together to eradicate this transnational scourge," he said.

Prime Minister Sellal also emphasized the importance of coordination to reform the multilateral system so that it could be adapted to the current global situation. He urged NAM member states to mobilize all their energy to reform the UN Security Council: "Strengthening the role of the General Assembly and the reform of the Security Council, to fall in line with an overhaul of the international economic and financial institutions, should continue to mobilize all our energy." He added that it was essential to focus efforts on a more balanced and more united human approach to globalization, with a view to sharing the fruits of universal progress with all mankind. The NAM, he recommended, should be a major force for suggestions. Algerian Foreign Minister, Ramtane Lamamra also emphasized that the Movement should work to set up a new international order characterized by solidarity as part and parcel of multilateral reforms in the international order. The current chair of the NAM, Iran, also called for strengthening cooperation among member states to better defend their interests in a changing world. "For now, it is necessary to preserve and strengthen the non-aligned nations for better efficiency and to contribute to safeguarding the world's peace," Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Zarif said.

United Nations Secretary General, Ban ki-Moon, in a message to the Conference, underlined that the Non-Aligned Movement possessed all the universal values and shared with the UN the concepts of multilateralism needed to solve the challenges that faced the international community. He noted that the UN and the NAM had enjoyed a close relationship for over five decades, and he reiterated his expectation that the UN could rely on the support and solidarity of the NAM to cope with the current challenges of the world. African Union Commission Chairperson, Dr Dlamini Zuma, told the Conference that Africans in the past had been the invisible people of our world, but more recently following its improved growth rates, it had been transformed from being a "hopeless continent" to becoming a world growth pole. It was now going in the right direction, the Chairperson said. As members of the NAM, Africans should work for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and for the democratization of the global governance system, she said.

Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, who led the Ethiopian delegation to the Conference, said the Conference offered an opportunity to reflect and assess implementation of the Teheran Plan of Action adopted at the 16th Summit of NAM 2012. He recalled the Movement's remarkable contributions in the global fight to put an end to colonialism and apartheid, but noted the world today faced both old and new challenges that posed serious threats to the maintenance of international peace and security and to sustaining hard-won social and economic development gains. He underlined the importance of peace and security for sustainable development. He said the strong solidarity of the Non-aligned Movement countries and their deep and sustained engagement with other nations was critical to ensuring lasting global peace and prosperity. He called for the Movement to play a more active role in efforts aimed at helping Africa implement its peace and development agenda. Ethiopia, Dr Tedros said, had been making its own contribution to the security and stability of its sub-region through IGAD, and for the rest of the continent as a member of Peace and Security Council of the African Union. He reiterated Ethiopia's steadfast commitment to the lofty ideals and principles of the NAM. Dr Tedros commended the success of the Movement in consolidating the concept of solidarity for joint action. This was, he said, a valuable contribution to our world, which could be characterized as an international community bound together by shared values and responsibilities.

The conference reviewed the progress and implementation of the Teheran Plan of Action adopted at the 16th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement held in 2012 in Teheran, Iran, and worked to prepare for the upcoming NAM Summit in Caracas, in Venezuela, in 2015. It addressed existing, new and emerging issues of collective concern and interest to the Non-Aligned Movement. In this regard, the conference emphasized the Movement's abiding faith in, and its strong commitment to, its founding principles, ideals and purposes, particularly the establishment of a peaceful and prosperous world and a just

and equitable world order, as well as support for the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The Ministers in their declaration reaffirmed the continued relevance, validity and adherence to all principled positions and decisions of the Movement as contained in the substantive outcome documents of the 16th NAM Summit held in Teheran in August 2012, and the preceding Fifteen Summit Conferences of the Movement, as well as all preceding Ministerial Conferences and Meetings of the Movement, including the XVI NAM Ministerial Conference and Commemorative Meeting held in Bali, Indonesia, in May 2011. They also expressed their determination to preserve and act in keeping with the Bandung Principles and the purposes and principles of the Non-Aligned Movement in the present international juncture as agreed in the Declaration on the Purposes and Principles and the Role of the Non-Aligned Movement in the Present International Juncture adopted at the 14th NAM Summit in Havana and in the Bali Commemorative Declaration on the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Ministers acknowledged the NAM Chair's Report on the Movement's activities since the 16th NAM Summit. This showed significant progress in implementing the NAM Plan of Action as stipulated in the Teheran Final Document and the Teheran Declaration. Both contributed positively in the process of strengthening and revitalizing the Non-Aligned Movement. The Conference declaration also reiterated its commitment to working actively with partners to address present challenges and risks stemming from threats to global security, increased marginalization of the South, environmental hazards, including climate change and communicable diseases. It also called for increased cooperation for solution of political problems. The reform of the United Nations system was declared as a key element for ensuring fair and equitable global governance to promote economic development, social progress and lasting peace and international security. The declaration said this "should be addressed as a matter of high priority".

Regarding ensuring peace and security, the declaration said conflicts should be settled on the basis of peaceful means. It called for restraint over unilateral measures such as sanctions and embargoes as well as "so-called preventive wars, and interference included under the cover of humanitarian assistance." Recognizing terrorism as a serious threat to the stability of individual states as well as to international peace and security, the declaration noted the significance of international cooperation supported by operational means to strengthen national strategies to combat the scourge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations as well as its connections with drug trafficking and organized crime.

The declaration identified poverty eradication as the greatest global challenge facing the world and described it as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. It said common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as the right to development remaining fully relevant and forming the foundation of the post-2015 global agenda. In this regard the post-2015 agenda should have the eradication of poverty in developing countries as its overarching objective through the implementation of the four pillars of sustainable development, including the cultural pillar as agreed at Rio+10. On climate change, the Conference declaration urged more financial and technological support for developing countries' efforts to mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects. Support, it emphasized, should be commensurate with needs; and funding schemes should urgently receive resources in line with commitments for be promptly disbursed.

Somalia's Parliament attacked and a call to end political infighting

An attack was made on the Somali national parliament complex in Mogadishu on Saturday (May 24) while the Assembly was sitting. A Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device exploded at the entrance to the Parliament and this was followed up by Al-Shabaab fighters who managed to get into an unoccupied part of the building. The attack was foiled and all the terrorists involved were killed. Ten members of the security forces or civilians were killed. Three members of parliament were injured, but most of the legislators were evacuated from the rear of the building. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud described the attack as a heinous crime. He said "We are all aware of the importance of our parliament in giving our people a voice and of the way it represents our sovereignty and our freedom of speech" adding that this was yet another example of the way "Al-Shabaab acts not in the interests of the Somali people but of its own, media-focused, perverse agenda. Just as they targeted the symbol of freedom of speech and democracy yesterday, so too they let the people starve in 2011, always to achieve their goals. Their actions have nothing to do with Islam or Somali culture." The President, who commended the Somali security forces and AMISOM, urged all Somalis to consider their role in bringing peace to Somalia, saying, "To our people who are living in areas which have been recently liberated, I remind you that we must forget our differences and work together to retain this

hard-won peace. To our people in areas where the military are advancing right now, your cooperation is imperative. You may not hold a weapon, but your voices and actions can reject the evil forces of terrorism that defile Islam and defile our country.”

The President confirmed that the Minister for National Security, Abdikarim Hussein Guled, had tendered his resignation to the Prime Minister and that it had been accepted. He said “Whilst our security forces responded admirably, it is clear that much more needs to be done to prevent these attacks from happening. We must create a safe Mogadishu that blooms into life: where people can walk safely at any time of day or night, business can flourish and people are happy to call their home.” The President said that the Prime Minister would appoint a new Minister for National Security as a matter of urgency and the first task would be an urgent review of Mogadishu security measures. On Thursday, the Prime Minister appointed Defense Minister Mohamed Hassan Hamud as acting Minister of National Security until a permanent appointment is made.

The attack was widely condemned. The Special Representative of the African Union, Ambassador Annadif, noted that “These attacks show that al Shabaab simply don't care about the plight of innocent Somalis. Yet again they are bent on their own selfish purpose and show no respect for the well-being of ordinary people. And the failure of their attack once again evidences the futility of their actions.” Ambassador Annadif sent his condolences to the families and friends of all those who suffered in today's attack and wished a swift recovery for those injured, and stressed that the Federal Government of Somalia, supported by AMISOM, will continue to make its prime focus the stabilization of the country.” The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia (SRSG), Nicholas Kay, condemned the attack “I am appalled and condemn the attack on Somalia's Federal Parliament. The Federal Parliament represents the people of Somalia and their hopes and aspirations for a peaceful and stable future. Today's attack is an attack against the people of Somalia for which there can be no justification.” He added that the United Nations would continue to support the Somali people and their Government as they work towards peace and stability.

The members of the Security Council also strongly condemn today's attack against the Parliament of Somalia and extended their condolences to the families of the victims and the people and Government of Somalia. They reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever and whenever and by whomsoever committed. They also reiterated their support to all actors supporting efforts towards greater peace and stability in Somalia, including both UNSOM and AMISOM. The UN Secretary-General also condemned the attack and conveyed his solidarity and support to the men and women of the Federal Parliament “who represent the people of Somalia and their aspiration for a peaceful future.”

Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, said he had been appalled and shocked by the attack on the Federal Parliament which represented the people of Somalia and their aspirations for a peaceful future. It was, he said, is a key institution in the Somalia's progress towards peace and security, and it provided the people of Somalia with a voice in bringing peace, democracy and development to their country. A statement said the attack once again demonstrated Al-Shabaab's disinterest in the lives of innocent Somalis, in development and in peace and stability in the country. The people and Government of Ethiopia offer their deepest condolences to the families of the victims of this attack, as well as to the families of those killed in the attack on a restaurant in Djibouti at the weekend in which three people died and fifteen were injured, and to the dozens of those injured in the explosions in a market in Nairobi on May 16. The statement said “These cowardly attacks indiscriminately target innocent civilians. They are deliberately intended to prevent development and progress, and they underline the necessity of hunting down and dealing with those responsible. Terrorism is an enemy which has no future in the Horn of Africa, which is a region dedicated to development and progress.” It added that Ethiopia, as Chair of IGAD, is committed to fighting against terrorism, and reaffirms its unwavering support to Somalia, Djibouti and Kenya. It would continue to work with AMISOM in the major task of stabilization in Somalia and in all efforts to prevent terrorism and provide for peace and security in the IGAD region, and it would do “everything in its power to eradicate this scourge of terrorism from our region”.

Meanwhile, there has been further concern over the delays in building a Federal Somalia. Mr Nicolas Kay raised this in his recent briefing to the UN Security Council when he said it was necessary for urgent progress to be made over establishing mechanisms to revise and implement the constitution, oversee the establishment of federal states and prepare for elections in 2016. Mr Kay also then said he was also

concerned that “the current political crisis in Mogadishu”, which included a call by over 100 Members of Parliament for the President to resign, could mean a return to a cycle of infighting between Somalia’s political institutions that has paralyzed previous governments.

On Tuesday (May 27), the United Nations, the European Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development on Tuesday issued a joint statement pointing out that “Ongoing political instability does not serve the interests of Somalia or its people. Somalia cannot afford a return to the cycle of deadlock and infighting between political actors that has paralyzed governments since 2000.” The statement noted that the development of a federal system, the constitutional review process and preparation for 2016 elections were behind schedule. It said “The Constitution sets out clear roles and tasks for all Federal institutions, including Parliament, the Executive and the Presidency. Somalia needs continuity and stability. But it also needs faster and greater delivery by all.” The statement called on the Executive, led by Prime Minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed, to take “timely and decisive” action to create greater national unity, improve security and expedite progress on federalism, the constitution and elections. It added that “International partners stand ready to support all moves that will enhance peace building and state-building and to hold to account anyone who poses an obstacle to such progress.” The statement said Al-Shabaab’s attack on the Parliament showed the need to redouble efforts towards peace and state-building.

On Thursday (May 29), the UN Security Council extending the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) for another 12 months, called on the Somali Federal Government to develop a “clear plan” towards the proposed elections in 2016, including achieving key milestones such as a referendum on the constitution and the formation of interim state administrations. UNSOM was set up in June 2013 and is tasked with providing UN ‘good offices’ functions to support peace and reconciliation; assisting the Government and AMISOM with advice on peace building and state building; and helping build capacity in human rights and the rule of law.

The African Union Peace and Security Council celebrates 10th anniversary

The African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) celebrated its 10th anniversary last week in a meeting dedicated to commemoration of the event at the Nelson Mandela Hall in the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa. The Peace and Security Council was established following the adoption of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union at the inaugural Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002, but it was not until March 2004 that the first fifteen members of the PSC were elected by the Executive Council and adopted its Rules of Procedure on March 16, and so commencing operations. It was officially launched at the level of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa on May 25 that year. It was exactly a decade later that the PSC held a commemorative session with AU organs and other stakeholders; and Ambassador Ismail Chergui, AU peace and Security Commissioner, underlined the occasion as an opportune moment for institutional introspection of the past decade and for consideration of the possibility for greater capacity to discharge its mandate.

Ambassador Chergui pointed out the 10th anniversary was being celebrated against a backdrop of commendable and significant progress especially in the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). He noted that in addition to the centerpiece of the APSA, the Peace and Security Council itself, of the structures envisaged by the Peace and Security Architecture Protocol, the Continental Conflict Early Warning System (CEWARN) and the Panel of the Wise, were operational. He said progress was underway to make the African Standby Force operational by 2015, with capacity for rapid deployment. In the past decade, the PSC had also established subsidiary organs with a view to enhancing its capacity. He also mentioned the important achievement of building partnerships with the AU’s Regional Economic Councils (RECs), with the UN Security Council, and with the PSC’s of the EU and Arab League. At the same time, he pointed out that despite contributions from member states and external partners, the Peace Fund required a redoubling of effort to make the operations of the PSC, the Panel of the Wise and CEWARN fully effective.

The PSC had made key achievements but the Commissioner noted “there are still violent conflicts which have far reaching consequences.” He said the conflicts in South Sudan, Central Africa and Eastern Congo, as well as Boko Haram terrorist attacks in Northern Nigeria, Al-Shabaab activities in Somalia and Kenya, LRA abductions in Central Africa and disturbances in Libya called into question the PSC’s capacity to ensure peace and security in Africa. Ambassador Chergui highlighted the Tripoli Declaration and the Solemn Declaration signed during the 50th anniversary of the AU as testaments to Africa’s resolve to have an Africa free of violent conflict, genocide and end all wars by 2020. He said “as prevention is better than cure” the structural

prevention of conflicts should be the focus of the PSA. Emphasizing the need to address the living conditions of societies through socially responsive polices, he said the root causes of most conflicts were “a lack of provision of basic necessities,” adding that addressing socio-economic issues and solving political problems in a manner responsive to communities was essential to ensuring peace and security. The Commissioner also underlined the need to encourage member states to ascribe to the frameworks set out by the African Union in such areas as good governance, elections, human rights and conflict prevention.

Ambassador Konjit Senegiorgis, Ethiopia’s Permanent Representative to the AU and UNECA, stressed that the PSC had “really made a difference in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security on our continent by discharging its mandate.” She praised the achievements in conflict resolution through designated mediation teams, by the Panel of Eminent Persons and the peace operations. In her statement, Ambassador Konjit underlined the adoption of the AU Policy framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development and the launching of the African Solidarity Initiative as an important achievement for the PSC. As a member of the PSC at its inception, she recalled Ethiopia’s contribution to the AU Peace Keeping Mission (AMIB) and said Ethiopia was “very proud to have deployed its troops as part of this mission together with Mozambique and South Africa.”

Detailing the challenges arising from delays in operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASBF) and ACRIC and shortage of funds for African-led peace operations, Ambassador Konjit noted that the PSC had been “more reactive than proactive in its efforts to promote peace and security in Africa”, adding that “ I believe it is high time that the PSC utilize all available tools of preventive diplomacy in anticipating incipient conflicts and preventing them from escalating into full blown conflicts. Particularly, we should maximize the utilization of the signals that we get from our Continental Early Warning and Response Mechanisms.”

Over the past decade the PSC has accomplished important work in regard to peace and security and upholding democracy and constitutionalism. It suspended the membership of Mali, Guinea Bissau and Madagascar, and more recently Egypt, on grounds of unconstitutional seizure of power. It reinstated Madagascar and Mali following the return of constitutional authority through elections. In doing so, the PSC has helped constitutionalism take root in Africa’s governance tradition. It has taken decisions over deployment of peace- keeping operations in Sudan (UNAMID), in Somalia (AMISOM) and in the Comoros. AMISOM’s deployment in Somalia has brought significant security improvement, liberating different part of the country including Mogadishu since 2012 from Al-Shabaab control. Equally, the delay in operationalization of the African Standby Force has hampered the PSC’s capacity to rapidly deploy forces special to saving civilians and societies’ vulnerable groups.

In a press statement on the anniversary, the PSC itself stressed the importance of preventive diplomacy. It said “The Council emphasized the need for the allocation of more resources to support and strengthen the capacity of the Continental Early Warning System and the good offices’ role of the Chairperson of the Commission and the work of the Special Envoys and Representatives, underlining the advisory capacity of the Panel of the Wise, in its capacity as a preventive diplomacy body, in order to take informed decisions.”

It called for annual meetings of the Peace and Security organs of the RECs and for greater coordination and complementarity. It called for better engagement with African Civil Society organizations and NGOs. It also suggested more regular and robust interaction with the UN Security Council and emphasized the need to draw on the comparative strengths and advantages of the two Councils, while acknowledging the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. In post-conflict situations, the PSC stressed the importance of the continued functioning of its subsidiary bodies, including the Post-Conflict Committee, to consolidate peace and prevent any relapses. The Council noted a growing problem of state fragility in light of the latest developments in Africa and underlined the need to strengthen governance and institutions, as well as reform security sectors.

The Peace and Security Council recognized the lack of sustainable and predictable finance and the problem of provision of logistical support for AU peace support operations. These seriously undermined the AU’s efforts to timely and effectively respond to crises. It therefore agreed on the need to have greater ownership in providing financial and logistical support to AU peace support operations. It emphasized the need to expedite the process of finding alternative sources of financing for peace and security matters. It appealed to all AU Member States to ratify all relevant AU instruments relating to peace and security, particularly the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. It stressed its

commitment to ensuring enforceability of its decisions while calling on member states to take the leadership in enforcing these.

Ethio-Sudan Business Forum convenes in Addis Ababa

An Ethio-Sudan Business Forum was held this week (May 25-27) in Addis Ababa, culminating in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association and the Sudanese Investors Federation. The Forum centered on discussions of the overall investment landscape and the opportunities created for investment in the two countries, the importance of devising a future-oriented cooperative partnership, engagement of the Ethiopian and Sudanese business communities in the priority areas of economics, investment and trade cooperation, assessment of the implementation of the bilateral agreements signed between the two nations and the need to ensure sound and steady development of the already existing bilateral ties. The event was attended by members of the business communities and also by senior government officials from both countries.

Gebrehiwot Gebreegizabher, President of Ethiopia's Industrial Association, and Wagdi Meregagi, President of the Sudanese Investors Federation, signed the Memorandum of Understanding. This aimed to promote strengthening of a comprehensive, forward-looking and mutually-beneficial cooperative partnership between the two countries in various areas including trade, economy and investment. The agreement allows the two sides to commit themselves to the establishment of joint ventures in numerous areas and elevate the two friendly countries' common and shared interests to a new level. Gebrehiwot Gebreegizabher affirmed that the MoU would support the efforts of investors and the business communities to become an engine of economic development and transformation. He emphasized that the involvement of investors in development projects would provide fruitful and practical results.

During the signing ceremony, Mebrehatom Meles, Ethiopia's State Minister of Industry, emphasized that the MoU would advance the bilateral cooperative partnership in the industrial sector. He said transformation and development of the industrial sector, coupled with increasing Sudanese investment inflows to Ethiopia, would provide substantial benefits for all. He noted that Sudanese investors and members of its business community were already participating in various areas of Ethiopia's development with vigor and sustained effort. They would benefit from the notable progress of the country's economic growth and be able to tap into the potential opportunities of the investment and business climate, he said. The State Minister also underlined that joint ventures between Sudanese and Ethiopian investors would provide for the exchange of opinions, sharing experience and knowledge and the provision of technology transfer for the development of the overall bilateral cooperation.

Ethiopia's Industry Minister, Ahmed Abtew, expressed satisfaction at the progress made in the economic aspects of the cooperative partnership of Ethiopia and Sudan since the establishment of the free trade zone between the states. At the same time, he said the achievements of the economic partnership had not yet reached the two countries' desired level. He called on both sides to commit fully to enhancing and intensifying their economic cooperation and to scaling up Ethiopia-Sudan relations to a higher level, providing enabling conditions for the creation of a prosperous, peaceful and stable region. He said he believed the Forum would be an opportunity for both business communities to forge new economic partnerships and renew existing links between their investors and business people.

Sudanese Industry Minister, Alsimeh Al Sadig, told the meeting that the Sudan highly valued the possibility of strengthening and enhancing bilateral ties in economic, trade and investment spheres. These, he said, would add value to the transformation and development of their respective industries. He said the MoU would enable the two countries to set up relations on a solid foundation and inject energy into development of the industrial sector. He agreed that economic relations had not yet yielded expected results and they were not as strong as the historic and time-honoured political relations. He said both countries were jointly working to increase their annual economic cooperation to more than USD 1.5 billion from the current USD 600 million; and called for investment in cotton and sesame production as well as in the areas of skin and hides. He urged the importance of timely consultation, proper follow-up methods and other mechanisms to get rid of impediments, to implement signed agreements and the smooth flow of trade and investment. He also agreed with Ethiopia's Minister of Industry that the two countries must engage to expand and deepen practical cooperation as well as push forward trade and investment ties.

Fitsum Arega, Director-General of the Ethiopian Investment Agency, noted that over 700 Sudanese investors and business persons had been licensed to operate in various sectors across the country. At the same time, however the involvement of Sudanese investors in Ethiopia's trade and investment was less than expected in light of the long-standing and close bilateral relations. He said the Forum could be an important milestone to encourage and stimulate Sudanese investors participation in Ethiopia's development projects. He added that the Forum was a crucial opportunity to showcase and promote Ethiopia's investment potential and the opportunities available for Sudanese and other international investors. He detailed the country's major advantages including political and macro-economic stability, good governance, an attractive investment law, zero tolerance of corruption, a committed government and meaningful pro-poor economic growth. He also pointed out that Ethiopia was one of the fastest growing economies in the world, and noted its numerous massive investments in railways, roads, electricity, water supply, civil aviation, and shipping. It had made meaningful progress in economic, social and political fields and its remarkable economic growth was expected to continue and change the lives and the livelihoods of its people. Since Ethiopia was a leading producer of many agricultural products, he urged Sudanese businesses to invest in agriculture and agro-processing and harness the existing potential opportunities.

Abdelrahman SIRR Al-Ketim, Sudanese Ambassador to Ethiopia, said the Forum was a new platform for both the Ethiopian and Sudanese business communities to encourage and promote a comprehensive, forward-looking, coordinated and cooperative partnership on trade and investment. He noted Ethiopia's "conducive investment climate" and the favorable conditions for business and investment, and said a number of Sudanese investors and business people had already been engaged in various areas in both trade and investment.

The Forum demonstrated that the bilateral relations between Ethiopia and Sudan are entering a new period of cooperative partnership and regional integration, within the framework of IGAD and the African Union. A major contributing factor for partnership is the role played by the political leadership of the two countries and by the growing people-to-people relations. Both are committed to the Preferential Trade Agreement signed between them in 2005 and to the enhancement of close cooperation in various fields including trade, tourism, investment, intellectual property rights, energy and infrastructure, mining, water, agriculture, the environment and forestry, as well as the need to respond to the infrastructural deficit and promote infrastructural integration through such areas as energy, roads and railways, to encourage regional integration. The two sides see their way clear for sustainable development within a spirit of friendship, mutual trust and mutual benefit, working together for the revitalization of the African Renaissance.

A preparatory meeting for a regional Conference on Human Trafficking and Smuggling

The preparatory meeting for the proposed regional Conference on Human Trafficking and Smuggling in the Horn of Africa was held last week (May 21-22) in Sudan's capital, Khartoum. The Conference itself was intended to promote a comprehensive, integrated, coordinated and shared response to try to wipe out human trafficking and smuggling in the whole area stretching from the Horn of Africa along the trafficking route to North Africa and beyond. The preparatory meeting was to discuss objectives and expected outcomes of the planned regional meeting and its sessions, focusing on the initiatives undertaken by the AU and regional countries to address trafficking, smuggling and irregular migration, the provision of a general overview of the rationale for a regional meeting, the current migratory phenomena in Northern Africa, the importance of working towards shared and coordinated responses, an exploration of synergies with various initiatives and partners, a brief situation report and consideration of the challenges of the threats to Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan.

This technical level preparatory meeting was attended by representatives of Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the AU, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the League of Arab States, EU and other partners including Norway, Italy, USA, and Switzerland. The meeting was organized by the African Union in collaboration with the Government of Sudan, the UNHCR and the IOM offices in Khartoum and Addis Ababa. The AU, UNHCR and IOM have been supporting AU states in strengthening coordinated responses to transnational organized crime including the trafficking of persons and smuggling of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers within the Horn of Africa region over the last decade.

The representatives from Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea and Egypt had extensive discussions on the causes of human trafficking, smuggling of migrants and on irregular migration as well as on refugees and asylum

seekers within the Horn of Africa and outside the region. They agreed that the difficulties could not be solved by one country alone, and agreed the problems could only be overcome through “comprehensive, long lasting, and holistic” mechanisms. In order to tackle human trafficking and illegal migration, they suggested, countries must integrate their collective efforts and work together over poverty eradication and for the provision of inclusive and sustainable development. They agreed to work on the coordination and harmonization of their approaches and initiatives to prevent human trafficking, smuggling and irregular migration in the Horn of Africa.

Representatives of the four countries also called on the international community to pay more attention and provide greater support to the efforts being taken by governments of the Horn of Africa in their struggle against poverty and the pursuit of peace, prosperity and stability. They shared the view that greater coordination and cooperation were fundamental mechanisms for rooting out the repercussions and causes of human trafficking and smuggling, recommending the working out of terms of reference for a mechanism for coordination and cooperation. They agreed that such a mechanism of collective cooperation and coordination would enable countries of the region to work together on information sharing, data collection and exchange, capacity building and resource mobilization as well as the challenges of implementation.

Both Egypt and Sudan extended invitations to host the Regional Conference and said they would continue consultations on the issue, agreeing to produce a conclusion by the end of the AU Malabo Summit in June. The level of the participation for the Regional Conference, whether at Ministerial or Senior Official level, would be determined after consultations in Addis Ababa, and it was agreed that the conference would take place by October this year.

In November 2012, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Egypt, the AU, IOM and UNHCR held a preliminary consultative meeting in Addis Ababa and made recommendations on the issue of human trafficking. They agreed that the increasing human trafficking and smuggling threat was a “grave” human rights violation. They reaffirmed that a timely, collective and effective response must be devised and applied. The meeting stressed that a consolidated, united and comprehensive approach by source, transit, and destination countries must be coordinated with international organizations, NGOs and other partners. Representatives agreed to strengthen information sharing mechanisms and border management structures and document integrity. They also agreed that the AU must take the leadership in coordinating the collective efforts of member countries as well as facilitating ways to collaborate linkage with transit and other destination countries in Europe and the Middle East.

The Government of Ethiopia has made it clear it is fully prepared to combat trafficking in smuggling of persons, as well as to prevent cross-border criminal activities. Ethiopia’s anti-trafficking response mechanism focuses on the root causes of trafficking and smuggling including poverty, lack of education, unemployment and other problems. At the same time, Ethiopia is committed to coordinate efforts with neighboring nations to tackle the process and consequence of trafficking and smuggling. The Government is also working on legal and institutional frameworks to protect and prevent human trafficking and smuggling; and it has made considerable progress in designing initiatives and in taking anti-trafficking measures.