



Ethiopian News

July 2010 Issue

Ethiopia at the G8 and G20 Summits

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi took part in the G8 and G20 Summits held in Canada from 25th to 26th June, respectively. The themes for the summit were *Accountability and Effectiveness in International Assistance* for the G8 and the G20, and focus was on the global economic crisis and possible solutions for sustainable and balanced growth.



At both summits, Ethiopia was encouraged by the organisation and content of the discussions and the level of their relevance to Africa. Ethiopia views positively the increasing importance and recognition, given by the G20 leaders, to the development needs of Africa. In this connection, Ethiopia welcomes the consensus reached by the G20 leaders to raise the capital of Africa Development Bank by 200%.



PM Meles at the Climate Finance Group Meeting

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was in New York in early July to take part in a meeting of the High-level Advisory Group on Mobilising Finance for Climate Change, as part of the ongoing efforts to mobilise financing swiftly to help developing countries combat climate change.

During the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen last December, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon appointed PM Meles and the then UK Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, to head up the group. Norwegian PM Jens Stoltenberg has since replaced Gordon Brown.

The 21-member high-level advisory panel is seeking ways to raise \$100 billion a year by 2020 to help developing countries adapt to and mitigate the effects of global warming. At the climate conference in Copenhagen in December, world leaders also promised developing countries an additional \$30 billion between now and 2012.



(l-r) PM Meles, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and Norwegian PM Jens Stoltenberg

At a news conference following the group's New York meeting, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said the panel is looking to identify the sources of

this longer-term financing. “These sources must be economically sound and politically viable,” he said.

Norwegian PM Stoltenberg said there are several possible sources of financing, but he agreed that a key challenge for the panel is to find ones that are politically and practically feasible.

The panel will meet again in October in Addis Ababa to finalise its recommendations for the secretary-general ahead of the November climate meeting in Cancun, Mexico.

In related news, six developing nations participating in a climate change meeting in the Maldives pledged to slash greenhouse gas emissions and pursue green growth and development.

Antigua and Barbuda, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, the Maldives, the Marshall Islands and Samoa all pledged to the carbon reduction target.

During the meeting entitled “*Cartagena/Dialogue for Progressive Action*”, Ethiopia committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2025, Samoa by 2020, while the Marshall Islands pledged to cut its carbon dioxide emissions by 40% by 2020 from a 2009 base year. The Maldives and Costa Rica also reaffirmed their commitment to carbon neutrality by 2020 and 2021 respectively, while Antigua and Barbuda will aim to slash emissions by a quarter by 2020 from 1990 levels.

The countries affirmed their pledges during the meeting of developing and rich world countries who want strong international action on climate change.

The group provides an informal space open to all countries who want an ambitious outcome in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and who are committed domestically to becoming or remaining low carbon emitters.

Irish Foreign Minister in Ethiopia

The Irish Foreign Minister, Mr. Michael Martin, paid an official visit to Ethiopia from 30th June to 2nd July, where he conducted discussions with high level Ethiopian Government officials, including PM Meles Zenawi and State Minister Dr. Tekada Alemu.

During the meeting with the State Minister, the two officials exchanged views on bilateral and regional issues. The Irish Foreign Minister commended the sound policies adopted by the Ethiopian Government, which resulted in fast economic growth and major social development, particularly in the areas of education, primary healthcare, rural development and food security. Mr. Martin reassured that Ireland would continue to assist Ethiopia in various fields despite the current budgetary and financial constraints his country faced. He also expressed his appreciation for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the recently held national elections in Ethiopia.

State Minister Dr. Tekada expressed his deep satisfaction with the current Ethio-Irish bilateral relations. He said the Irish development assistance policy was in line with Ethiopia’s development strategies and the development programme being implemented by Irish Aid in various parts of Ethiopia had proved effective and sustainable. He also commended the Government of Ireland for pursuing the principle that developing countries must be allowed to own and lead their development strategies.

Ethiopia approves \$5.6 billion budget

Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, has announced that the government has approved a record 70% spend of its total annual budget on poverty and infrastructure development, underlining the government’s resolve to further enhance its poverty eradication endeavours.

This is the largest spending on these programmes by any African country.

The \$5.6 billion budget for 2010/11 is up by 20% from \$4.7 billion in 2009/10, and is the biggest budget ever passed by the country's parliament.

The pledge on poverty eradication is in keeping with Ethiopia's commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals of reducing poverty by half by the year 2015. The current budget allocates the lion's share of the resources for provision of services like education, health, rural electrification, roads and telecommunications – sectors that are critical to alleviating poverty and achieving the MDGs. UN sources indicate that Ethiopia is one of 20 developing countries that will meet the MDGs.

Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing countries in Africa. Over the past four years its economy has grown by 11.2% on average, mainly thanks to improved infrastructure. Ethiopia plans to attract more foreign investment in agriculture, mineral exploration and hydropower.

PM Meles said that more than \$1.7 billion of the budget would be spent locally by Ethiopia's nine federal regions, \$879 million will go to the road network and the rest will be spent on electrification. Ethiopia has spent \$3.6 billion on roads over the last decade. At least 10% of the total budget has been allocated to developing Ethiopia's vast agricultural sector, which relies heavily on agricultural exports. Ethiopia is Africa's top coffee exporter and the second biggest exporter of sesame seed.

Ethiopia on track to halve poverty by 2015

According to a draft report written by the United Nations (UN), Ethiopia will most probably meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving the poverty rate by 2015, assuming it maintains its current economic growth levels.

The report says that the government has "made enormous progress in the provision of social services such as education, health and infrastructure by spending a large share of its

budget in the pro-poor sector...This could be taken as the best practice from which others may learn."

Ethiopia is also on target to achieve its goal of universal primary school education by 2015.

Ethiopia's GDP growth to lead Africa by 2011

Ethiopia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is likely to grow by 10.9% in 2010/11, putting it in the lead across the continent, the African Development Bank (AfDP) has announced.

In its 2011 report, forecasts indicated that Ethiopia will be in a leading development position with 10.9%, followed by Angola and Uganda with an expected 7.9%.

Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing non-oil economies. The report also recalled that Ethiopia ranked first in its overall GDP growth in 2009 by registering 9.9% growth followed by Angola and Malawi with 7.6% and 7% respectively.

EU grants €1.6 million to Ethiopian CSOs

The Delegation of the European Union (EU) to Ethiopia has awarded grant contracts to 12 Ethiopian Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) worth about €1.6 million from the European Commission Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia Programme.



The funds are being offered to the CSOs in Ethiopia for improved governance, women's empowerment and conflict resolution in various parts of the country.

The new contracts were signed with Ethiopian Charities, Ethiopian Resident Charities and consortia of Ethiopian Resident and International Charities.

The signing of these new contracts brings the total number of ongoing projects under the programme up to 26, worth about €4 million. Since the start of

the programme in 2006, 55 grant projects have been supported so far under the Civil Society Fund.

Around 400 Ethiopian CSOs have benefited from capacity development activities in the framework of this joint European Union-Government of Ethiopia programme.

The CSF is a €10 million programme of support to civil society being implemented over a six year period (2006-2011). It is financed by the European Union Development Bank in cooperation with the Government of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia gets ready to export power to energy-hungry Africa



Improved rains have boosted Ethiopian dam levels and, combined with the repaired Gilgel Gibe II power plant resuming output, Ethiopia will be ready to start hydropower-generated electricity exports to neighbouring Sudan in September. In addition, Ethiopia is also considering electricity exports to Djibouti.

Supplies to Sudan will total about 200MW, while 150MW could also be sold to Djibouti should there be sufficient supplies.

Gilgel Gibe II is expected to resume generation by the end of July after a tunnel collapse in January. Moreover, recent rains have enabled the country's largest hydropower plant, Tana Beles, and Tekeze to run at full capacity. The three plants have a total capacity of 1180MW of power.

According to the World Bank, Ethiopia has Africa's second-largest potential for hydropower capacity of 45GW, after Congo. The National Meteorological Agency reported rainfall to be average or higher in the central and western areas.



Tekeze Dam

Ethiopia's hydropower production will alleviate regional power shortages. The African Development Bank has provided a \$1 million grant for the design of a transmission line to Kenya, which is currently in talks with Ethiopia to import 500MW of electricity. The line is expected to be completed by 2014.

Meanwhile, the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo) has announced that the construction of the Gilgel Gibe III hydropower dam project is well underway with 38% of the construction completed so far. Gibe III, funded with over €1.4 billion allocated by the Ethiopian government, will produce the lion's share of the country's electric power exports. Over 6,000 local and foreign professionals are participating in the construction process.

World Bank funds Ethiopian power grid

The World Bank said that \$180 million credit for Ethiopia will help the country increase the amount of electricity available to rural communities.

The \$180 million credit will support upgrades in several major Ethiopian cities, including the capital Addis Ababa. Rural projects will expand the

electricity coverage of about 50 villages, increasing the total coverage area for around 700,000 people.

Ethiopia earns over \$2 billion from export trade

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) has announced that Ethiopia secured more than \$2 billion from export trade in the just ended budget year. The revenue was obtained from 31 items exported to a range of countries.

Coffee, oilseeds, gold, *khat*, cut flowers, spices, honey, livestock, cotton, leather and leather products, textiles and tea were among the items exported to Europe, Asia, Africa, the USA and elsewhere.

The revenue secured has shown a \$37.1 million increase compared to the same period the previous budget year.

Ethiopia secures over \$281m from gold

Ethiopia has secured over \$281.4 million from gold produced during the past year.



The revenue was obtained from 3,912kg of gold supplied to foreign markets, a vast increase compared to the same period the previous year. The

increase in revenue is attributed to a rise in world gold prices, the procedures put in place to control contraband and illegal trade as well as integrated efforts by the Ministry and State offices to support traditional gold miners and goldsmiths. There are more than 38 associations engaged in traditional gold production in Oromia, Benishangul Gumuz, Tigray, Gambella and SNNP States.

WFP scheme to benefit farmers

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) began a scheme to boost production by about

70,000 smallholder farmers in Ethiopia by buying the food they produce to use in the agency's operations in Ethiopia.

Through the Purchase for Progress Initiative (P4P), which is financed by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, WFP plans to buy an estimated 126,000 tonnes of food from local farmers over the next five years.

The initiative should benefit both the agency and the farmers, whose incomes and know-how will rise as they become more familiar with the agricultural marketplace. The WFP country director for Ethiopia, Mohamed Diab, said that the farmers will have a secure market and income, encouraging them to grow more food, and WFP can buy the food at competitive prices for people in need in Ethiopia.

Under an initial phase of the project, which kicked off in February, WFP has bought more than 5,500 tonnes of maize and beans from cooperative unions based in three regions of the country.

WFP already buys vast quantities of food in Ethiopia to help people in need. The agency bought at least 592,000 tonnes of cereal, beans, salt and fortified food valued at \$183 million between 2004 and 2009 – enough to feed about 4 million people a month.

Ethiopia science projects feature at Royal Society Summer Exhibition

A reception was held at the Ethiopian Embassy in London on 1st July to celebrate the inclusion of two science projects based in Ethiopia, and run by Addis Ababa University and partner UK universities in an exhibition in London during the Royal Society's 2010 Summer Exhibition, marking the Society's 350th anniversary. The exhibition was held in the South Bank Centre and attracted about 30,000 visitors.

"Fast and Furious: witnessing the birth of Africa's New Ocean" introduced members of the public to the exciting geology of the Afar, and the dramatic

events earth scientists have been observing there in the past few years. A team of scientists are finding out how oceans form by observing the creation of the newest ocean on Earth. The surface of the Earth is constantly changing. Continents have collided and drifted apart, and new oceans have formed over millions of years to give the Earth its present-day appearance. In the remote Afar desert in northern Ethiopia, a 60-kilometre-long segment of plate boundary cracked open by eight metres over ten days in 2005.



Dr Elias Lewi, Inst of Geophysics, Addis Ababa University

“The geological activity in Afar, the hottest place on Earth, is allowing us to witness how our ocean basins started to form,” says Dr Tim Wright, School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds. At the exhibition, visitors saw a 3D interactive guided tour of the Afar region, examining how the surface geology changes when the land splits apart, comparing freshly-erupted basalt and obsidian lavas with samples dredged up from the modern Mid-Atlantic Ridge. They saw scientists at work in this extreme environment and tested some of the equipment that they used there. The UK universities involved are Leeds, Bristol, Oxford, Edinburgh, Cambridge and the British Geological Survey. For further information, see: http://seefurtherfestival.org/exhibition/view/fast-and-furious-witn_page_2

The second project was ***Leishmania: lessons from a parasite***. Researchers from Addis Ababa University and Imperial College London are studying the Leishmania parasite to improve our understanding of one of the most neglected tropical diseases. Leishmaniasis is a parasitic disease affecting about 12m people in eighty-eight of the poorest countries in the world, where medical diagnosis and treatment are limited. Those affected often have pronounced immune-suppression, but what triggers this is not understood. In patients that are failing to heal, researchers have found significantly increased levels of an enzyme, arginase, which can impair the immune response. Modulation of arginase might be a potential therapeutic strategy.



The Ambassador with Prof Asrat Hailu, Faculty of Medicine and Dr Tim Wright at the Event

“The public health impact of the leishmaniasis has been grossly underestimated, mainly due to lack of awareness of its serious impact on health. We are working to understand how Leishmania survives in the body and how we could turn the table on this deadly scourge of mankind” says Dr Pascale Kropf, Department of Immunology, Imperial College London. Visitors to the exhibit entered an Ethiopian hut and learnt about the Leishmania life cycle, how the parasites infect people and elicit immune responses in the infected person, and how the disease is currently treated. See <http://seefurtherfestival.org/exhibition/view/leishmania-lessons-pa>

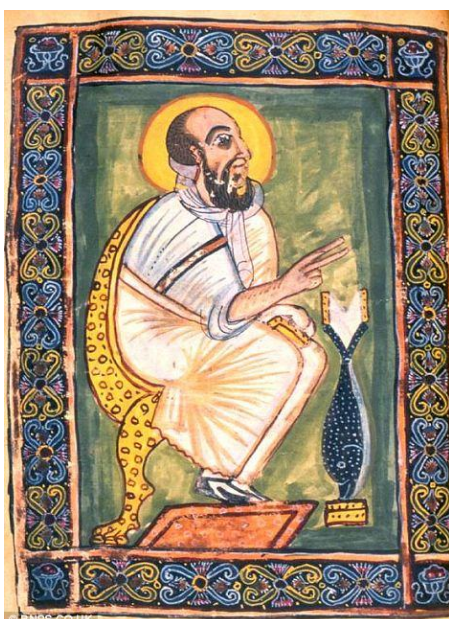
At the reception, Ambassador Berhanu Kebede praised the work by all the scientists concerned - “What happened in 2005, the massive crack that appeared in a matter of ten days – 60 km long and 8 metres wide - was a phenomenon that has attracted the attention of people around the world, and will continue to do so.”

The Ambassador congratulated Dr Pascale Kropf and all her colleagues at the department of immunology at Imperial College and at Addis Ababa University “who have been involved in this attempt to understand how *Leishmania* survives in the body and how science could eventually conquer this deadly disease.”

World’s oldest illustrated Christian Bible discovered at Ethiopian monastery

The world’s oldest illustrated Christian Bible has been located at a remote Ethiopian monastery.

The Garima Gospels are named after a monk, Abba Garima, who arrived in Ethiopia in the 5th century. According to legend, he copied out the Gospels in just one day after founding the Garima Monastery, at 7,000 feet, near Adwa, in the Tigray region, northern Ethiopia.



A page from the Garima Gospels

Beautifully illustrated, the colours are still vivid and, thanks to the Ethiopian Heritage Fund, have been conserved. And it is hoped that the two volumes will be made available to visitors to the monastery which is in discussions to start a museum there.

The Garima Gospels, which are believed to have magical powers, have never left the monastery. They were written on goat skin in the Ethiopian language of Ge’ez and experts believe it is also the earliest example of book binding still attached to the original pages.

Human skeleton older than Lucy discovered

An international team of scientists conducting field research in the Woranso-Mille area of the Afar region has published the discovery of a 3.6 million-year-old partial skeleton of “Lucy’s” species, *Australopithecus Afarensis*; the latter was discovered in 1974. “Lucy” is estimated to have lived 3.2 million years ago.

According to a statement made by the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), the new partial skeleton, which has been nicknamed *Kadanuumuu*, generates new information on the locomotion, shoulder girdle morphology and shape of the rib cage in our early ancestors, particularly in *Australopithecus Afarensis*.

Kadanuumuu means “big man” in the Afar language and it reflects its comparatively large size.

Events

International Construction Exhibition 2010

The Construction Contractors Association of Ethiopia is organising the 7th International Construction Exhibition (Ethio-Con 2010) to be held in Addis Ababa from 22nd to 26th September 2010 and invites companies in this sector to participate in this important event to promote their products and services in the growing Ethiopian market.



The construction sector in Ethiopia has been growing at unprecedented speed during past years due to the government's priority of developing the country's infrastructure and the wide involvement of the private sector and NGOs in this domain. As a result, both the demand and supply side of the construction sector in Ethiopia have shown considerable growth. This trend is set to continue unabated in the years to come.

At the upcoming exhibition, the association is making preparations to achieve a higher presence of foreign companies engaged in the construction sector including contractors, engineers, architects and suppliers of construction inputs. It hopes to provide better opportunities for local contractors to enhance their competitiveness through experience-sharing and forging partnerships with foreign companies in the sector.

The organiser of the exhibition has prepared packages to encourage the participation of countries across the world who can take advantage of the opportunities in Ethiopia's rapidly growing construction sector. The package will include reasonable lease rates and assistance in facilitating entry visas for those coming from countries where Ethiopia does not have diplomatic missions, and facilitation of their individual requirements such as accommodation and clearing their exhibits.

For further information including registration and application forms, please visit www.centurypromotion.com or call +251 911 205826/+251 911 974040.

Sports

Haile to make Great North Run debut

Haile Gebreselassie will honour a promise he made a decade ago and compete at the 30th staging of the Bupa Great North Run, in September.

Gebreselassie, before winning a second successive Olympic Games 10,000 metres title in 2000, had already committed himself to taking part in the world's biggest half marathon from Newcastle to South Shields. However, he ripped his Achilles tendon in a thrilling finish to the track final in Sydney, where he only just retained his crown by a stride ahead of Kenya's Paul Tergat, and subsequently required surgery.



"This is a race I have always wanted to compete in and I'm really looking forward to running as it has a worldwide reputation for not only the quality but also the fantastic size of the field," Gebreselassie said.

Gebreselassie has broken 27 world records during his career, and collected two Olympic gold medals and four world titles.

Amsterdam hosts Ethiopian Sports & Culture Festival in Europe

The 8th Annual Ethiopian Sports & Culture Festival in Europe was held in Amsterdam from 29th to 31st July.

Ethiopia's greatest athlete, Haile Gebrselassie, and former Ethiopian national soccer team player, Negussie Gebre, were this year's invited guests of

honour. Former Ethiopian athlete and Switzerland-resident, Mohammed Kedir, was also at the event. Mohammed was a member of the great Ethiopian running generation of the 80's (Green Flood), which included the likes of Miruts Yifter, Yohannes Mohammed and Eshetu Tura, to name a few.

The 3-day festival comprised 23 Ethiopian football teams representing various European cities, and also included two guest teams from the USA for the first time. Football and running events for young athletes were also held.

News in Brief

Ethiopia increases forest coverage

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development says Ethiopia's total forest cover has tripled in size since the year 2000 as a result of large-scale reforestation campaigns launched in the last 10 years.

Ethiopia has, in recent years, undertaken massive tree-planting campaigns to help reduce land degradation and improve its biodiversity. Ethiopia has increased its forest coverage to 9%, up from 3%.

Ethiopia planted more than 700 million trees in 2007 alone (Ethiopia's Millennial year), according to the UN, besting Mexico which planted 217 million, in a drive to combat climate change through lush new forest projects. The Ministry said some 2.5 billion seedlings will be planted this rainy season.

Academics honoured by University of Nottingham

Professor of Plant Taxonomy and Biodiversity at the University of Addis Ababa, Sebsebe Demissew, received an honorary degree of Doctor of Science from the University of Nottingham on 15th July. The professor is the second person from Africa to receive such an award from the University, after former South African President, Nelson Mandela.



Group photo with family and friends
Back row (l-r): Christine Ennew, Pro-Vice Chancellor; third right – Prof. Sebsebe and Prof. Poliakoff;
Front row, second left – Dr. Nigist Asfaw

The professor is a Keeper of the National Herbarium and Leader of the Ethiopian Flora Project. Over a 15-year period he coordinated the documentation of the Flora of Ethiopia and Eritrea, completing it in 2009. The project was an international collaboration of many partner institutions, including the University of Addis Ababa, the Universities of Uppsala, Copenhagen, Oslo and Vienna, the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in the UK and the Missouri Botanical Garden, USA. Professor Sebsebe has also researched the indigenous use of aromatic and other garden plants in Ethiopia. He worked on a national report for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - on the conservation and development of the Plant Genetic Resources of Ethiopia. He is currently working on a book *Trees of Ethiopia* and together with his wife, Dr Nigist Asfaw, – the founder of Green Chemistry in Ethiopia - has written a book on the aromatic plants of Ethiopia. His books on lilies have received a warm welcome from specialists in the field.

Ethiopian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Berhanu Kebede, and invited guests attended the award ceremony. Ambassador Berhanu said, "Ethiopia is delighted and proud that Professor Sebsebe has been awarded the prestigious honorary degree of Doctor of Science by the

University of Nottingham. It is a double pleasure that he is the second African after Nelson Mandela to be so honoured.”

In an Oration at the Graduation Ceremony, Professor Martyn Poliakoff CBE FRS said that contrary to popular belief, Ethiopia is very green and harbours a huge variety of plants which have now been logged along with their uses in traditional medical treatments. Later Professor Poliakoff said “I am delighted that Dr Nigist has been appointed to a Special Lectureship in Chemistry at Nottingham and Sebsebe to a Special Professorship in BioSciences. I hope that this will lead to a further strengthening of the links between the University of Nottingham and Ethiopia.”

Aida Muluneh wins the 2010 CRAF International Photography Award



Ethiopian photographer Aida Muluneh has been named as the recipient of the 2010 CRAF International Photography Award at a ceremony in Italy.

The 2010 prize, which was given to Aida by the CRAF scientific commission, has previously been awarded to notable figures on the international photographic scene, including Charles Henri Favrod, Erich Hartmann, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Peter Galassi, Paolo Gasparini, Josef Koudelka, Joan Fontcuberta, Anne Cartier-Bresson, Naomie Walter Rosenblum, Alain Sayag, Margit Zuckriegl, Erich Lessing and Bernard Plossu.

“Aida Muluneh directs her attention as a photographer in particular towards the women of the African Diaspora, concentrating on the bonds and the disagreements between the generations, the joys and the pains of life,” the organization said. “Her subjects transmit, with a mixture of grace and

power, the vicissitudes related to the phenomenon of the dispersion of the African people.”

The prize committee said the accolade is also a recognition of Aida’s continued efforts to establish a photography educational-institution in Ethiopia. “In the year that CRAF has dedicated to Africa with the exhibit ‘Glimpses of Africa’, the International Photography Award presented to this young and very accomplished photographer – who is what’s more socially committed to the creation of a school of photography dedicated to young people, in Addis Ababa – is also intended to give recognition to all of the young and emerging African photographers,” the group said.

AAU Awards Four Honorary Doctorates

Addis Ababa University (AAU) awarded honorary doctorate degrees to four renowned individuals during the graduation ceremony held for the first time inside the Millennium Hall on 24th July.

Haile Gebreselassie, Cathrin Hamlin, founder of Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, Thabo Mbeki, former president of South Africa and Mahmood Mamdani, Herbert Lehman professor of government at Colombia University in New York, were accorded the highest honours by the AAU.

Professor Andreas Eshete, the president of AAU, presented Honorary Doctorates of Humane Letters, Medical Sciences, Law and Letters to Haile, Hamlin, Mbeki and Hamlin, respectively.

AAU is the oldest and biggest university in Ethiopia, and boasts four colleges with eight faculties and four schools.

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