



Ethiopian News

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AU Summit takes place in Addis Ababa



Late January saw Addis Ababa once again play host to the annual African Union (AU) summit, opened by Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegen (pictured left) and attended by leaders from across the continent, under the theme '2016: African Year of Human Rights with a particular focus on the Rights of Women'.

In preparation for the 26th African Union summit, an AU Ministerial Retreat in Tigray was organised by the AU Commission. The retreat allowed government representatives, notably foreign ministers, to liaise, brainstorm and exchange ideas on the implementation of Agenda 2063, away from the more formal summit environment. This year the major focus points included the integrated high-speed train network; an African e-virtual university; establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by 2017; the African passport; and an African outer-space strategy.



After the retreat, the 28th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the AU took place, attended by foreign ministers, which considered reports from various AU committees and set recommendations to be considered by the coming summit. They also elected 15 new members of the AU Peace and Security Council: Botswana, South Africa, Chad, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Niger, Togo, Algeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Zambia, Congo, Egypt and Nigeria. Guests in attendance included UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Mr Carlos Lopez, and ambassadors to the AU.

The Executive Council further endorsed Ethiopia's bid to represent Africa as a non-permanent representative of the UN Security Council. Ethiopia is a founding member of the UN and previously held this UNSC role in 1967/1968 and 1989/1990 and is currently the only African candidate (after Kenya and Seychelles withdrew their bids in favour of Ethiopia). A seat at the Council is an excellent opportunity to have Ethiopia's, and the AU's voice heard in the most powerful and influential political circles, and will mean Ethiopia can help to shape the global agenda.

Following on from this, the Executive Council also endorsed the candidature of foreign minister Dr Tedros Adhanom for Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO). Dr Tedros's career has been dedicated to public service and scientific research on health. Before taking his current post he was Ethiopia's Minister of Health and the country saw a massive expansion of health services under his leadership, which was a major component in Ethiopia's success in the health-related Millennium

Development Goals. He is a globally recognised and published researcher on malaria and was also the first non-American recipient of the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Humanitarian Award in 2011.

Ethiopia's UNSC bid and Dr Tedros's candidature for the WHO Secretary General post were endorsed at the 26th African Union Summit. Many reports were also discussed there, including those concerning the post-2015 Agenda and climate change. The summit saw the end of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe's time as chairperson of the AU; the new chairperson is the Chadian President, Idriss Déby.

On the side-lines of the AU summit, Dr Tedros held meetings with many foreign ministers including those of Denmark, Kristian Jensen, and Sweden, Margot Wallstrom, on issues of renewable energy development, climate change and irregular migration and its causes.

He briefed the UK Minister for Africa, the Caribbean and Overseas Territories, James Duddridge, on the Oromia protests and consular access to Mr Andargachew Tsiege. With the Italian minister for foreign affairs and international co-operation Dr Tedros discussed migration, economic co-operation and regional peace and security. He also met the Polish under-secretary for development co-operation in Africa and the Middle East and the Portuguese minister for foreign affairs and international co-operation, Augusto Santos Silva.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-selassie, also met with representatives from Spain, Norway, New Zealand, Cuba and Singapore.



Editorial: Ethiopia's success story continues despite challenges

Speaking at the 46th World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland in January, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn told his audience that the Sustainable Development Goals had been fully integrated into Ethiopia's 2nd Growth and Transformation Plan at the planning stage and approved by parliament. This is a clear indication of Ethiopia's renewed determination to add to its remarkable achievement of meeting almost all the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. Ethiopia's success has been a subject of discussion and admiration in international development discourse.

But Ethiopia has had to surmount a number of challenges over the past 12 years of robust economic growth, the latest being a serious drought, exacerbated by the most severe El Niño weather phenomenon for 50 years.

The recent disturbances in some parts of Oromia region have presented another challenge. The upheavals were caused mainly by a lack of understanding of the purpose of the Integrated Master Plan for Addis Ababa and the surrounding towns in Oromia. Despite the good intentions behind the Plan, the regional government in Oromia ultimately made the wise decision to abandon it altogether in response to people's demands. This, coupled with the steps that are being taken to address issues raised concerning good governance, has ensured that calm has returned to Oromia Regional State.

El Niño began wreaking havoc last year. The Government has done its best to tackle the resultant drought on its own, by tapping into the national food reserves and allocating more than US\$300 million to buy wheat in the international market. But the number of people in need of food assistance has risen very quickly, making it difficult for Ethiopia to cope alone.

The Government has been applauded for its handling of the drought, in which no deaths or displacement of people have so far occurred, in contrast to the past. Ethiopia is no longer its old self of 30 years ago, it has built up food reserves and committed substantial resources to tackling the problem. This is a clear indication of how much the country has progressed.

In a nutshell, undeterred even by huge challenges such as El Nino, Ethiopia will continue to progress towards prosperity and development and will ultimately reach its objective of extricating itself from the vicious cycle of poverty once and for all.



Dr Tedros leads delegation to EU

An Ethiopian delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom, made an official visit to the European Union in Brussels from 12th to 14th January. The delegation first held talks with Mr Neven Mimica, the EU Commissioner for Development Cooperation. Dr Tedros underlined the value of Ethiopia/EU relations, commended the EU's contribution to the success of Ethiopia's First Growth and Transformation Plan and hoped it would play a significant role in the success of the



Second Growth and Transformation Plan (2015-2020). Mr Mimica said the EU would continue its support, as Ethiopia’s poverty reduction achievements are second to none, which is why it is among the highest beneficiaries of EU funding.



Dr Tedros with Mr Mimica

The two sides also discussed the implementation of the EU Trust Fund and cooperation on migration. Ethiopia is receiving €745 million from the 5th EDF through to 2020. It has so far effectively utilised €200 million and has submitted financial implementation agreements for another €250 million to the Commission, requesting prompt release of the funds.

Dr Tedros also met Mr Gilles de Kerchove, EU anti-Terrorism Coordinator, who commended Ethiopia’s significant role in both maintaining peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and building regional integration. Expressing solidarity with Ethiopia in the fight against fundamentalism and terrorism, he briefed the delegation on the challenges of terrorism in Europe. Since Ethiopia is a stable country in an unstable region, the EU is considering the possibility of cooperation in the intelligence area. Dr Tedros said terrorism and fundamentalism were a concern for both Europe and Africa and emphasised the importance of initiating counter-terrorism measures *in advance* of the open challenge of terrorist attacks. He shared ideas on the current crises in the Middle East and the spill-over effects in the Horn of Africa, before reaching a comprehensive understanding on future

cooperation on fighting destabilising agents in the region.

The Ethiopian delegation also met the EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid, Mr Christos Styliandes, to discuss the El-Nino-induced drought-affected areas in Ethiopia and support for refugees. The Commissioner noted Ethiopia’s important role in peace negotiations and stabilization efforts in South Sudan and Somalia, without which humanitarian conditions would have been much worse.



Dr Tedros with Mr Styliandes

Dr Tedros addresses parliament concerning MFA plan

In early January, Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom, with State Minister Yonas Yoseph and the Ministry’s Director-Generals, presented the annual plan and first quarterly performance report (Sept-Dec) to the Foreign Affairs Standing Committee of the House of Representatives.

In addressing the Committee, Dr Tedros said that the Ministry’s responsibilities under the Constitution included helping to build a democratic system and ensuring sustainable development in Ethiopia.

Dr Tedros highlighted the major focus points of the Ministry’s Plan for 2015/2016, which are strategic partnerships, business and economic diplomacy, forging the national image and boosting the participation of the Diaspora. In these respects, the Ministry aims to develop stronger ties with neighbouring countries that will ensure mutual benefit as opposed to simply the promotion of Ethiopia’s national interest. Examples of this

include promoting the principle of equitable water sharing for hydropower opportunities. Furthermore, the Ministry aims to work more closely with civil society, including think tanks, advocacy groups, the Diaspora and the media with a view to influencing these groups to report positively on Ethiopia's development.

Dr Tedros noted that the government had created an attractive environment for foreign direct investment and he envisages pre-investment level visits by nearly 50 high-level investors this year, as well as nearly 1,000 small and medium level investors. Twenty of these high-level investors and 228 of the small and mid-level ones are expected to become operational this year. Concerning the Diaspora, it is projected that 110 new umbrella organisations will be formed this year. These new umbrella organisations should increase female participation to 20,000 woman members, encouraging them to play a stronger role in the socio-economic development of the country.

In conclusion, the Standing Committee expressed their appreciation of the Ministry's Plan but recommended that more should be achieved in the future, especially on the topics of gender mainstreaming and the full utilisation of the budget.

El Nino drought – a funding shortfall

Dr Tedros said Ethiopia appreciated the quantity and quality of the EU's support and its expertise, which were not taken for granted. Concerning the current drought, the Minister noted the gap between what was required and what had been pledged. For the 10.2 million people in need of aid, requirements stood at US\$1.4 billion. The Ethiopian Government has so far spent \$300 million and a similar sum has been pledged by donors. The gap is about US\$800 million and this needs to be filled. Dr Tedros also pointed out that Ethiopia hosts the largest number of refugees from other countries – over 700,000 - and this was increasing daily. More cooperation was needed. [The EU has since donated an additional €25 million].

Dr Tedros met the Chairperson of the European Parliament Subcommittee on Development, Linda McAvan, who recognised Ethiopia's achievements in development, peace and security and in the hosting of refugees and hailed its green economy strategy, pledging even closer cooperation.



On 13th January, the delegation met Louis Michel, former European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, who praised Ethiopia's economic performance and hailed Ethiopia as a model for effective development fund implementation, saying he had been following its progress for more than a decade. He said the European Parliament was ready to enhance its cooperation with Ethiopia and that economic as well as parliamentary partnerships would be further bolstered.

Dr Tedros met Madame Federica Mogherini, High Representative and Vice President of the EU Commission, with whom he reflected on Ethiopia's economic performance - the country's economy is now the fourth largest in sub-Saharan Africa. She said the EU would continue its strategic engagement with Ethiopia and would remain Ethiopia's first partner in development. An EU-Ethiopia Business Forum will be organised later this year. There was follow-up on the EU-Ethiopia Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility, which was signed in November 2015, and the EU and Ethiopia would 'work together to tackle irregular migration' but also 'take advantage of the opportunities provided by well-managed migration.'

Ms Mogherini recognised Ethiopia's significant effort in hosting refugees and she and Dr Tedros welcomed the fact that the **EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa** had already started financing projects in Ethiopia. They discussed the recent unrest in Oromia and Amhara regions, the situation in the Horn of Africa and the wider Red Sea region, including South Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia. Ethiopia was playing a crucial role in the region in terms of promoting peace and security and the EU would continue to support these efforts.

Further to the EU's efforts, in late January Gayle Smith (Administrator for USAID) announced that the US would pledge an additional US\$97 million. This includes 176,000 tonnes of food to be distributed to 4 million Ethiopians and refugees. Gayle praised the government's response to the drought, adding: 'By quickly providing additional resources we can ensure that farmers are able to plant their crops and help Ethiopia bounce back' to minimise lasting consequences for food security.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also visited areas of Ethiopia affected by the drought to raise its profile and draw attention to the gap in funds. He praised the government for leading the response and for making the greatest financial contribution so far. He also stated that the problem was too big for any single government to tackle alone, and that the UN was fully committed to supporting Ethiopia.



Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn named Africa World News Man of the Year 2015

After considering nominations from across the world, *Africa World News*, the pan-African magazine, has named Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn as its Man of the Year 2015.



It noted many of Prime Minister Desalegn's qualities such as international security ally, global champion and African statesman. In general, his traits fell into three broad categories: economic growth, regional stability and regional partner.

First, the magazine noted that it is 'remarkable how Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn sustained economic progress in Ethiopia after the sudden death of his predecessor in 2012.' Indeed Ethiopia has been experiencing 'near double digit economic growth and huge infrastructure investment under Prime Minister Hailemariam's leadership, positioning it among the elite in Africa.' It noted that, although the economy was state-driven, the state-owned companies were ambitious, citing such examples as the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation, currently constructing the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, heralded as Africa's largest hydropower project; Ethio Telecom, which is working on a 4G network in Addis Ababa; and the Sugar Corporation which is building 10 new factories and hoping to become a major player in the global sugar trade. Under the Prime Minister, in 2014, were achieved Ethiopia's first sovereign credit ratings from global agencies resulting, for instance, in a B1 from Moody's.

Second, Ethiopia is a major diplomatic player in the Horn of Africa region and has long been considered a beacon of stability in an otherwise volatile area. Its chairmanship of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and its role as mediator between both Sudan and South Sudan, and the warring parties in South Sudan has strengthened its reputation in this respect. The PM visited both Sudan and South Sudan in 2013 in order to facilitate face-to-face entente between the two Presidents and to encourage consultations on controversial issues such as the status of Abyei and the implementation of the Addis Ababa Agreement. In Somalia, Ethiopia is currently contributing soldiers to the fight against Al-Shabaab through AMISOM, while also working as part of Somalia's Vision 2016.

Third, Ethiopia has not just been a global champion, for example in promoting the Millennium Development Goals and receiving the South-South Award, but also a dependable partner in the region in other respects. For instance, the PM is leading Ethiopia's partnership with Kenya in its Lamu Port-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor project, which includes railways, highways and an oil pipeline. This will provide Ethiopia and South Sudan (both landlocked) with new export pathways and ease the congestion at Kenya's Mombasa port. Similarly, Ethiopia is partnering with Djibouti to develop a \$1.55 billion fuel pipeline alongside the recently opened Addis-Djibouti railway.

The magazine concluded: 'The year 2015 was remarkable for Ethiopia and Prime Minister Hailemariam as a global and African leader of immeasurable value.'

Ethiopia establishes a Media Council

In January, the Ethiopian Media Council was formally established. Comprising 18 print and broadcast media outlets, the council is a self-regulatory body for media practice and the professionalism of journalism in Ethiopia. Each outlet has signed the Council's code of conduct and

is expected to raise awareness about freedom of expression and to act as mediators or arbitrators in cases relating to media disputes.

The Council has an Assembly made up of the 18 media outlets and a five-member Executive, drawn from two print media outlets (*The Reporter* and *Q'um Neger*), two broadcasters (EBC and private broadcasting) and a representative of the Ethiopian Journalists Association. The Assembly will elect the members of the Council's Ombudsman's Office and its 18-member Ethics Panel; both bodies are comprised of outsiders to the Council.

Minister Getachew Reda, Head of the Government Communication Affairs Office, welcomed the establishment of the Council, underlining the need for responsible journalism. He said he hoped the Council would help journalists to do their jobs properly and that it was important for the Council to be totally self-funded and therefore able to operate independently of government, business or NGO interests. He added that 'a flourishing and responsible media is important in pinpointing government weaknesses.'

The Media Council can help strengthen local media, improving both the quality and quantity of reporting

US-Africa Business Summit

More than 1,000 government and private sector representatives came together in Addis Ababa in early February to attend the 10th Corporate Council on Africa (CCA)'s **US-African Business Summit** at the UN Conference Centre.

2016 is the first year the summit has been held in Africa since 2007. Speakers include the Chief Executive Officer of Zenith Bank, Peter Amangbo; Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Stock Exchange, Oscar N. Onyema; Chief Executive Officer of Seplat Petroelum, Austin Avuru; and Co-Founder of AACE Foods, Ndidi Nwuneli. PM Hailemariam Desalegn, President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria and President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia all attended.

H.E. Shiferaw Attends International Conference on Education

H.E. Shiferaw Shigute, the Minister of Education, led an Ethiopian delegation at the **Education World Forum**, held in London from 17th to 20th January. The forum is an annual event and the world's largest gathering of education and skills ministers.

During his visit, Shiferaw met and held talks with representatives of DFID, the Department of Education and the British Council. Ethiopia's performance in achieving gender parity in primary and secondary school education was highly praised during the discussions.

Shiferaw also used the occasion to visit **Bradford University**, where he met the University management and discussed ways and means of strengthening the existing partnership even further. Bradford University is preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary in Addis Ababa, where the seat of the African Union is located.

Ethiopia to be a top tourist destination

Ethiopia can become one of the five leading tourist destinations in Africa if it fully implements its Sustainable Tourism Master Plan by 2020, says Dr Ray Muntida, Advisor to the IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan.



Photo credit: Bale Mountain Lodge

Tourism in Ethiopia currently generates about US\$2.9 billion annually, close to a million jobs and about 4.5% of GDP. The Government is determined to significantly increase the number of tourists

during the 2nd **Growth and Transformation Plan (2015–2020)**. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism plans to triple foreign visitors to more than 2.5 million by 2020, which would make it Africa's top tourist destination. Last financial year, 770,000 tourists visited Ethiopia and the Ministry hopes to increase this to one million and the revenue to well over US\$3billion by the end of this Ethiopian budget year (i.e. by July 2016).

The government has established a Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (STMP), a revitalised Ethiopian Tourism Organization (ETO) and a high-level Tourism Transformation Council (TTC) chaired by Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. These will ensure increased tourism revenue, so the sector will be in the frontline of eradicating poverty.

Revenue and tourist numbers are both up this year and the country's image is changing, as the international media has noted. The widely acclaimed *Rough Guides* and *Lonely Planet* rated Ethiopia last year as one of the most impressive tourist destinations and the UN World Tourism Organization has highlighted the untapped cultural and natural resources.

In January, in a piece entitled 'Tourism and Natural Treasures to pull Ethiopia out of poverty' Al Jazeera noted that 'Key tourism factors such as easy and fast growing air access, personal safety and local hospitality, rapid economic growth and, above all, fascinating discoveries to be made, bode very well for rapid tourism growth'. The country, it says, still has so many diverse cultures, landscapes and wildlife areas that can be developed, citing the Simien and Bale Mountains national parks, the Sof Omar Caves and the Danakil Desert where Lucy was found, lending weight to Ethiopia's claim to be the cradle of humanity.

Last year, Ethiopia was named 'Best Tourism Destination' by the representatives of the 28 countries on the **General Assembly of the European Council on Tourism and Trade (ECTT)**.

This is one of the highest tourism honours and is offered to countries that comply with the principles of the UN Tourism Division, UNESCO and ECTT on fair and ethical tourism. ECTT President, Professor Anton Caragea, said ‘the Government of Ethiopia is recognising the importance of tourism as a key facilitator for the country’s development, investing in infrastructure, creating a special team under the Prime Minister’s leadership for destination promotion and management and protecting the cultural, natural and historical patrimony of the country.’ He said the community-based approach, promoted by PM Hailemariam, is the perfect way of sharing revenue, growing income and supporting marginal and rural community development. ‘Ethiopia is a perfect, safe and outstanding place to visit, and all world tourism experts have expressed their confidence in the future of tourism in Ethiopia’, he added.



Photo credit: Bale Mountain Lodge

The Simiens have shown the potential for national parks and offer a model of achieving ecological tourism that should be recognised throughout the world. The judges described Ethiopia as perfect for safari and adventure tourism, providing safety and peace, making the country one of the world’s top adventure destinations.

East African Energy Pool (EAPP) endorses plans to integrate power supply

At the end of January, the East African Energy Pool met to discuss implementing a master plan for regional integration of energy resources in East Africa. The plan, drawn up by Danish company

Energinet, seeks to improve access to energy by promoting power exchanges and more efficient co-ordination with lower power supply costs. The member states are looking to jointly utilise resources to ensure mutual development in the region, also a key aspect of Ethiopia’s foreign policy.

The 25-year plan aims to optimise energy resources through regional investment schemes in power generation, transmission and distribution. All the member states of EAPP agreed to six points that will lead to the implementation of this plan, except Egypt, who lamented that the plan did not pay enough attention to risk analysis or environmental impact.

Up until now Ethiopia has only engaged in bilateral relations regarding energy supply and resources; it provides power to Sudan, Djibouti and service provision to Kenya. Bringing these relationships together into a regional network will bring more effective and streamlined integration.

Speaking at the conference member states said: the roadmap ‘provides a high-level tool for steering East Africa’s power development and integration... and for cooperation of member states of the EAPP and other African institutions’.

GERD update

Progress on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam was made in December and January. The Dutch consulting company, Deltares, was replaced in December by French company Artelia who now work alongside BRLi (also French).





The companies are working together to conduct an impact assessment of the dam, which will include the safety of the construction of the dam for the downstream countries. The study is expected to take between 8 and 12 months and Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt have all committed themselves to respecting the results. The construction of the GERD will continue unabated during this time.

Sudan and Egypt have both accepted an invitation from Ethiopia to visit the dam. The invitation was also extended to ministers, professionals and journalists in the interest of transparency and friendship. In a two-day meeting of the three states in Khartoum in December, Ethiopia explained the adequacy of the two bottom outlets of the GERD for allowing water to pass through to the countries downstream. While Egypt had asked government representatives to raise the number of outlets to four, Sudan was satisfied with the explanation and assurance.

In early February, a contract will be signed with UK-based company Corbett & Co. who will be managing the legal affairs of the GERD.

Ethiopia plans to build 105 small dams in GTPII



The Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity has said that in order to generate more hydropower for rural localities, 105 small dams will be constructed to harness power on small rivers within the coming five years.

The latest rural electrification plan takes Ethiopia’s topography into consideration and potential sites have already been identified in Oromia, Southern

Nations, Nationalities & Peoples, Gambella, Amhara and Benishangul-Gumuz regional states.

Bizuneh Tolcha, the Ministry’s Public Relations Director, said the dams are deliberately targeting areas of the country that are off-grid, bringing efficient power that will expand local industries and irrigation schemes. The feasibility of five selected sites has been confirmed, with 11 more close to finalisation.

Under GTPI, hydropower was provided from small river dams to 300,000 inhabitants of Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples states. German Development Cooperation (GIZ) was active in this field and will continue to facilitate knowledge and technology exchange.

Ethiopia boasts excellent topography for exploiting small river potential and has already identified 5,000 possible sites for such dams.

Fogera Irrigation Dam nears completion

The Fogera Irrigation Dam, under construction in South Gondar (Amhara region) on the Rib River, is near completion, say delighted residents.

Farmer Atalel Bante says he cannot collect his usual harvest due to flooding of the river across his farm land during the summer, but he and other residents will benefit from two harvests a year using water from the new dam. Dam Project Acting Manager Engineer Feleke Kidane said the construction has been delayed by lack of construction materials and financial limitations but is now progressing well. The dam will enable cultivation of 20,000 hectares of land and will also prevent flooding and supply drinking water.



Now 72% complete, the dam will have a 234 million cubic meter reservoir and will develop land across a 45 kms radius. Many small and medium-sized irrigation dams have been built across the country in recent years.

Addis Ababa international stadium to be constructed

On 6 January, an agreement was signed between the China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports to build an international stadium. It will have a capacity of 60,000 spectators and meet all the requirements laid down by FIFA and the IAAF and can therefore host the opening and closing ceremonies of the World Cup and Olympic Games. It will be located near the Youth Sport Academy, Bole sub-city, and have parking capacity for 10,000 cars. The design contract for the stadium was awarded to MH Engineering and the first phase of construction is expected to begin 45 days from the signing of the contract at a cost of 2.47 billion.



Construction of Addis's first 18 storey condo commences

According to the Addis Ababa Saving Houses Enterprise, construction has begun on an 18-storey 11-block condominium in Turist Nigd, the first of its kind. The project is part of the 40/60 government scheme for alleviating the housing problem in Addis. It oversees the construction of 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13 storey buildings on 12 sites.

This particular building will have a total of 2,343 units comprised of 528 single bedroom units, 1,056 two-bedroom units and 352 three-bedroom units, as well as 407 shops. The project will not only provide much needed housing in Addis Ababa but

provide jobs in both the construction and the shop units afterwards. It will benefit 8,131 people.



Addis light rail factory goes into production

This January, a light train manufacturing factory began production. Located in Cherkos, the factory, under the auspices of the Metal and Engineering Corporation (MEC)'s Locomotive Industry, has so far produced a prototype light train.

According to Manager Tsegay Gebrekirstos, 285 million birr was invested in the factory, importing the materials and manufacturing the prototype, a dry-run for future manufacturing for the Addis light railway.

While saving foreign currency, the factory will generate employment in the area and promote technology and knowledge transfer.

In Dire Dawa, the Locomotive Industry is producing long-distance trains after signing a contract with Chinese company NORINCO.



UK-based 54 Capital invests \$42 million in Addis Pharmaceuticals

In its seventh deal in Ethiopia, 54 Capital, a UK-based investment company, is looking to build a new plant for Addis Pharmaceutical Factory (APF) within two years, investing \$30 million. The move will increase the number of drugs produced in the northern Tigray region of Adigrat from 90 to 150.

Last month 54 Capital purchased a 40.7% stake in AFP with the potential of investing a further \$12 million to increase the stake to 49%. The company has also invested approximately \$35 million in the FMCG sector in Ethiopia since 2014.

The pharmaceutical sector has been prioritised by the government in the coming GTPII and the industry is set to grow to a value of a least \$1 billion by 2018.

UK-based Delonex launches oil exploration



Delonex Energy Limited, a UK-based oil company, has launched oil exploration activities in the Ogaden basin, southeast Ethiopia. It has already acquired seismic data from more than 1,000 km of its line and is in the process of collecting more from its exploration block.

Based on this data the company will look to identify potential drilling sites; it hopes there will be at least two such sites in its concession. The licence area covers blocks 18, 19, and 21 in the Abred-Ferfer area and grants an exploration period of three years with the possibility of two extensions of two years each.

Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein negotiating factory space in Addis

Aspiring to make Ethiopia a manufacturing hub in Africa during GTP II, Ethiopia has been attracting global designer fashion brands to its Hawassa Industrial Park, which is set to be completed in the coming months. The Park will be 300 hectares, housing 37 factory sheds at a cost of US\$246 million.



In August 2015, Swedish household name, H&M, made the decision to locate some of its factories in Ethiopia and Tesco and Walmart have also followed suit. Now it appears that American designers Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger are set to negotiate lease sheds in Hawassa Industrial Park.

Aside from these brands, top Indian apparel makers Raymond Group and Arvind Limited are among those negotiating leases, as well as companies from countries including Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Hong Kong. Ralph Lauren and Vanity Fair are also considering making a move to Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Airlines resumes flights to New York



Ethiopian Airlines has announced that final preparations are underway for launching a flight to New York from Addis Ababa by the end of June. The airline suspended its flights to Newark in 2004 in

order to offer a direct flight between Addis and Washington DC.

Ethiopian will be using the most modern aircraft in the world on the route, the Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which is also the most environmentally friendly aircraft available with lower fuel usage and noise emissions. The plane offers in-seat on-demand video monitors and a wide range of entertainment options.

Tewolde Gebremarian, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, said: 'We are thrilled to resume our service to New York, our fourth destination in the Americas. New York is one of the world's most economically powerful cities and including it in our ever expanding network will play a critical role in the expansion of trade, tourism and investment between the fast growing continent of Africa and the United States.'

The airline is the largest and most profitable in Africa and serves 92 international destinations across 5 continents. It has expanded its network to include many new destinations in the last year including Tokyo, Manila, Dublin, Los Angeles, Cape Town, Durban, Gaborone, Yaoundé and Goma. It has also recently been reported that the airline will be the first in Africa to operate the **Airbus 350-900**, a huge honour and yet another cause for celebration.

Ethiopia's own robot technicians

In the middle of Ethiopia's university district lies iCog Labs, Ethiopia's first research and development lab focusing on artificial intelligence. The Ethiopian developers work on image recognition software, improving robot intelligence and, on behalf of California based companies, map human genes to further understand longevity.

The programmers have the same capabilities and skills as developers from all over the world, but are subject to complications including erratic internet access and power cuts. This, however, has not stopped them from organising the first national football competition to take place between robots.

Founder Getnet Asseffa said: 'Artificial intelligence may seem far from African realities. But if you use it in daily life, it can improve the living conditions of human beings.' He also mentioned the leapfrog effect - how African countries have moved straight to mobile phones, suggesting artificial intelligence could be another example of this.



Over the course of a year, and with its own funding, iCog has been working on an Android app of an Ethiopian teacher Mrs Yanetu, who teaches reading, writing and basic maths. The aim is to ensure she can recognise children's emotions and answer their questions. Getnet hopes one day to be able to distribute free tablets to difficult-to-reach places in sub-Saharan Africa that lack infrastructure, schools and teachers.

While iCog receives no state support, Ethiopia is promoting scientific and technological research, investing €87 million in an ICT industrial park, dedicating two universities solely to the discipline, and imposing a quota requesting that 70% of Ethiopian students take a course in hard sciences.

Professor Yalemtehay Mekonnen wins AU science award

Professor Mekonnen has been awarded the 2015 Kwame Nkrumah science award by the African Union for the contributions she has made to the development of the African continent through her scientific discoveries. Her work is mostly centred on the properties of medicinal importance used in

communities. She tests them for medicinal properties and assesses whether they are a health hazard to humans, animals or the environment. Professor Merzouk Hafida from Algeria also received the award.



Professor Yalemtehay Mekonnen (right) and Professor Merzouk Hafida with their awards

France Campus and Addis Ababa University forge stronger links



The delegation with AAU staff

The French national agency for the promotion of higher education, international student services and international mobility, France Campus, sent a delegation of five to Addis Ababa University (AAU) to discuss future partnerships and collaborations in January.

AAU's Academic Vice President, Jeilu Oumer (PhD) and Zenebe Beyene (PhD), Director of the Office of External Relations, Partnerships and Communications welcomed the group and discussed a range of subjects on which they could collaborate, including natural sciences, health

sciences, business administration, paleoanthropology, paleo-environment studies and medicine.

There are over 300,000 international students in France, but very few are Ethiopian, so one of the main objectives of the visit was to promote the doubling of this figure.

The two institutions have agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding in the near future, which will enable them to collaborate on joint research projects and promote student and staff exchange. Dr Jeilu noted that, as more than 90% of AAU's graduate students are staff members of other regional universities, building the capacity of the AAU through such partnerships has a multiplier effect'.

Sports: Ethiopia dominates (again)

Ethiopian runners have had an extremely successful month across the globe. At the Chevron Houston Marathon, Ethiopian athletes won both the men's and women's races for the eighth consecutive year (winning the women's race for ten consecutive years). Ethiopians also took the top four spots in the men's race and came first and third in the women's.

At the Standard Chartered Dubai Marathon, male Ethiopian athletes took eight out of the top ten spots and were the fastest six runners. In the women's race, an incredible nine of the top ten spots were claimed by Ethiopian women.

Ethiopia in the News: New water technique could alleviate drought worldwide



Mr Alain Gachet, a French geologist, has developed a computer programme that can use satellite images of earth, taken from space, to ascertain where there are underground water reservoirs. Mr

Gachet has said that his method ‘peels away rocks like an onion’ to reveal water aquifers and underground rivers deep under the surface unknown to those living in the same spot. It can find water up to 700 metres deep.



In 2013 he used this technology to locate a lake larger than Lake Windermere in northern Kenya and has recently found water underground in northern Ethiopia, with the help of US scientists. There is no move to extract the water given the costs associated with extraction of materials from so deep underground but it is a positive and interesting step forward in the area.

The article can be found here: <http://goo.gl/8nYGvC>

Ethiopia in the News: “Training in Ethiopia: “A balance of purpose and pleasure enables me to thrive”



Julia Bleasdale, a British long-distance runner has been training at the Limalimo Lodge in the Simien Mountains in the run-up to this year’s Olympics. She has been active on twitter, posting beautiful photos of her journey and this month also released a blog post. The post was subsequently published in *The Guardian* and discusses her time in Ethiopia, the beautiful Simien mountains, and the famous Ethiopian hospitality.

She also discusses the building of the Limalimo Lodge which is going on around her as she trains.

The Lodge will open this year, promoting sustainable tourism that will have minimal impact on the surrounding area.



Julia says: “The virtues of warmth, high altitude and soft trails are well known to the endurance side of the athletic world, but for me a training location requires more to become the ideal location: natural landscape, tranquillity, fresh air and a welcoming community where positive friendships are easily formed. In Ethiopia, especially in these rural areas, the people of the community welcome you, even as they go about their busy work... Exploring the diversity of this new location has helped me build friendships, enhanced my chosen endeavour and taught me that the richest and most enduring experiences in running are not necessarily found in a race or a stadium.’

The article can be found here: <http://goo.gl/s85OD2>

Ethiopia in the News: An insider’s guide to shopping in Addis



CNN recently showcased Addis Ababa’s shopping opportunities describing them as ‘retail therapy at its best’. The piece details several shops in the city including the ZAAF collection, owned and founded by Abai Schulze. The shop sells luxury leather bags and accessories and has an online shop as well as outlets in the US and Europe.



Zaaf Collection

Little Gabies, a baby boutique founded by Amelsa Yazew, is also mentioned as is Shiro Meda for traditional wear and the contemporary arts and a crafts market at Anbar Marketplace. The story highlights the diversity of Addis Ababa as a capital city, with truly remarkable entrepreneurial and artisanal talent.



Little Gabies

The article can be found here: <http://goo.gl/E3YgCa>

Ethiopia in the News: Grave of Mysterious 'Sleeping Beauty' Discovered In Ethiopia



Archaeologists working in Ethiopia have discovered a remarkable treasure trove of



artefacts dating back to the first and second

centuries - including the skeletal remains of a mysterious woman that some are calling "Sleeping Beauty."

"She was curled up on her side, with her chin resting on her hand, wearing a beautiful bronze ring," Louise Schofield, a former curator at the British Museum in London and the leader of the excavation, said of the woman, *The Guardian* reported. "She was buried gazing into an extraordinary Roman bronze mirror. She had next to her a beautiful and incredibly ornate bronze cosmetics spoon with a lump of kohl eyeliner."

The remains were found in one of 11 graves discovered in May (2015) during a six-week excavation near the northern town of Hawzien. The excavation site is about three hours southeast of Aksum - an ancient city that was once the capital of the Aksumite kingdom, a large trading nation that lasted from the first through the eighth century.

The site yielded elaborate necklaces, bangles, glass vessels, and clay jugs and artefacts from the Roman Empire, so Romans and Ethiopians were trading much earlier than previously thought. Schofield told *The Guardian*. "We know from the later Aksumite period - the fourth and fifth centuries, when [Ethiopians] adopted Christianity - that they were trading very intensely with Rome. But our finds are from much earlier. So it shows that extraordinarily precious things were traveling from the Roman Empire through this region centuries before." The artefacts went on display in October in a new German-funded museum in Wukro, a town located about an hour from the excavation site.

<http://goo.gl/UZemlp>

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