



# Ethiopian News

January 2011 Issue

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## 16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly

The 16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union took place in Addis Ababa from 30<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> January under the theme “*Towards Greater Unity and Integration Through Shared Values*”.



**African Union**  
a United and Strong Africa

The opening session of the Assembly was chaired by outgoing Chairperson of the AU President Bingu wa Mutharika of Malawi. He congratulated Heads of State and Government who were elected/re-elected in 2010. These include Presidents Paul Kagame of Rwanda, Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania, Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, Ikililou Dhoinini of the Comoros Alpha Conde of Guinea and Ethiopia's PM Meles Zenawi. Both Mr. Mutharika and AUC Chairperson Mr. Jean Ping congratulated Guinea for organizing a free and fair election.

In his address to the Assembly, his sixth since he took over as AUC Chair, Mr. Ping reported on the activities of the Commission from July to December 2010, which included Cote D'Ivoire, Tunisia, Somalia and Sudan.

Mr. Ping's report also included work being done by the AUC to realize the objectives set out in its strategic plan (2009-2012). In the six months under review, the Commission, he said, pursued programmes related to development and regional integration and highlighted the Programme for Infrastructure and Development in Africa (PIDA) as well as cooperation with the Regional Economic Communities and the international community. He also mentioned the Pan African University project, which he said is progressing well. Other notable initiatives undertaken by the AUC included the launch of the African Women's Decade 2011-2020; the promotion of maternal, neo natal and child health and the creation of the African Youth Volunteer Corps.

The Chairperson gave special mention to the Common African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), commended the 22 states that have signed the CAADP compacts so far and encouraged other member states to follow suit. He congratulated Ethiopian Prime Minister Mr. Meles Zenawi for his role as the African spokesperson at the Cancun summit on climate change.

Mr. Ping highlighted the urgency required to operationalise the African financial institutions (the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund, and the African Investment Bank) noting that only 15 ratifications have so far been received for the formation of the African Investment Bank. He also highlighted the on-going initiatives to find alternative sources of financing for the AU.

With regard to the theme of the summit on shared values, the Chairperson said the AUC had left no stone unturned in preparation and that it had held consultations with many stakeholders. It had also continued its engagement with partners as evidenced by the Afro Arab summit, the Africa EU summit and its attendance at G20 meetings.

Finally, the Chairperson reiterated the Commission's commitment to work closely with member states and all stakeholders so that all objectives are met in accordance with the provisions.



The UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki Moon, in his address, placed emphasis on the need to achieve peace and security in Africa. In addition to Sudan, Cote D'Ivoire, Tunisia, Egypt and Somalia, Mr. Ban also mentioned the need to

facilitate the transition to constitutional order in Niger.

The UN Secretary General commended Africa for continuing on a positive economic trajectory, observing that Africa is rebounding stronger and faster than anticipated. Six of the world's fastest growing economies are in Sub Saharan Africa and some considerable successes have been registered in primary school enrolment. There has been a decline in the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, and success in the eradication of polio and in the fight against HIV/AIDS. He added that the way to ensure sustained progress is by prioritising three areas; women, young people and the private sector.



French president Mr. Nicholas Sarkozy was a special guest at the 16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. His country is due to take over the presidency of the G8. He made a number of key points. The first was that France stands ready to support Africa's bid for a seat at the UN Security Council: secondly, Africa must take charge of its destiny and thirdly, leaders must take the views of their populations on board as they govern. He also highlighted the need for regulation of the financial and food markets to stop massive speculation and increases in food prices. Lastly, Mr. Sarkozy spoke about the need for innovative financing,

pledging that by the end of the year France will have innovative financing for Africa. In this respect, he said, France requires Africa's support in the G20.

### **E. Guinea takes over AU chairmanship**

President Theodor Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea took over the AU chairmanship from Malawian President Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika on 30<sup>th</sup> January.

The rotating post of the AU chairmanship has gone to the central Africa region for the year 2011.



Delivering a speech on the occasion, the President expressed his firm commitment to consolidating the economic, social and political activities for the betterment of the livelihoods of Africans. He said he would discharge the responsibilities of the office with diligence and dedication and called on all developed country partners and friends of Africa to further enhance the positive spirit they have had for the cause of Africa.

The African Union will hold its next summit from 29<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. The theme of the 17<sup>th</sup> summit will be "Accelerating Youth Empowerment for

Sustainable Development." The theme for the 18<sup>th</sup> summit, scheduled for January or February in 2012, will be "Boosting Intra-African Trade."

### **Newly established UN Women unveiled at AU Summit**

UN Women, the newest UN entity, celebrated its creation at the African Union Summit on 30<sup>th</sup> January.

President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and other dignitaries joined UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet at a ceremony that featured the unveiling of UN Women's new logo.



(l-r) UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet and Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf celebrate the creation of UN Women in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

"We need to empower African women who produce food, raise children and drive the economy," the UN Secretary-General said. "When women take their rightful place at the negotiating table, in the parliament and in leadership positions across society, we can unleash Africa's enormous potential. UN Women is here to help reach this goal."

"A vision of how much more is possible when men and women have equal rights and opportunities will drive UN Women," Ms. Bachelet said. "We will be bold and ambitious in

our aspirations. We will also be practical in building an organization that can make a lasting difference in women’s lives.”



UN Women integrates four existing UN organizations, with a greater concentration of resources and expertise expected to accelerate gender equality efforts. It will focus many of its efforts on national programmes, including in the 48 African countries it currently supports.

The agreement to create UN Women came from a July 2010 UN General Assembly resolution. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011, the new entity became operational under the leadership of Ms. Bachelet, the former President of Chile. Her attendance at the Africa Union summit marks her first official visit outside UN headquarters in New York.

The African Union has enshrined gender equality in its Constituency Act, and adopted the Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. The 2011 African Union summit is dedicated to shared values, including the achievement of gender equality.

### **PM Meles holds talks with UK DfID Minister**

On 30<sup>th</sup> January, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi met and held talks with UK Secretary of State for the Department for International Development (DfID), Andrew Mitchell MP, to discuss bilateral, regional and international issues.

The two parties also conferred on a wide range of issues including the Sudanese referendum and the situation in Cote d’Ivoire and Somalia.



Andrew Mitchell noted that support for Ethiopia is channelled effectively. He said his government’s development aid enhances wealth accumulation, ensuring self-reliance.

### **World Economic Forum 2011**

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was invited to attend two panels at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2011 held from 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> January in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland.

This year’s annual meeting was convened under the theme “*Shared Norms for the New Reality*”.

Prime Minister Meles focused on “Nurturing Africa’s Natural Resources” and “From Vision to Action: Africa’s Next Chapter”.



At “Nurturing Africa’s Natural Resources”, which was chaired by former UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair, there was a buzz of enthusiasm about the continent that is generally



relegated to last place when it comes to economic progress. “Asia’s still the economic darling, but it’s hard to find anybody in government or business who isn’t optimistic about Africa as the hot new continent for trade and investment,” said the panel which included PM Meles, PM Morgan Tsvangirai of Zimbabwe, and business executives from South Africa, Egypt, and elsewhere. But at the same time, there was also concern at the exploitation of poor nations by corporations and conglomerates as well as red tape, regulations and taxes in some African countries that hinder investment.

The World Economic Forum is an independent international organisation committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industrial agendas.

### **Ethiopian Education Minister visits the University of Nottingham**

A delegation of senior Ethiopian diplomats – led by the Education Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen – visited the University of Nottingham to meet staff and students in January.

The aim of the visit was to further strengthen the very strong relationship that has developed between the University of Nottingham and universities in Ethiopia over the past eight years: Ethiopian students are now studying in Nottingham, and Nottingham graduate Dr Ignacio Villar is a lecturer at Addis Ababa University. Dr Pete Licence, Associate Professor and Reader in Chemistry at Nottingham, is also Adjunct Professor in Addis.

The Minister was accompanied by the Head of Policy and Planning at the Ministry of Education, Solomon Shiferaw, the Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK, H.E. Berhanu Kebede, and senior figures from the Ethiopian Embassy, as well as Netsanet Demewoz, Business Director at the British Council.



Discussions were held to decide how best to set up twinning programmes in the future. Professor Christine Ennew, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Internationalisation at the University of Nottingham, told the Minister that Nottingham has set up five new scholarships for Ethiopian students and it was agreed to draw up a Memorandum of Understanding for the development of further links.



(l-r) H.E. Berhanu Kebede, Professor Christine Ennew, Professor Martyn Poliakoff and Education Minister of Ethiopia, H.E. Demeke Mekonnen at the School of Chemistry.

Professor Ennew said: “With our ‘Developing Solutions’ scheme, the University of Nottingham has one of the UK’s largest scholarship programmes for Africa and we are looking to build on this to strengthen links in Ethiopia with a particular focus on research collaboration and student exchange. We are particularly keen to see these links extend beyond our campus in the UK to our campuses in Malaysia and China.”

The visit took in a guided tour of the School of Chemistry – a school which has developed especially strong links with Ethiopia over the past eight years. Nottingham staff have been instrumental in helping to introduce ‘Green Chemistry’ in Ethiopia, an emerging field of sustainable science that will help African nations to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Green Chemistry — a field in which the University is a world leader — focuses on more sustainable ways of creating chemicals, and is now regarded as one of the major routes to more environmentally-friendly production of the chemicals that underpin modern society.

The work of Nottingham academics with colleagues in Ethiopia began with a chance meeting between Professor Martyn Poliakoff CBE FRS and scientists from the University of Addis Ababa, while Martyn was on holiday in Ethiopia in 2003.

Today, Green Chemistry is sufficiently developed there to enable African scientists to participate more fully in the search for new chemicals, processes and techniques that could impact on millions of people.

Much current research is focused on the search for renewable feedstocks and more

environmentally acceptable solvents as replacements for petroleum-based products. This makes Green Chemistry particularly relevant to the needs of African countries such as Ethiopia, faced with an increasing demand for chemicals, little or no indigenous oil, and rapidly expanding populations.

Professor Poliakoff has been instrumental in developing links between Nottingham and Addis Ababa through staff visits, conferences, workshops and collaborative research. In July 2010, the eminent Ethiopian plant scientist, Professor Sebsebe Demissew, received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science at the University of Nottingham’s summer graduation.

Professor Poliakoff said: “Collaborating with Ethiopia has been an enormously rewarding experience for me and my colleagues. The Nottingham link is really helping empower Ethiopian scientists and helping them engage with scientists across the world as equals. We believe that the discussions held today will give a major boost to the Nottingham-Ethiopia partnership.”

The University of Nottingham, described by *The Times* as “the nearest Britain has to a truly global university”, has award-winning campuses in the United Kingdom, China and Malaysia. It is ranked in the UK’s Top 10 and the World’s Top 75 universities by the Shanghai Jiao Tong (SJTU) and the QS World University Rankings.

The University is committed to providing a truly international education for its 39,000 students, producing world-leading research and benefiting the communities around its campuses in the UK and Asia.

More than 90 per cent of research at the University of Nottingham is of international quality, according to the most recent Research Assessment Exercise, with almost 60 per cent of all research defined as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'. *Research Fortnight* analysis of RAE 2008 ranked the University 7<sup>th</sup> in the UK by research power.

### **Ombudsman's office seeks best practice**

A delegation from Ethiopia's Ombudsman's Office arrived in London in mid December to seek best practice with regard to freedom of information (FOI) law. Ethiopia is to introduce freedom of information legislation later this year.

The delegation, led by chief commissioner Mrs. Foziya Amin Aliye, attended briefings by the Information Commissioner's Office on regulatory framework and enforcement, the Parliamentary and Health Ombudsman on Freedom of Information and Stakeholder Engagement and Public Administration International, where briefings included FOI International trends and drivers, public awareness and an action plan for successful implementation. The training was arranged by the British Embassy in Addis Ababa.



The delegation at the Equality and Human Rights Commission

While in London the delegation also met Simon Wooley of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Maurice Frankel of the Campaign for Freedom of Information.

### **Commodity prices capped to stabilize markets**

The Ministry of Trade (MoT) imposed price caps on major commodities to stamp out inflation on 6<sup>th</sup> January.

Based on the current price index, the State Minister of the MoT, Ahmed Tusa, said the inflation rate in Ethiopia has currently declined with only inflation of food and related items remaining over 18%. As a result, the Minister said the price of food items is now rising beyond the capacity of Ethiopia's lower and middle classes' purchasing power. Taking this into account, the government has fixed a price ceiling for major food items and other necessities.

The ministry categorised 20 domestic and imported items whose prices will be capped. These include: edible oil, meat, bread, sugar, rice, powdered milk, soap, clothes and textiles, bottled water and wheat flour.

The price of the items in the cap cannot be adjusted without prior knowledge of the regional Trade Bureaux and the Ministry of Trade.

The ministry said that the price regulation will not, in any way, cause loss to the traders. The measure is only meant to stabilise the market and prevent unnecessary price hikes.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, in a discussion with the business community on 6<sup>th</sup> January, said that the government is desirous to create a strong, healthy and well-developed business

community that can benefit from the country's free market competition.

He urged all concerned bodies to implement the proclamation on trade practices on food and non-food items.

The proclamations, including the trade registration as well as the trade practices and consumer protection, are ratified by the House of Peoples' Representatives. They are designed to bring about drastic change to existing trade systems in the country.

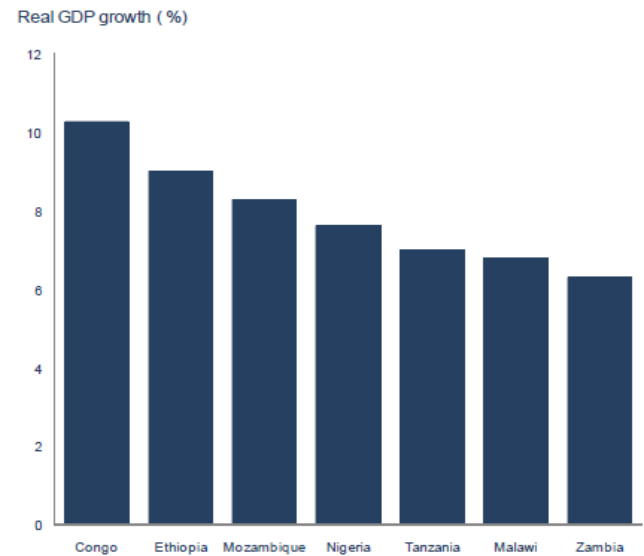
### **Ethiopia 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest growing economy in SSA**

The Global Economic Prospects report 2011, released on 13<sup>th</sup> January by the World Bank, indicates that Ethiopia was the second fastest growing country in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in 2010.

According to the report, the Republic of Congo, which recently began producing oil, was first with a real GDP growth of 10.3% followed by Ethiopia with 9% and then Mozambique and Nigeria.

The report stated that, "Unlike other fast growing Sub-Saharan African economies, where growth has been supported by the minerals sector, Ethiopia's robust growth performance over the past couple of years, including a 9 percent increase in GDP during 2010, has been driven by the agricultural sector. The sector has benefitted from continuing government investment in roads, power projects and marketing networks, which has helped bring more small-holder farmers into the market."

**Figure R6.6 Fast growing Sub-Saharan Economies in 2010**



Source: World Bank.

"Generous incentives have also supported large-scale commercial agriculture ventures, including agro-processing. The peaceful elections conducted in May 2010 encouraged the return of investors. In 2010, exports rebounded on modest increases in international commodity prices and the depreciation of the Birr."

"For the first 10 months of 2010, remittances were up 9%, year on year. In recent years, the government has been enacting policies to support remittance inflows; including allowing Ethiopians in the Diaspora to open foreign currency accounts in local banks."

The report forecasted that average GDP in Sub-Saharan African countries will grow by 6.4% in 2011, having grown by 5.8% in 2010 with the growth strongest among the metal and mineral exporters, and oil exporters, which have benefited from stronger commodity prices.



## **Africa now one of the world's fastest-growing regions - *The Economist***

In an analysis in their 6<sup>th</sup> January issue, *The Economist* found that over the ten years to 2010 (2001 - 2010), no fewer than six of the world's ten fastest-growing economies were in Sub-Saharan Africa.

“Much has been written about the rise of the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) and the shift in economic power eastward as Asia outruns the rest of the World.” But according to their latest analysis, the only BRIC country to make the top ten was China, in second place behind Angola. The other five African sprinters were Nigeria, Ethiopia, Chad, Mozambique and Rwanda, all with annual growth-rates of around 8% or more.

On IMF forecasts, Africa will grab seven of the top ten places over the next five years (2011 - 2015), with Ethiopia grabbing the first African position at 3<sup>rd</sup> place, with China and India taking the first two spots.

The article goes on to say that over the past decade, sub-Saharan Africa's real GDP growth rate jumped to an annual average of 5.7%, up from only 2.4% over the previous two decades, beating Latin America's 3.3%, but not emerging Asia's 7.9% (reflecting the vast weight of China and India). Most Asian economies saw much slower growth, such as 4% in South Korea and Taiwan.

Over the next five years, Africa is likely to take the lead with the average African economy outpacing its Asian counterpart. Standard Chartered forecasts that Africa's economy will grow at an average annual rate of 7% over the next 20 years, slightly faster than China's.

The full article can be found on *The Economist's* website: <http://www.economist.com/node/17853324>.

## **DBE set to loan 38 billion birr for investment projects**

In the coming five years, the Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) is set to loan 38 billion Birr (\$2.3 billion) for huge investment projects with a special emphasis on export.

DBE President Esayas Bahre said that the bank has identified its role and designed a five-year strategic plan in line with the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP). “As the GTP aspires to boost the industry sector enabling it to enhance Ethiopia's foreign earnings, the bank is more ready than ever to play its role for the same cause,” he said.

The Bank has been supporting investment projects in the area of commercial agriculture, agro-processing and the manufacturing and extraction industries, preferably export-focused. The Bank also plans to loan for investment projects focused on import-substitution like sugar and cement factories.

The DBE, one of the government's financial institutions engaged in providing development credits for more than a century, has been playing a role in prompting the overall economic development of the country.

### **Africa prioritizes infrastructure**

The NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) held their 24<sup>th</sup> meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January where African leaders put focus on programme delivery.

“The next decade provides the opportunity for better performance and results on the NEPAD agenda at the programmatic level. That will mean giving the NEPAD Agency the necessary means and resources to fully deliver”, said

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi at the start of the 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

“Now that the integration of NEPAD into the African Union (AU) structures and processes has materialised, with the establishment of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency), a new dawn beckons to actualise the NEPAD vision,” Zenawi said.

Despite the presence of high growth rates - averaging at about 6 percent per annum between 2004 and 2007, the decline of 2.4 percent in 2009 due to the global financial and economic crises it is now essential that the modest gains made over the past few years in development and governance are consolidated advised Zenawi.

Ali Bongo the Vice Chairperson of the African Union (AU) and President of Gabon reiterated the African leadership’s support towards NEPAD and called upon his colleagues to push for the NEPAD High-Level Sub-Committee on infrastructure which is chaired by President Jacob Zuma of South Africa.



(l-r): President Ali Bongo, Premier Meles Zenawi, AUC Chair Jean Ping and Mayaki NEPAD Agency CEO

In his remarks, Jean Ping, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, said that 2010 was a

crucial year for the AU and NEPAD – especially with the mainstreaming of NEPAD into the AU. As a result a NEPAD coordination unit has been set-up at the AUC to improve the synergy between the NEPAD Agency and the AUC.

On the work of the NEPAD Agency, Ping said the Agency had assisted the AUC and Africa in the preparation of African positions at the global level – at the G8 and G20 engagements concerning the follow-up on global commitments to Africa.

Ibrahim Mayaki, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NEPAD Agency, presented an activity report that focused on the achievements being made in the roll-out of NEPAD programmes and projects in the thematic areas of: agriculture, climate change and natural resource management, regional integration and infrastructure, human development, economic and corporate governance and the cross-cutting issues of gender, capacity development and information and communication technologies.

“However, there are some challenges that we still have to overcome in order for the Agency to deliver more fully on programme delivery, particularly around the provision of technical and financial resources for the Agency,” he added.

A key area that has been identified for delivery is infrastructure - whereby eight African countries on the HSGOC infrastructure sub-committee are working to champion regional and cross-border infrastructure projects in order to attract investments and enhance regional integration. This Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative is based on the AU NEPAD African Action Plan (AAP) and the Programme for the Infrastructural Development of Africa (PIDA).

## **UN launches initiative on sustainable urban transport for EA cities**

Two United Nations agencies launched a regional initiative in eastern Africa to help promote the use of sustainable urban transport in the capital cities of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

The project, launched by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), will support the efforts of national and local governments in Addis Ababa, Nairobi and Kampala to develop and apply strategies for better public transport services, improved infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists and travel demand measures, such as parking management or plans to reduce the need for motorised travel in metropolitan areas.

UN-HABITAT will implement the project, while the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) will provide the funds. The GEF unites 182 governments - in partnership with international institutions, nongovernmental organisations and the private sector - to address global environmental issues through grants to developing countries with economies in transition, for projects related to the environment. UNEP serves as an implementing agency for the GEF.

## **Sports**

### **AVIVA Grand Prix, Birmingham**

Ethiopia's reigning World indoor 1,500m champions Derese Mekonnen and Kalkidan Gezahegne will be headlining their respective fields at the AVIVA Grand Prix in Birmingham, UK, on 19<sup>th</sup> February, the penultimate stop on the 8-meeting IAAF Indoor Permit 2011 series.

23 year old Mekonnen captured back-to-back World indoor crowns in 2008 and 2010, and opened his 2011 indoor season with flair, foiling Bernard Lagat's attempt to take a ninth Mile victory at the Millrose Games in New York on 28<sup>th</sup> January in 3:58.58. He won in Birmingham a year ago in 3:33.10, still the career best indoors for the 2009 World Championships silver medallist outdoors.

Gezahegne, who won't turn 20 until 9<sup>th</sup> May, will start as favourite against a field of challengers lead by Irene Jelagat, the 22-year-old Kenyan who moved up in the ranks last year to finish fifth over the distance at the World Indoor Championships.

### **Gebreselassie to lead Tokyo marathon**

Legendary Ethiopian long distance runner, Haile Gebreselassie, will lead a strong field at the Tokyo marathon on 27<sup>th</sup> February, as he makes his first major appearance since he announced his retirement back in November at the New York Marathon, after a knee injury.

Gebreselassie set the world record for the marathon in Berlin in 2008 with a time of 2:03:59 and organisers say his main rivals will include Felix Limo of Kenya, who set his personal best of 2:06:14 winning the Rotterdam marathon, and Yemane Tsegay of Ethiopia, whose best is 2:06:30 when he finished fourth in the 2009 Paris marathon.

### **Ethiopia's double marathon victory in India**

Ethiopia's Girma Assafa and Koren Jelila Yal dominated both races at the 8<sup>th</sup> annual marathon in Mumbai.

Assafa, who was participating for the first time in the event, won the men's race with a new record of 2:09:54. He outran his compatriot

Batoru Tsegay Wolde and Kenya's Patrick Muriuki who clocked 2:09:57 and 2:10.00, respectively.

Koren Jelila Yal won the women's race with a 2:26:56 record time as she outsprinted her compatriots Merima Hasen and Elfenesh Alemu who set 2:26:56 and 2:29:04, respectively.

## News in Brief

### Europe and Ethiopia sign €13.7 million grant for climate project

European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, said that the European community will give Ethiopia a €13.7 million grant to build a carbon-neutral economy.

Mr. Piebalgs met with Ethiopian Finance Minister, Sufian Ahmed, on 31<sup>st</sup> January to discuss the grant to implement the Global Climate Change Alliance and also to discuss support for Ethiopia's five-year national growth strategy. He also met with Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and his Administration to deepen dialogue on potential routes towards reaching Ethiopia's millennium development goals and associated economic policies.

Intended to raise stakeholder awareness on climate change, the project is expected to identify and test climate change practices in watersheds along the Nile Basin, and also to build a carbon neutral and climate resilient economy in Ethiopia. The project aims to build a healthy climate relationship between the European community and developing countries that are the most vulnerable to climate change.

### Reforestation boosts Ethiopian economy

In an attempt to replace lost forests in the southern state of Oromia, a reforestation programme promises potential income, after the Government granted ownership of land to cooperative groups. Locals have, as a result, been able to plant cash crops such as Spanish apple seeds for orchards and fast-growing Australian eucalyptus for wood and fuel, alongside native species.

The Government handed control to the Farmers Forestry Development Corporation, and each member was given 2.5 acres of land on which to plant trees. Members have seen their income rise according to farmer Ade Zaude of the Development Corporation, "we now have a lot of resources...we have trees in our compounds, a lot of money in our savings account, and other farmers are coming to us to seek the knowledge."

The programme not only encourages increased tree-planting, but has enabled those involved to attract investment in pig- and poultry-raising projects, as well as beekeeping.

Ethiopia has been hailed by the United Nations Environment Programme as the world's top tree-planting country, with 1.4 billion saplings springing up as part of its Billion Tree Campaign.

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