
Ethiopians in the UK buy bonds worth over £40,000

23rd March 2015

More than 300 members of the Ethiopian Diaspora attended a successful bond selling event held at the Embassy on 21st March 2015, aimed at raising funds for the construction of the Grand Renaissance Dam (GERD).



In his opening speech, H.E. Ambassador Berhanu Kebede thanked the guests for, once again, turning up to demonstrate their continued support for the construction of the GERD. The construction of the dam is crucial to consolidating the double-digit economic growth Ethiopia has been experiencing for over a decade, the Ambassador said, noting that the project had so far reached the 41% completion stage. He added that the ever-increasing determination and enthusiasm of the people of Ethiopia will ensure that the construction of the dam will be completed in 2017 as originally scheduled and emphasized that through their concerted effort, the people of Ethiopia will make poverty a thing of the past. The Ambassador also recalled similar previous events that were successfully held at the Embassy and thanked members of the Diaspora for their unfailing support.

Eng. Simegnaw Bekele, Chief Engineer of the GERD construction project, who was unable to be physically present in London to attend the event due to a heavy workload, addressed the gathering via direct telephone link from the construction site. He gave a comprehensive briefing on the progress of the construction and the national significance of the dam. "Myself and 8,500 plus employees are working round the clock to ensure the timely completion of the dam", he said. He further went on to say that, in addition to its economic benefits, the construction of the dam was also a capacity-building exercise, which has made it possible to equip a new

crop of young Ethiopian engineering professionals with the knowledge and experience of dam construction and large-scale project management, including women engineers.

Adding that cost-effectiveness is a major consideration in the construction process, he called on fellow compatriots to leave behind a vivid historical legacy by contributing towards the national flagship project. He also underscored the public mobilization aspect of GERD, and he said that he did not know of any other project behind which people rallied so much and so enthusiastically. He said the GERD should make it into the Guinness Book of Records for public mobilization. The participants expressed their heartfelt gratitude and support to Engineer Simegnew and the entire workforce at the site with an enthusiastic applause.

Chairman of the GERD support Committee in the United Kingdom, Ato Mulat also thanked the audience for responding to the invitation extended by the Committee to participate in the bond selling event. He said the Committee will continue to undertake a range of activities to raise more funds for GERD.

A film documenting the progress of the construction was screened and drew an enthusiastic applause from the audience. The participants of the event were treated to a wide selection of Ethiopian dishes and a range of Ethiopian music representing various nations and nationalities.



The event was a joyous occasion and a clear manifestation of the unity, patriotism, devotion and determination of Ethiopians to rally behind the project. At the end of the event, it was disclosed that the participants had bought bonds worth over £40,000 (\$60,000).

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For further information, please contact the Press Office on 020 7838 3883/0; info@ethioembassy.org.uk

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