



Ethiopian News

January 2012 Issue (1)

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to All Our Esteemed Readers

ICASA 2011 at a glimpse

The 16th International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA 2011), Africa's largest conference on HIV/AIDS, opened on 4th December in Addis Ababa.



The conference brought together more than 10,000 participants from 103 countries, including scientists, health workers, people living with HIV, policy makers, civil society and non-governmental organizations, activists and government representatives to share and learn about successes, challenges and innovations in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS. The extraordinary conference served as a platform whereby many professionals networked,

shared experiences and developed their skills and knowledge.

The conference was launched in the presence of the Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, former US President George W. Bush, UNAIDS Executive Secretary, Mr. Michel Sidibé, and the Society for AIDS in Africa President Prof. Robert Soudre, and President of ICASA 2011 Dr. Yigeremu Abebe, diplomats, invited guests, participants and senior government officials.



H.E. Meles Zenawi welcomed all participants and urged them to fully participate and share experiences that will contribute to bring an end to the AIDS epidemic in Africa. The Prime Minister also

recognized the important contribution of international partners in providing antiretroviral treatment, but he stressed that it is time for Africa to own the response, saying “We must urgently devise African led innovations to defeat HIV.”

As in many countries in Africa, Ethiopia has expanded access to HIV prevention, in treatment and in providing care and support to those affected by HIV and AIDS. New HIV infections have declined by 25% in many Sub-Saharan African countries including Ethiopia, the Prime Minister said.

Achieving the MDG targets will require even more aggressive and innovative ways of addressing the social, cultural and economic factors that make people individually and collectively vulnerable to HIV infection, Meles said.

Former President of the United States of America George W. Bush, who was travelling through Africa to promote the Pink Ribbon Red Ribbon initiative, made a stop in Ethiopia to participate at the conference.

In his address, President Bush praised the Obama Administration for their continued support of the global AIDS response. “We are breaking the grip of AIDS—but this is only the beginning. There is a lot of work to be done,” said President Bush. “In moments of economic crisis there can be a temptation for Americans to disengage from the world. But we cannot retreat. There is no greater priority than saving a human life.”



Ethiopian Prime Minister H.E. Meles Zenawi presenting an award to former US President George W. Bush for his AIDS work

PM Meles presented President Bush with an award in recognition of his great contribution and

commitment to combating HIV worldwide, particularly in Africa.

This year’s conference theme, ‘Own, Scale-up and Sustain,’ was selected to emphasize the need for increased country ownership and commitment in the response to AIDS.

Throughout the five days of ICASA 2011, over two hundred and twenty sessions took place, including forty-two workshops for community, leadership and professional skills building.

Five Young Investigator Awards were also presented for exceptional scientific research and work in the field of HIV and AIDS in Africa to two Ethiopians, one Nigerian, one Rwandan and one Senegalese. A daily exhibition booth gave over sixty local and international organizations and companies the opportunity to share their work, materials and ideas, and discuss important breakthroughs and activities with delegates.

Ethiopia Plans to Eliminate HIV Transmission from Mother to Child by 2015

The Ethiopian government has launched a new national plan to ensure that all pregnant women living with HIV have access to HIV prevention and treatment services and that new infections among children are eliminated by 2015.

The national accelerated emergency plan includes providing 90% of pregnant women with antenatal care services and providing antiretroviral prophylaxis to at least 80% of HIV positive pregnant women. The government also aims to ensure that all pregnant women have access to delivery by a skilled birth attendant.



“We are stepping up our efforts to reach many more millions of mothers and babies with prevention of mother to child transmission services in the next four years to ensure an HIV free generation,” said Dr. Tedros Adanom, Ethiopia’s Minister of Health.

In June 2011, Ethiopia signed the Global Plan towards the elimination of new HIV infections among children by 2015.

“I am confident that Ethiopia will succeed in eliminating new HIV infections among children and keep their mothers alive,” said Michel Sidibe, UNAIDS Executive Director who joined Dr. Tedros at the launch on 4th December.

Ethiopia is one of the 22 sub-Saharan countries that succeeded in reducing their national rate of new HIV infections by 25% between 2001 and 2009. The Ethiopian government estimate shows that approximately 1.2 million people were living with HIV in the country in 2010, including about 90,000 pregnant women.

The Ethiopian Public Health Association and the World Federation of Public Health Associations invite public health professionals from around the world to participate in the 13th World Congress on Public Health that will be held in Addis Ababa from 23rd to 27th April 2012.



UK passes £1 billion Fast Start climate finance milestone

The UK last month allocated more than two thirds of its Fast Start Finance, which will help the poorest and most vulnerable to adapt to climate change, putting it well on track to meet its £1.5bn commitment by the end of 2012.

Developed countries pledged to provide around \$30 billion of Fast Start Finance between 2010 and 2012

at the Copenhagen climate talks in 2009, with the UK contributing £1.5bn from its £2.9bn International Climate Fund (ICF). The ICF aims to help developing countries tackle climate change and adapt to the effects of global warming.

UK Energy and Climate Change Secretary Chris Huhne said, “We promised we’d be the greenest government ever both at home and abroad and passing the £1bn milestone shows the UK’s commitment to helping developing countries tackle the effects of global warming.

“Africa is one of the areas which will feel the impacts of climate change first which is why we’re helping its people adapt to a warmer world and to avoid dirty fossil fuels.”

“Climate change is the greatest challenge of the 21st century so we have a moral responsibility to help the poorest countries respond. This not only benefits the most vulnerable but also helps all of us move towards a safer and cleaner future.”

Also revealed was a financial package for Africa to help some of the most vulnerable people which included £15m to develop Ethiopia’s ability to respond to climate change.

Through a challenge fund and an innovation centre for small businesses, UK aid will help Ethiopia build on its climate institutions and skills. UK support has already helped Ethiopia develop an ambitious national strategy on climate change.

UN commends Ethiopia’s advances

The United Nations praised Ethiopia’s tremendous efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to ensure peace and stability in Africa and to build a green economy.

Eugene Owusu, UN Resident Coordinator, said Ethiopia has been implementing its Five Year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) to meet the MDGs. Recognizing the country’s endeavour for poverty alleviation and sustainable economic development, the UN in Ethiopia has planned its development programmes in line with the GTP, Mr. Owusu said.



We are fully supporting the GTP, he said. The UN’s development partnership will be through its 2012-2015 UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) , a joint framework incorporating about 24 UN Agencies in Ethiopia.

Mr. Owusu said there are challenges in three areas: promoting gender equality/empowering women, reducing child mortality rates and improving maternal health, the government has been implementing the GTP to meet these goals.

Ethiopia, with the UN’s help, will meet all the MDGs, Mr. Owusu said, adding that “the UN is very confident that Ethiopia will achieve these goals.”

The UN focuses on sustainable economic growth and risk reduction, basic social services, governance and capacity development, women, youth and children.

Mr. Owusu commended the Ethiopian people and government’s efforts in bringing lasting peace and stability in the Horn of Africa in particular and the continent in general. “Ethiopia is doing a fantastic job, he said, adding that the leadership is committed to ensuring peace and stability.”

He also appreciated Ethiopia’s Green Development Strategy initiatives and the leadership role that PM Meles Zenawi has been playing on behalf of Africa.

Ethiopia is the first African country to devise a climate-friendly green economic vision and strategy, which was launched in Durban,” Mr. Owusu added.

The UN has been in Ethiopia for about 50 years. Currently, there are 26 separate agencies in the UN system working in the country both in humanitarian and developmental areas.

Kenya to import electricity from Ethiopia

The government of Kenya has agreed to start importing electricity from Ethiopia guided by the results of a joint feasibility study. The deal to import 400MW was reached between Kenya's Ministry of Energy and Ethiopia's Ministry of Water and Energy in December.

Construction of the interconnector is expected to start in early 2013 and end by 2016 and cost US\$1.2

billion, funded by the World Bank, French Development Agency and African Development Bank.

The power agreement is part of the Kenyan government's effort to increase the country's installed electricity capacity to 3,868MW by 2016, up from the current 1,394MW.



The plan will address the chronic power shortages that push the country into adopting more expensive thermal power, fuelling high consumer prices.

The power purchasing agreement with Ethiopia is the second Kenya has had after a similar arrangement more than a decade ago where Kenya imported about 30MW from Uganda. But unlike Uganda, which only serves Western Kenya, the Ethiopian supply will be fed into the national grid, making it available country-wide.

Hydro-power accounts for more than half of power generation in Kenya, followed by thermal and geothermal sources.

Ethiopia is currently undertaking multibillion hydro power projects to generate around 8,000 MW of power in the next five years.

In April 2011, Ethiopia launched The Renaissance Dam project, Africa's biggest dam, over the Nile River. The dam will generate around 5,250 MW of power by 2015 at a cost of \$5 billion.

Ethiopia already provides power to Djibouti and is planning to start supplying neighbouring Sudan.

Ethiopian geo-thermal project to cost \$270 million

It is expected that Ethiopia's geo-thermal project, the 70MW Aluto Langano, funded by the World Bank and development agencies from France, Germany and Japan, will cost \$270 million.



Aluto Langano Power Plant

The project is currently producing 7.3MW and is expected to be finalized by 2015.

The Ethiopian government aims to utilize renewable energy sources such as wind, ethanol as well as hydro to meet the nation's energy needs, by 2025.

Last year, Ethiopia launched a green economic growth strategy estimated at \$150 billion over 20 years. The programme aims to develop Ethiopia into a middle-income economy by 2025 with no increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

The strategy is the first of its kind to be implemented in Africa but could be duplicated in other countries.

Ethiopia is set on an economic growth path that takes into account the reality of climate change, according to Dr. Tewolde Gebere Egziabher, Director General of the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority.

Wind power and geo-thermal projects are part of the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation's objectives to increase Ethiopia's generation capacity from the current 2,000 MW to 10,000MW.

Ethiopia injects \$4 billion into sugar factories

In its bid to become a major sugar exporter, Ethiopia is constructing 10 sugar factories following the injection of \$4.6 billion worth of investment.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said construction of the 10 factories across the country was progressing well.

"The sugar development project will bring about technology transfer thereby creating jobs," he said.

The development of the sugar factories is part of Ethiopia's five-year Growth and Transformation Plan, which aims to undertake a multi-billion investment on various development projects to reduce poverty, setting the pace for Ethiopia's quest to become a middle-income country by 2025.

The sugar factories are currently being constructed in Beles in the central Amhara region, Wolkait in northern Tigray, Kesem in the north eastern Afar regional state and in the South Omo Zone of the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' region.

Meanwhile, the Ethiopian Sugar Corporation, the state-owned company, said the construction of the sugar factories will help Ethiopia become one of the world's top 10 sugar exporters to the international market.

The corporation said foreign investment is being sought to develop other projects on 5 million hectares of land that has been designated for sugar production.

Ethiopia imported 150,000 metric tons of sugar last year. The government aims to become a self-sufficient sugar producer by the end of 2013 and increase production eightfold to 2.3m tons by mid-2015, creating a surplus of 1.25m tons for export.

\$359 million target set for 2012 leather exports

The Ministry of Industry envisages a target of \$359.3 million for leather and textile exports during 2012 – a substantial increase over its earnings of \$166.3 million last year. Ethiopia will raise a potential \$206 million from exports of value added leather items in 2012.



Key export destinations for Ethiopian leather and textile products include India, Germany, the UK, China, Italy and the United States.

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development said exports of semi-processed leather from Ethiopia have been subject to a 150% tax levy since December 2011 to encourage export of finished leather and leather items. The Ethiopian Leather Industries Association said Ethiopia now has the capacity to produce finished leather items of export quality.

The institute is collaborating with Indian organizations to facilitate technology transfer to further enhance its capacity.

Ethiopia intensifies investment in science

Ethiopia intends to invest more in science and technology to realise its goal of becoming a middle-income country by 2025, Science and Technology Minister Mahamoud Ahmed Gaas said at the first Science Congress of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS) held in Addis Ababa from 15th to 16th December 2011.

The two-day forum was held under the theme: "Science and Technology - Survival of a Nation" and explored how to advance science and technology and their application at country level, enhancing commitment to science and technology (S&T) by government, universities, research institutes, professional organisations and the private sector.

The minister said "The country has given prime attention to expanding and intensifying education, training and research with the 70:30 ratio favouring science and technology."

He said the rise in the number of public universities from nine a few years ago to the current 31 was an indication of the government's drive to boost technology institutions throughout the country.

The government has invested more than \$200 million in opening new universities in the past five years.

Fishing industry to become commercialised

The Ministry of Agriculture is planning to develop and globally promote Ethiopia's fishing industry.

To inaugurate commercial aquaculture, the Ministry plans to establish seed production centres which can supply companies, facilitate access to credit, provide basic marketing infrastructure such as roads and communications, encourage private sector investment in a range of sectors and establish regular institutional coordination mechanisms among stakeholders. It will also strengthen research and extension support, promote fish farming, and establish clear and secure user-rights for land and water favourable to aquaculture investment – while facilitating applications to land, water and the right to undertake aquaculture operations.

Ethiopia's climatic conditions, agro-ecology, availability of commercially popular species such as tilapia, catfish and carp, and the increasing demand for fish both locally and internationally underlines the need to develop the fish.

Currently, there are 180 different species of fish in Ethiopia, 30 of which are native, but only 30 investors have obtained licences for commercial fishing. Aquaculture is dominated by traditional fishing, integrated aquaculture and cage culture.

Rural residents to benefit from \$100 million

The United Nations agency tackling rural poverty is providing \$100 million in financing for a programme to help poor households in Ethiopia gain access to financial services and diversify their income-generating activities.

The \$50 million loan and \$50 million grant from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is for the Rural Financial Intermediation Programme Phase II (RUFIP II).

Poor people living in rural areas need access to credit on a regular basis so they can build up their assets and diversify their income-generating activities, the agency noted. Without collateral, they often depend on moneylenders, paying exorbitant rates of interest.

Currently, only about 15 per cent of rural households have access to savings and credit services. The RUFIP II programme, which will be implemented nationwide, will build on the successes of the first phase, scaling up the delivery of financial services

from 3.3 million poor rural households in 2012 to 6.9 million by mid-2019.

3.6 million poor rural households, living on less than \$2 per day, of which nearly 50 per cent are women, are set to benefit from the programme, the 16th financed by IFAD in the country.

IFAD has invested about \$13.7 billion in grants and low-interest loans to developing countries over the past three decades, empowering about 405 million people to break out of poverty and to create vibrant rural communities.

Ethiopian Airlines joins the Star Alliance

On 14th December, Ethiopian Airlines officially became a new member of the Star Alliance global network, making the flag carrier the third member carrier on the African Continent, joining Egypt air and South African Airways.



The membership grant comes after the Chief Executive Board (CEB) of Star Alliance in September 2010 unanimously approved the application of Ethiopian Airlines to join the global network.

"Today we have taken a large step forward in completing our Africa strategy," said Jaan Albrecht, CEO of Star Alliance, announcing the membership at a ceremony held at Addis Ababa's Bole International Airport.



"With Ethiopian Airlines now part of the Star Alliance network, we offer our customers the widest choice of

flights connecting to, from and within Africa. Moreover, Ethiopian Airlines will bring the Star Alliance customer benefits to more markets across Africa, a region of the world in which air travel is enjoying steady growth rates."



Through membership of Star Alliance, Ethiopian Airlines will gain access to the many new markets across the globe and more business travellers from Ethiopia or from across Africa will benefit.

It allows passengers more convenient flight schedules and a larger flight network.

"Ethiopian's extensive intra-African network will provide more choice for our travellers and bring the Star Alliance benefits to new markets," Albrecht said.

Addis Ababa is the seat of the African Union and home to many international organizations like the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and the Airlines will now be able to cover major commercial and political cities on the continent offering worldwide flight connections at special rates.

"It is another historical milestone for Ethiopian to join this most prestigious and longest serving Alliance in the world," said Tewolde Gebremariam, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines.

"This day will remain colourfully marked in our history book," he said, stressing that this event is in line with efforts to lay a strong foundation for the airline to achieve its vision 2025 objectives.

The new membership has brought the total number of Star members to 28 since the Alliance was established in 1997 by five of the world's leading

airlines: Air Canada, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Thai Airways International and United Airlines.

Star Network covers more than 21,100 daily departures combined. These flights reach 1,290 airports in 189 countries, with an annual passenger number of 607.5 million.

SoleRebels wins 2011 Africa Award

SoleRebels, the world's first fair-trade certified green footwear company based in Ethiopia, collected a 2011 Africa Award for Entrepreneurship at a ceremony held in Nairobi, Kenya on 8th December.



Company founder and managing director Bethlehem Tilahun Alemu accepted the award at a gala attended by many luminaries of global business including Sir Richard Branson who is now a dedicated fan of the company.



"I am elated by this award. It is recognition that soleRebels is at the forefront of a new business

paradigm on the continent, one where African-driven businesses and brands are elevating Africa's global competitiveness by winning in the global marketplace," stated Bethlehem.

The Awards, dubbed the Nobel of Business Awards in Africa, honours Africa's best entrepreneurs who work to create businesses that meet the needs of those around them and, by doing so, raise the living standards of their communities while also creating something of lasting value for themselves, their employees, their communities and their nations. The Africa Awards for Entrepreneurship is owned and founded by Legatum, a private investment group, based in Dubai, with a twenty-five year heritage of global investing. They manage a multi-billion dollar fund of proprietary capital which is allocated to businesses and programmes that promote sustainable development.

Sole Rebels was one of six finalists that were recognized as Africa Awards Winners and each was granted a prize of \$50,000.

The grand prize of \$100,000 went to the Harare based SECURICO, which provides guarding services and electronic security solutions, and is the first security company in Zimbabwe to be ISO certified. SECURICO has more than 3,400 employees, 900 of which are women, making it the largest employer of women in the private sector. The award for Outstanding Women Entrepreneur was granted to Victoria Seeds, an agribusiness based in Kampala, Uganda.

Ethiopia eyes more success at 2012 Olympics



The Ethiopian Olympic Committee (EOC) said it is working hard to achieve good results in the 2012 London Olympic Games.

Speaking at a press conference recently regarding Ethiopia's preparations for the London Olympic Games, President of EOC, Berhane Kidanemariam, said the Committee is carrying out extensive preparations to attain more success in the 2012 London Olympics.

He said the activities, launched a year ago by taking into account the current situation and Beijing 2008 Olympic Games as a benchmark, have been progressing well.

Berhane indicated that the structure that EOC set to allow stakeholders to participate in the preparations has borne encouraging results.

Eight athletes have so far received a scholarship to train abroad, for which all expenses were covered by the Ethiopian Olympic Committee.

Sixty coaches and medical teams and 120 athletics, swimming, world taekwondo and boxing professionals have received training.

Ethiopia earned 7 medals at the Beijing 2008 Olympics Games and efforts will be made to raise this number by 40% in 2012, he said.

In addition to good results, Ethiopia will use the 2012 London Olympic Games to show Ethiopia's positive image to the rest of the world.

EOC envisages collecting 30 million birr to provide sufficient funds to the Ethiopian team, he said, urging governmental, non-governmental organizations and stakeholders to contribute their share.

Ethiopia will participate in athletics, boxing, swimming and taekwondo at the 2012 Olympics.

More London Olympics news



UK schools are being encouraged to support the Olympic teams of a range of other countries, including Ethiopia, as part of the London Olympics **International Inspiration** programme. So far, eleven schools have signed up to support Ethiopia in the **Get Set** network.

Their pupils will be cheering on Ethiopian runners, boxers and other participants.

Schools in Luton, Suffolk, Barking, Cheshire, Hampshire, South Lanarkshire, Waltham Forest, Sandwell, Leicestershire and Devon are among those already participating. If your local school would like to join the network they can go onto the **Get Set goes global** website and indicate that they want to support

Ethiopia using the map. They can then decide how they're going to celebrate Ethiopian athletes and cultures on **London 2012 World Sport Day - 25th June** www.london2012.com/getsetgoesglobal.



LOCOG Chair, Seb Coe with school children at Perryfields Primary School in Oldbury, Birmingham

Schools in Ethiopia can make the most of the International Education Programme resources which can be downloaded at www.london2012.com/schoolsfromaroundtheworld.

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games (LOCOG) launched International Inspiration, London 2012's international legacy programme in Ethiopia on 28th November.

The Olympics will take place in two parts – the Olympic Games from 27th July to 12th August and the Paralympic Games, from 29th August to 9th September.

ETHIOPIA INVESTMENT SUMMIT 2012

Seven out of the ten fastest growing economies in the world over the next five years will be in Africa. Ethiopia is at the forefront of this truly magnificent resurgence of the African continent. Precise Consult International, in partnership with a number of strategic global partners is organizing the **Ethiopia Investment Summit 2012** to link global investors to Ethiopian opportunities.

Driven by market forces and economic policy reform, the Ethiopian economy has shifted into a trajectory of growth unseen in its long history. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, Ethiopia will be the third fastest growing economy in the world this year. It has recorded 8 consecutive years of double-digit GDP



growth underpinned by dynamic across-the-board expansions in agriculture, services and industry. Summit organisers say that this achievement is indicative of the immense opportunities available – “not just in raw materials and mining but also in energy, transport, infrastructure, manufacturing, agribusiness, and services. With a population of 80 million, strategically located at the crossroads of Africa, the Middle East and Europe, Ethiopia is truly a rising African Tiger Economy.”

The Ethiopia Investment Summit 2012 will gather up to 300 senior business executives from Ethiopia, global corporations, domestic and foreign investors who are either doing business or considering doing business in Ethiopia. The major goals of the summit are to help investors understand the macro and micro level industry dynamics driving long term opportunities, and to create concrete networking and deal making opportunities.

The Summit is timed to complement the gathering of the World Economic Forum (WEF) for Africa, which will be held in Addis Ababa from 9th to 11th May (see www.weforum.org). More than 1,000 participants are expected to attend the 2012 World Economic Forum on Africa including business leaders, policymakers and professionals from across the world providing a platform for Ethiopia to present its investment opportunities.

As such, the Summit will offer a once in a lifetime opportunity to network and interact with an impressive gathering of some of the world’s most interesting and powerful business, civil society and government leaders.

Ethiopia to host Africa Fashion Week 2012

Ethiopia will host the next edition of "The Hub of Africa Fashion Week 2012", a fashion and design event, which will take place from 25th to 27th April.

The event will include a trade expo and symposia and will attract exhibitors from around the world.

The organisers say the event will be a source of knowledge transfer, given the involvement of industry leaders.

The fashion week will allow designers to showcase their lines.

The organisers hope the fashion week will help designers in building and growing the African fashion industry.

GRAND RENAISSANCE DAM

EXPRESSION OF ETHIOPIA'S COMMITMENT TO THE BENEFIT OF ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE NILE BASIN



Committee on Renaissance Dam begins work

A tripartite committee established to increase transparency on Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam, has begun its work.

Water and Energy Minister, Alemayehu Tegen, said the committee was established to create trust and foster cooperation amongst the lower riparian countries.

It was established on the basis of the pact signed by Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt to form a team that reviews the benefit and impact of the dam.

The committee, which consists of two experts from each country and four foreign professionals, convened its first meeting in Addis Ababa. The second meeting will be held in Sudan.

At its first meeting the committee set criteria on how to include international experts.

Ethiopia has already commenced construction work as it has a strong belief that the dam will not harm the water security of Sudan and Egypt and will in fact reduce evaporation, siltation and flooding downstream.

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Published by the Press Office, Ethiopian Embassy, London, SW7 1PZ