

# **A Week in the Horn**

## **1<sup>st</sup> July 2016**

### **News in Brief:**

- **Africa and the African Union**
- **Djibouti**
- **Eritrea**
- **Kenya**
- **Somalia**
- **South Sudan**
- **Sudan**

### **Articles (from page 4):**

- **Prime Minister Hailemariam on an official visit to Mozambique**
- **Ethiopia becomes a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council...**
- **...and IGAD offers its congratulations on Ethiopia's election**
- **"It's bad in Eritrea but not that bad" – yes it is**
- **Ethiopia and the European Union agree on further cooperation**
- **CEWARN holds a four-day training course in Kampala**
- **Somalia's National Leadership Forum finalizes an electoral timetable**

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### **News in Brief**

#### **Africa and the African Union**

The African Union Commission and the European Union (EU) signed this week (June 29) the African Union Support Program III (AUSP III). The program has a new co-funding of €51 Million (85% European Union and 15% African Union Commission).

IGAD's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) held a four-day training course in Kampala this week for members of its Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit (CEWERU). (See article)

The African Union Commission (AUC) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) on Tuesday (June 28) launched a technical cooperation project (TCP) to end hunger in the Horn of Africa region.

#### **Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn arrived in Mozambique for a three-day official visit at the invitation of President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi on Tuesday this week (June 28). Ethiopia and Mozambique signed a comprehensive cooperation agreement in Maputo on Wednesday (June 29), which would expand the bilateral cooperation on diverse frontiers. The accord included the establishment of a Joint Ministerial Commission. (See article)

President Mulatu Teshome, while receiving the highest Order of Serbia on Strips on Tuesday (June 28) noted the bilateral ties between the two countries should be strengthened on the social, economic and political fronts.

Dr Tedros met with Mr Kemal Seid Ismael, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Sudan on Friday (July 1). Dr Tedros noted that Ethio-Sudan relations are showing advances on the political, economic, social and cultural fronts. State Minister Mr Kemal forwarded an official message from the Government of the Republic of Sudan congratulating Ethiopia on its election as a non-permanent member of the UNSC. He said, "Ethiopia's membership to the United Nations Security Council is important not only to Sudan but also the whole of Africa".

Foreign Minister Dr Tedros discussed with his Italian counterpart Paolo Gentiloni in New York on Monday (June 27). The discussion by and large focused on regional peace and security matters. Dr Tedros also met with Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, Erlan Idrissov.

Foreign Minister Dr Tedros also held discussions with Margot Wallstrom, Foreign Minister of Sweden. The two sides expressed satisfaction over the deepening of the bilateral relation of the two countries evident in frequent high level meetings on the side-lines of different forums.

Dr Tedros met with Lilliane Ploumen, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development of the Netherlands (June 27). The two sides noted the growing partnership between Ethiopia and the Netherlands, while underlining the need to further expand it.

In one round of voting the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday (June 28) elected Ethiopia to serve as non-permanent members on the Security Council for a two-year term commencing on 1 January 2017. (See article)

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on Thursday (June 30) congratulated Ethiopia on its election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. (See article)

Ethiopia and the European Union signed two agreements this week (June 28) that will expand their areas of cooperation. (See article)

The World Bank on Thursday (June 30) approved 100 million US dollars in additional financing from the International Development Association (IDA) Crisis Response Window (CRW) to the Productive Safety Net Project 4 (PSNP 4).

A half-day seminar which aimed at building the capacity of Ethiopian exporters was held on Wednesday (June 29) at MoFA meeting hall. On the occasion, Chinese experts offered training packages to Ethiopian exporters.

USAID, in partnership with Ethiopia's Ministry of Health, WHO and implementing partners celebrated the transition from the HEAL-TB activity to Challenge TB on Tuesday (June 28).

Dr Benyam Dawit, Ethiopia's candidate for United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has been re-elected to serve another term receiving 152 votes out of 194 countries at the meeting of state parties to the convention on the rights of the child.

## **Djibouti**

President Ismail Omar Guelleh, speaking to mark the country's 39<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary, said on Monday (June 27) that the country's economy was growing at 6 percent and could go beyond this in the future. He said it was the responsibility of the government to ensure the growth was inclusive and to achieve development goals. He further said the government would place more emphasis on decentralization which guarantees equal development for all regions.

## **Eritrea**

The Dutch parliament on Thursday (June 30) passed a resolution calling for action against the Eritrean government over its activities in the Netherlands. The Parliament had decided to hold a session to discuss the influence of the ruling Eritrean party, the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) on the Eritrean community in Holland, following revelations of multiple examples of intimidation, blackmailing and threats.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) on Wednesday (June 29) called upon Swedish judicial authorities to investigate the case of Swedish-Eritrean journalist Dawit Isaak who remains imprisoned in Eritrea.

With the UN Human Rights Council considering a draft resolution from Djibouti and Somalia, Eritrea has been intensifying its criticisms of the Commission of Inquiry's Report, resorting to further rhetoric over reality. (See article)

## **Kenya**

President Uhuru Kenyatta flew into Gaborone, Botswana, for a three-day state visit on Monday (June 27). The two countries cooperate through the framework of the Botswana-Kenya Joint Permanent Commission on Cooperation. During the visit, President Kenyatta and President Karma addressed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Botswana-Kenya Business Seminar. The relationship between the two countries began under their respective fathers, the founding fathers of their respective nations and fellow pan Africanists.

Following a meeting of the Tripartite Committee of Kenya, Somalia and the UNHCR, at the weekend, Kenya said it aims to reduce by almost half the population of the Dadaab refugee camp, home to about 326,000 mostly Somali refugees, by the end of the year. A joint communiqué said the number would be reduced by "voluntary returns to Somalia, relocation of non-Somali refugees, the de-registration of Kenyan citizens who registered as refugees, and a population verification exercise."

## **Somalia**

The meeting of the National Leadership Forum last week in Baidoa (June 22-25) issued a communiqué on Saturday which said the Forum had agreed and endorsed an election timetable up to the election of a president by the second week of September as well as the necessary technical and implementation details for the electoral processes. (See article)

Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Sharmarke sacked two female ministers, Khadra Bashir Ali, Minister of Education and Hawo Hassan Mohamed, Minister of Health on Friday, (June 24), replacing them with two men, Mohamed Hajji Abdi Noor as the Minister for Health, and Dr Abdikadir Abdi Hashi as Minister for Education.

Mauritania's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Khalid Omar Ali, paid a visit to Somalia's capital city, Mogadishu on Monday (June 27). During his visit to the capital, he met Foreign Minister, Abdisalam Hadliye, and discussed ways of bolstering bilateral relations.

The United Nations Security Council "condemned in the strongest terms" the attack on the Nasa Hablod Hotel in Mogadishu on Saturday (June 25) in which 20 people were killed including Bur'i Mohamed Hamza, Minister for Environment Affairs. It said "Any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed."

Ambassador Stephen Schwartz was sworn in as US Ambassador to Somalia on Monday (June 27). He was nominated in January and unanimously confirmed by the Senate in May. He will be working from the US Embassy in Nairobi but has said he hopes to be able to re-establish the embassy in Mogadishu at some point.

Colonel Paddy Ankunda, Uganda military spokesman, told Reuters on Thursday last week (June 24) that Uganda plans to withdraw its troops from Somalia by December 2017. He said Uganda's plans had been communicated to the African Union and "unless something major comes up that's the time we want to come out of Somalia."

## **South Sudan**

United agencies said the level of food insecurity in South Sudan has reached its highest level since the start of the conflict over two years ago. The statement read: "The deteriorating situation coincides with an unusually long and harsh annual lean season, when families have depleted their food stocks and new harvests are not expected until August."

## **Sudan**

President Omer Al-Bashir on Monday (June 27) met with the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios, on the occasion of the expiry of his term of office in Sudan. They

discussed the national dialogue and the position of the political parties. Mr Menkerios underlined his support to the efforts of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel and expressed his optimism over realization of peace in Sudan.

Mr Kemal Seid Ismael, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Sudan, met with Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom on Friday (July 1). Mr Kemal noted that the High-level Joint Commission has started to bear positive developments, particularly in the economic domain. The State Minister also forwarded an official message from the Government of the Republic of Sudan and personally congratulated Ethiopia on its election as a non-permanent member of the UNSC. He said, "Ethiopia's membership to the United Nations Security Council is important to not only Sudan but also the whole of Africa".

The Security Council on Wednesday (June 29) decided to extend the mandate of the UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), for one year, until 30 June 2017.

British Ambassador to Sudan, Ambassador Michael Aron on Thursday (June 30) hoped the Sudanese opposition groups would sign the African Union brokered Roadmap Agreement during a meeting for the Sudan Call forces due to be held soon in Addis Ababa.

The Khartoum government has withdrawn its troops from the border with South Sudan. Sudanese Armed Forces spokesman, Brigadier Ahmed Alshami announced the withdrawal this week. He said this was consistent with the implementation of the joint political and security mechanism between the two countries, following the agreement last month in Khartoum on withdrawal of the forces, creation of demilitarized zones and stopping of support to rebels on either side.

The UK ambassador to the Sudan, Michael Aron, said on Monday (June 27) that the result of Britain's referendum, to leave the EU, will not affect the relations between the UK and the Sudan.

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### **Prime Minister Hailemariam on an official visit to Mozambique**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn arrived in Mozambique for a three-day official visit at the invitation of President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi on Tuesday this week (June 28). Ever since formal diplomatic ties were established between the two countries in 1977, Ethiopia and Mozambique have enjoyed good relations. They have signed a number of Cooperation Agreements in the fields of Air Service and Economic, Cultural, Scientific and Technological Cooperation, as well as a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the area of Defense, signed in May 2009. The Air Service Agreement signed in 1975 was revised and signed in 2011. This was of particular importance as it allows Ethiopian Airlines to fly to Maputo seven times a week.

The Prime Minister's visit is seen as an important milestone in the relationship between the two countries, providing for the rejuvenation of the years of bilateral relations. Three very crucial agreements were signed during his visit. These were the Agreement on the Establishment of a Joint Ministerial Commission, the Protocol on Cooperation and a Cooperation Agreement on Culture and Tourism. These provide for close partnership in different fields of development and civil aviation, agriculture, military training, human resources development, science and technology, transportation and other bilateral fields as well as establishing the agreement to establish a Joint Ministerial Commission signed by the Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Minister of Mozambique, Oldemiro Balói, and Ethiopia's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie. The agreements emphasize Ethiopia's keen interest in continuing and expanding the existing relations, and its intent to build closer political, economic and investment ties with Mozambique.

During a state banquet, the Prime Minister highlighted Ethiopia's firm intention to use its non-permanent membership on the UN Security Council to protect Africa's interests. He mentioned climate change, poverty, unemployment, peace and stability, terrorism and illegal migration as being among the critical challenges for Africa needing serious attention and commitment. President Nyusi expressed Mozambique's interest in drawing lessons from Ethiopia's experiences in fast economic growth and inclusive development.

Earlier, on Tuesday (June 28), when Prime Minister Hailemariam met for talks with President Filipe Nyusi of Mozambique, the two sides reiterated the importance of deepening bilateral relations, and discussed ways of fostering trade and investment as well as continental issues. In his speech, the Prime Minister extended his congratulations to the President of Mozambique, and the people of Mozambique on the celebration of the 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of their National Day on June 25. The Prime Minister said: "Ethiopia has always attached great importance to its relations with Mozambique and we truly value these time-tested and strong brotherly ties." He said the signing of these agreements reaffirmed the common interest of both countries in forging the sort of strong relationship so essential to realizing continuous economic development and political cooperation based on mutual interest. He added that this would enable the two countries to cement their long-standing cooperation and move along a clear path for integrated action towards a prosperous future. Prime Minister Hailemariam said, "Indeed, now is the time for us to use our existing relationship as the basis to develop real and close links for mutual political and economic development."

Mentioning a similar and impressive track record the two countries share in economic growth for the last decade the Premier noted that he has no doubt that the agreements the two countries signed would ensure stronger cooperation than ever before. According to Hailemariam, such visits would help the countries to jointly exploit available opportunities and would also assist in the removal of any impediments, which might affect their shared vision for the transformation of the two countries. In this context, added the Prime Minister, "I must applaud the efforts of our experts who have worked so hard to make my visit a success."

President Nyusi praised Ethiopia's continental as well as global peace-making role and said Ethiopia's election to the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member was a good opportunity for Africa, expressing his belief that the country would maintain its outstanding role in ensuring peace and security in Africa. He stressed that this rendered many opportunities for Africans. President Filipe Nyusi also hailed Ethiopia's active role in the maintenance of peace at both continental and international fora. Prime Minister Hailemariam, on his behalf, extended his gratitude to Mozambique and the African Union for supporting Ethiopia at the UNSC elections, adding that the opportunity accorded further responsibility for Ethiopia to reinvigorate its commitment on African agendas.

Mozambique is a multicultural nation and has a population of approximately 25,303,113 spanning a variety of ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. The Country's GDP is estimated to have been 33.19 billion dollars in 2015 and its per capita income is around 1,200 dollars. In its international relations, Mozambique is known as a principal advocate of pan-Africanism and the country favors international cooperation i.e. multilateral framework, as a solution for regional and international problems.

### **Ethiopia becomes a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council....**

The United Nations General Assembly elected five non-permanent members to the Security Council on Tuesday this week (June 28) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The election provided the successful candidates, Ethiopia, Bolivia, Sweden and Kazakhstan with Italy and the Netherlands splitting the fifth seat, with a two-year mandate for membership of the Security Council commencing January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

The Security Council rotates the ten non-permanent seats among the various regional blocs into which United Nation member states traditionally divide themselves for voting and representation purposes. This year, the 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly conducted the elections for five non-permanent seats. These included one seat for the African Group, one seat for the Group of Asia and the Pacific small island developing states, one seat for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, and two seats for the Western European and Others Group. The candidates presented for the election were therefore Ethiopia and Bolivia running on a clean slate basis from the African and the Latin America and Caribbean Groups respectively; Italy, Netherlands and Sweden, competing for two seats for Western Europe and others Group; and Kazakhstan and Thailand competing for a single seat for Asia and the Pacific Group.

In accordance with the United Nations rules and regulations, the General Assembly on June 28, in a secret ballot to elect candidates by a two-thirds majority, elected Ethiopia, with 185 votes on the first round; Bolivia, with 183 votes on the first round; Sweden, with 134 votes on the first round; and Kazakhstan, with 138 on the second round. The Netherlands and Italy ended a battle for another seat by agreeing to split the two-year term. This is

not unique. It has happened on at least five earlier occasions, as for example when Czechoslovakia held the seat in 1964 and Malaysia in 1965. A seat on the Security Council is an important achievement because it gives a country a strong voice in matters dealing with international peace and security, and it is the Security Council, which authorizes and oversees the U.N.'s peacekeeping missions and is responsible for international peace and security.

The number of votes Ethiopia obtained in the General Assembly was very impressive if not surprising. In fact, with 185 votes out of 190 members of the General Assembly, it had an extraordinary 96% support in the Assembly. Ethiopia was running uncontested for the Eastern African seat, with the full backing of the African Group, which endorsed it at the 26th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in January 2016. Ethiopia is, of course, one of the founding members of the United Nations and has contributed considerably to the drawing up of the principles of the United Nations Charter. It has, however, only twice served on the Security Council before, 1967-1968 and 1989-1990. This week's elections showed the 193-member General Assembly was prepared to welcome Ethiopia back to the Security Council after 26 years of absence.

The election provided a clear indication of recognition of Ethiopia's increasing reputation for helping to maintain international peace and security. Ethiopia's participation and experience in peacekeeping in Africa also played a significant element in its successful bid. It currently provides a contingent of 8,321 personnel, both men and women, involved in UN peacekeeping duties, one of the largest in the world. In addition, Ethiopia is a founding member and host country for the African Union. In fact Ethiopia is a major pillar in the continent's peace and security architecture. In the same way, Ethiopia has also played a significant contribution towards mediating conflict in the Horn of Africa, including in South Sudan and in providing peacekeepers for AU missions.

Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, affirmed that Ethiopia would work for the benefit of African states and other developing countries. He stressed that it would also further strengthen its clear stand in support of ensuring global security and peace as well as preventing and eliminating terrorism during its tenure in the Security Council. The Foreign Minister said the election of Ethiopia to the Security Council demonstrated Ethiopia's success in working unreservedly to attract international cooperation and attain audibility in international fora during the past two decades. This success could be seen as directly or indirectly associated with Ethiopia's steadily growing influence in the international arena.

In fact, Ethiopia's election to the Security Council comes at a time when it is calling for the enhancement of peacekeeping operations as well as for the advancement of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub regional organizations. By underlining the necessity for further cooperation between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council, Ethiopia has made it clear it is also keen to play a key role in the on-going reform of the United Nations peace and security architecture.

Prime Minister Hailemariam when addressing the General Assembly last September laid out some of Ethiopia's concerns and aims about the UN. The Prime Minister said then that United Nations achievements were a far cry from the "Herculean" challenges it faced today. While its "very many failures", especially in the areas of peace and security, could not be overlooked, the United Nations remained an organization that no one could afford to live without, for it remained the only universal organization that provided all nations, regardless of their size or wealth, a unique platform to advance common objectives and address the myriad problems they collectively faced.

The Prime Minister told the General Assembly that the Organization could be made more relevant and effective. It was, he said, up to Member States to empower it to fulfil its promises in a new era. Not only had the Organization's membership changed dramatically over the years, so had the world's geopolitical and economic realities. While the need to reform the Organization had long been recognized, he said, forging the necessary compromise among the wider membership was not easy. Now, however, it could not be further delayed; the United Nations must be made fit for the post-2015 era. Noting that comprehensive reform of the United Nations, and of the Security Council in particular, was imperative, he repeated Africa's call for full representation in all of the Organization's decision-making organs. These concerns will remain a central element of Ethiopia's actions as a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

In fact, Ethiopia is becoming a non-permanent member of the Security Council at a time when the UN's remit in an increasingly globalized world is widening and deepening. As the international community takes on more responsibility for human security and human protection, it will inevitably reach into areas that some states are uncomfortable with. Given its widening and deepening mandates, one might think that if the UN is not running into controversies it is probably not doing its job properly. However, there are signs of a growing gap between what states say and what they do, and an increasingly obvious reluctance to hold states to their commitments. If such a gap between rhetoric and reality is not addressed, it may become "filled with cynicism, leading to a loss of legitimacy and credibility." The UN is the creation of member states and its fate lies, ultimately, in their hands. It is for these member states themselves to decide whether or not their words and commitments carry credibility, and whether they really mean what they say.

In addressing accusations of the UN's failures, former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld once asked: "Do we refer to the purposes of the Charter? They are expressions of universally shared ideals which cannot fail us, though we, alas, often fail them. Or do we think of the institutions of the United Nations? Those [institutions] are our tools. We fashioned them. We use them. It is our responsibility to remedy any flaws there may be in them..."

The five newly elected non-permanent members of the Security Council are replacing Angola, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain and Venezuela which finish their two year terms at the end of 2016. They take their place on the Security Council along with the five permanent Security Council members, namely Britain, France, China, Russia and the United States, and the other five non-permanent members who are Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay. These other five non-permanent members end their term in December 2017. The new members will begin their term of office on January 1, just as the next secretary-general takes the helm following an October election to replace UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon and will last until 31 December 2018.

### **...and IGAD offers its congratulations on Ethiopia's election**

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on Thursday (June 30) congratulated Ethiopia on its election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. Ambassador Mahboub Maalim, Executive Secretary of IGAD said on behalf of the organization:

"IGAD is proud to learn that Ethiopia, one of its Member States and a founding member of the United Nations has been elected to serve a non-permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council for the next five years with overwhelming support from members of the UN General Assembly."

Ambassador Maalim went on to say that IGAD recognized Ethiopia's election to the position as a well-deserved achievement given its historic contributions to African political and socio-economic aspirations and its contribution to peace and stability in the IGAD region and beyond.

Ethiopia is currently recognized as one of the leading contributors of peacekeepers around the world with contributions of over 8,000 military and police personnel to UN peacekeeping missions worldwide. In addition, he noted, the country is demonstrating exemplary economic development and is currently recognized as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

Ambassador Maalim said IGAD was confident that the region and the African continent would be ably represented in the Security Council through the membership of Ethiopia. It saluted the people and Government of Ethiopia for making the regional bloc proud. IGAD, he said, wished to seize the occasion to congratulate the Government and people of Ethiopia for a great achievement for Africa.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, also congratulated Ethiopia on the occasion of its election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council; and congratulations have also been received from many other people and countries.

### **"It's bad in Eritrea but not that bad" – yes it is.**

With the UN Human Rights Council considering a draft resolution from Djibouti and Somalia, Eritrea has been intensifying its criticisms of the Commission of Inquiry's Report on human rights violations in Eritrea. It has been continuing to encourage its international supporters to defend it. One of these has been Ms Bronwyn

Bruton, the Deputy Director of the Africa Center at the Atlantic Council, in Washington. Ms Bruton says she has been able to go to Eritrea several times in the last year to do research. The Eritrean government has certainly got its money's worth from these visits, so presumably has Nevsun, the Canadian company which runs the Bisha mine and which has been under widespread criticism for accepting the use of forced and conscript labor in the construction of the mine and more recently. Coincidentally, Nevsun Resources has become a major financial supporter of the Atlantic Council, making a contribution last year of between US\$100,000 and 250,000 "because [it was] impressed by their ongoing constructive work on Eritrea." Nevsun says the contribution was an unrestricted gift, "a no-strings attached contribution to be used in whatever way the Atlantic Council saw fit."

Ms Bruton at times appears almost embarrassed by her support of Eritrea. In her latest Op-Ed in the *New York Times* last week, her piece was headed "It's Bad in Eritrea, but Not That Bad". She starts by summarizing the Commission's findings accusing "the leadership of Eritrea of crimes against humanity. It cites cases of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, rape and extrajudicial killing. It claims that up to 400,000 Eritreans have been enslaved in a vast conscription program, forced to work in the army or the bureaucracy for next to nothing, often for a decade or more. A constitution drafted in 1997 has yet to be implemented. National elections have never been held. Opposition political parties are illegal. Many dissidents have been arrested and have not been heard from since. There are few civil society organizations and no independent media. It is tortuously difficult for Eritreans to obtain formal authorization to leave the country."

She concludes from all this that "The Eritrean government deserves to be called out for these practices." Yes, indeed, but Ms Bruton quickly adds: "criticism, to be credible and effective, must be scrupulously fair, and the commission's report is not. It extrapolates from anecdotal examples, like instances of rape by military forces, to allege systemic abuses and blame them on state policy." Ms Bruton says the Commission's research suffered from selection bias; they didn't interview Western diplomats or U.N. staff based in Eritrea, nor consult the relevant academic literature. They discarded tens of thousands of testimonials from Eritreans defending the Isaias regime, claiming these were irrelevant or inauthentic. The result, she claims, is a seriously flawed report that entrenches the skewed perspective long dominant in policy circles and the media in the West.

Ms Bruton says during her own visits to Eritrea over the past year, she talked to "senior government officials, including Mr Isaias; foreign diplomats; local and foreign businesspeople; and ordinary Eritreans" From this she apparently concluded "No doubt, the human rights situation there is frightful, and hundreds or thousands of cases of torture, rape or unjust imprisonment probably escaped the commission's attention. At the same time, things aren't as bad as the report claims." She says Eritrea is not the North Korea of Africa. It, too, is isolated and secretive, but satellite dishes carrying the BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera can be seen throughout the country, the Internet is accessible and appears to be unfiltered. The United Nations Development Program gives Eritrea high marks for its progress on several Millennium Development Goals.

In fact, Ms Bruton herself appears to be suffering from "selection bias". She hasn't apparently interviewed Eritrean human rights organizations, nor has she consulted the relevant academic literature. She ignores thousands of testimonials from Eritreans who have fled the country. The result is a seriously flawed Op-Ed that entrenches the skewed perspective long dominant among the declining numbers of supporters of the regime in the West.

Ms Bruton even manages to produce the regime's favorite (and irrelevant) excuse for its internally repressive policies and behavior, the alleged failure of Ethiopia to recognize the decision over the border in 2002. She ignores the fact, and it really is a fact, that Ethiopia has not "flouted the ruling" as she claims. It has fully accepted the delimitation of the border and has been trying to get Eritrea to discuss demarcation, and normalization of relations, for more than a decade. Eritrea has repeatedly refused. Eritrea, despite Ms Bruton's assertions, has no good reason to feel betrayed by "the West's failure to enforce the boundary decision."

A few years ago, Ms Bruton came up with the idea that the best way for the United States to fight terrorism and promote stability in Somalia was a policy of "constructive disengagement." By this she meant drop support for the Somali government and focus merely on humanitarian aid and development. She said that a "Somalia left to itself is in many respects less threatening than a Somalia that is being buffeted by the winds of international ambitions to control the country." The suggested "constructive disengagement" would, of course, have handed Somalia over to al-Shabaab. Now Ms Bruton has come up with an equally unsound, if diametrically, opposed

suggestion for Eritrea, effectively calling for “constructive engagement” for Eritrea as the only way to help Eritrea reform. It is equally ill thought out and similarly ignores almost everything known about the Eritrean government and about President Isaias himself.

Ms Bruton suggests that the conscription program, for example, needs to be rethought, and the term of service reduced to a fixed and reasonable length. Well, yes, this is exactly what critics have been saying for years. It’s hardly surprising foreign companies are wary of getting involved for fear they’ll be accused of profiting from slave labor as indeed Nevsun has been. Ms Bruton suggests that scathing attacks on President Isaias’ administration should be stopped as they can seem “overblown to sympathizers, making it easier for them to dismiss uncomfortable truths about its real shortcomings.” Condemnation of the Isaias government, she suggests, risks alienating those Eritreans best positioned to push towards sustainable change. This is hardly a satisfactory reason to stop criticism. Those Eritreans have made no progress in encouraging change in twenty years, and any that have tried have ended up in solitary confinement without charge or trial for the last decade or more. Ms Bruton keeps making references to the “seriousness of the situation in Eritrea”, but then works to put the best gloss on it, trying to qualify the mass of evidence in the Commission’s report and ignoring all the other numerous reports, the eye witness accounts, academic evidence and the mass of detail accumulated over the two decades.

To try to undercut the recommendations of the Commission, including a potential referral to the ICC, Eritrea also tabled its own draft resolution. This claimed that Eritrea had acceded to most international and regional human rights instruments, recently signing the Convention against Torture, Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes and other treaties. It referred to the new Civil and Penal Codes and their procedures, claimed Eritrea had actively engaged in the UPR process as well as with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in areas of strengthening the judicial system, and detailed the role of the Government of Eritrea to combat irregular migration as well as human trafficking and smuggling in persons. It suggested expediting implementation of the 92 recommendations it had accepted during its second universal periodic review, urged investigation of all allegations of human rights violations and abuse and laid down the primary responsibility of states to bring those responsible to justice, and acknowledge Eritrea's initiative to draft a new constitution.

This is an excellent example of the way the regime and its supporters play with words. Eritrea’s approach is to say that it has ratified a convention and this is then the evidence that it has acted to implement it and is in compliance. It doesn’t need to provide any further proof. The ratified but un-implemented 1997 constitution is repeatedly used as a point of reference to claim that human rights abuses don’t happen in Eritrea as they are forbidden in the constitution. Certainly, the draft constitution forbade all sorts of illegal activities and abuse, but it was never implemented, and indeed has now formally been declared dead. In this connection, there has, in fact, been no information made public about the supposed committee set up to draft the new constitution or of what its mandate or guidelines might be, nearly two years after President Isaias said it was being set up.

The Commission has been criticized, by Ms Bruton among others, for not taking account of UNDP comments that there have been “great advances” in the economic, social and cultural rights of Eritreans. In fact, the Commission did acknowledge Eritrea’s achievements of the Millennium Development Goals in its first report. However, in this year’s report, it said that since “there are no external or internal mechanisms to validate these self-reported data, we are not ready to take it at face value”, given that the UNDP actually places Eritrea three from the bottom of its Human Development Index. Similarly, there is in fact no evidence of Eritrea implementing any of the recommendations of either the first or second Universal Periodic Reviews; since 2009 Eritrea has done no more than make promises to implement UPR recommendations. No perpetrators of violations have been brought to justice in Eritrea so far.

Eritrea, in response to a UPR Recommendation to “ensure that any physical or moral harm against journalists or human rights defenders is investigated and that the perpetrators are duly prosecuted,” said “the principle is acceptable but Eritrea rejects the implicit and baseless insinuation.” It’s ‘argument’ is that no journalists have suffered harm, claiming that all those journalists who disappeared in 2001 and the others arrested subsequently, were not and never had been journalists, merely traitors.

Some people may believe, to use Ms Bruton’s phrase, “it’s bad in Eritrea, but not that bad,” and others may believe that there is a different way to bring positive change, prodding the government, slowly, in the right

direction. Not sticks but carrots. This, however, disregards almost everything that has happened in Eritrea in the last two decades; it also ignores the fact that the Government has done what one Eritrean observer described as “the impossible: gotten the African Union to take action against a fellow African state for the first time in its 50-year existence.” How did it manage this? Well Ms Bruton actually makes the point: “The Eritrean government didn’t help its case by giving military support to al-Shabaab, a Somalia-based affiliate of Al Qaeda; it’s been under sanctions as a result.” It’s also under sanction for its attacks on Djibouti and its refusal to acknowledge its actions. Equally, President Isaias has chosen not to attend AU Heads of State and Government meetings and withdraw from IGAD and other international meetings.

One of the main areas of information, Ms Bruton ignores, or perhaps dismisses as partisan, are the human rights organizations, which are in constant touch with those fleeing the country and with people in Eritrea itself. Last week, Human Rights Concern - Eritrea, wrote an open letter to the UN Human Rights Council underlining that the Commission’s report notes the persistence of the gross human rights violations highlighted in its previous report. These, Human Rights Concern – Eritrea said were “part of the totalitarian practices adopted by the Eritrean government and ruling party to perpetuate their power.” There was, therefore, little likelihood of the Eritrean authorities bringing these practices to an end willingly. There was, therefore, a very clear need for the entire international community to “keep Eritrea under close scrutiny until consistent and tangible progress with regard to the situation of human rights is evident.” It said “renewing the mandate of the Special Rapporteur will assist in ensuring Eritrea not only complies with recommendations it has already accepted, but also bring its policies and practices in line with humanitarian and human rights norms, instituting rule of law, and effectively addressing the pervasive crimes against humanity underway within its borders.”

Human Rights Concern - Eritrea said the Commission’s Report provided a road map for the vital process of assessing and identifying the full extent of human rights abuses in Eritrea. There was still much to be done to end the atrocities and ensure justice for victims. Thousands of Eritreans continued to flee their country each month to escape repression, and thousands have died as a result. Eritrean citizens were fully cognizant of the appalling dangers they faced in trying to reach safety. It was, HJRC-Eritrea said, an extraordinary, even unique, indictment of their government that they still choose to risk such dangers rather than remain in their own country. It is really that bad in Eritrea.

### **Ethiopia and the European Union agree on further cooperation**

Ethiopia and the European Union have signed two agreements this week that will expand their areas of cooperation. On Tuesday this week (June 28), Ethiopia and the European Investment Bank (EIB) concluded an agreement for the establishment of a European Investment Bank country office in Addis Ababa. Ambassador Teshome Toga, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia to Brussels and Pim van Ballekom, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank for African, Caribbean and Pacific States, signed the accord in Luxembourg. The deal underlined the excellent cooperation the two parties have had over the years; and the agreement will help ensure provision of a greater access to finance for both public and private institutions in Ethiopia.

During the week, the Ethiopian Investment Commission and the European Union Business Forum to Ethiopia also signed an agreement in a bid to enhance business and investment ties between Ethiopia and the EU. The Head of the EU Delegation to Ethiopia, Ambassador Chantal Hebberecht, noting that Ethiopia and the EU were key partners in trade and investment, said Ethiopia's export to the EU member states has now reached 40%, and the cumulative trade exceeded three billion Euros in the previous year. The Ambassador said the forthcoming Ethio-EU Business Forum would be instrumental to work out ways to deal with challenges in the value chain. She said, "We should develop our public economic diplomacy. There are common issues like taxation, quota free trade and visa issues, which need urgent discussions and consultations. I hope the coming forum will pave smooth way which can enable to promote our business and investment ties." She noted that the EU delegation and the Business Forum have come up with the right business platform, adding that this will attract more European investors to Ethiopia.

Acknowledging that Ethiopia and the EU have been working together on a range of issues, particularly in areas of poverty reduction, job creation, trade and investment, Ethiopian Investment Commission Director-General, Fitsum Arega, stressed that the agreement would help in the exchange of best practices and in the transfer of

technology. Noting that Ethiopia has prioritized the manufacturing sector, the Director-General added that Ethiopia wanted to penetrate further into the European markets, and he said the country looked forward to receiving further EU support for this.

Earlier on June 14, Prime Minister Hailemariam and Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, signed an Ethio-EU Strategic Engagement Agreement in Brussels aiming at structuring strengthened cooperation between the two partners. The Strategic Engagement Agreement acknowledges the crucial role played by Ethiopia in Africa and the international community, as well as its significant economic growth, estimated at an average of 10.6% by the World Bank over the decade 2004-14, and its progress to achieve Millennium Development Goals, on track to reach six of the eight. The Agreement notes that the EU and Ethiopia are willing to jointly address a number of regional and global issues of common interest and enhance their partnership on bilateral issues to a more strategic level. It notes that: "The strategic engagement should become a comprehensive process of dialogue and cooperation, in different areas and on different levels, based on common interests. It should be guided by ownership, equity, partnership and joint responsibility".

The Agreement also underlines that Ethiopia is one of the EU's most important partners on the African continent. It notes that EU fully supports Ethiopia's constructive role in peace and security in the Horn of Africa, not least in Somalia and South Sudan and as chair of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. It also acknowledges Ethiopia's role as the number one contributor to UN peacekeeping operations in Africa, as well as its contributions to thematic international debates such as climate change. The Strategic Engagement Agreement focuses on six sectoral dialogues, which include issues of regional peace and security; countering-terrorism and violent radicalization; social and economic development, investment and trade; migration; governance and human rights; and climate change and environmental cooperation. It includes provision for regularly reviews during annual high-level meetings and meetings of senior officials.

In fact, the EU and Ethiopia can look back on 40 years of constructive bilateral relations in areas as diverse as development cooperation, trade and economic development, consolidation of democratic institutions, and regional peace and security. The importance of the relationship has been underlined in a number of earlier agreements including the Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa in 2011, and the Horn of Africa Action Plan last year. Ethiopia is also an increasingly important partner in terms of migration, as demonstrated by its signature to the Declaration on a Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM) in Valletta on November 11 last year.

### **CEWARN holds a four-day training course in Kampala**

IGAD's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) launched a four-day training course on its new integrated data collection and analysis system to 21 representatives of Ugandan civil society networks that will make up its constitute its Information Collection Network in Uganda. Members of CEWARN's Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit (CEWERU), which serves as the mechanism's national hub, are also taking part in the training, which began in Kampala, on Tuesday (June 28).

The training follows CEWARN's expanded operational mandate that was adopted in September 2012. This allowed for the subsequent renovation of its conflict data collection and analysis system and for it to provide a more robust regional conflict early warning and response mechanism. As a result, CEWARN's geographic and thematic scope significantly expanded to address a wide spectrum of conflict typologies across the IGAD region.

CEWARN's operational focus now means that it collects early warning data across fifteen priority conflict themes categorized into five sectors. The sectors cover the areas of Security, Governance, Social, Economic and Environmental areas. The priority themes include Commerce and Trade; Finance; Poverty; Natural Disasters and Accidents; Resource Competition; Elections and Campaigns; Fairness, Equality and Justice; Armed Conflict and Violence; Crime and Personal safety; Terrorism and Torture; and Pastoralism and Migration.

Previously, between 2002 and 2012, CEWARN focused essentially on cross-border pastoral and related conflicts in parts of the cross-border areas of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda with a limited focus on cross-border pastoral and related conflicts. During this period, CEWARN provided conflict early

warning and analysis to government and non-government peace actors. It also supported response initiatives in these areas.

However, since 2012, CEWARN's focus has expanded to include conducting early warning work on a wider spectrum of violent conflict typologies and supporting longer-term response. Under the new system, CEWARN monitors events and trends across the priority themes. It will also integrate media reports, structural data and field observation reports through limited crowd sourcing into its early warning analysis.

The purpose of this week's training is to introduce the 21 field reporters and CEWERU members to the new monitoring and reporting system as well as enable them to gather and share early warning data on events and trends across the priority themes. Their reports will inform the response initiatives of CEWARN and the national Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit (CEWERU) of Uganda, which brings together governmental and civil society institutions, that have the mandate to respond to peace and development concerns. Similar training will be conducted in Sudan and Somalia next month and full operationalization of the system will be launched across all IGAD Member States in 2017.

### **Somalia's National Leadership Forum finalizes an electoral timetable**

The National Leadership Forum met in Baidoa last week (June 22-25) under the chairmanship of Federal President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. Those present included: Federal Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke; Federal Deputy Prime Minister, Mohamed Omar Arte; the President of Puntland, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gaas; of Jubaland, Ahmed Mohamed Isla "Madobe"; South West, Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan; and Galmudug President, Hussein Guled. The Forum issued a communiqué on Saturday, (June 25) in which it agreed and endorsed an election timetable up to the election of a president by the second week of September as well as the necessary technical and implementation details for the electoral processes.

The Forum agreed on the members of the National Traditional Forum, the list of 135 traditional elders from each clan who will choose the 13,750 members of the Electoral College that will select the 275 members of the Lower House of Parliament. These will be chosen by the Electoral College at processes run by the regional administrations while regional leaders will directly nominate members of the Upper House. These nominees are to be approved by regional parliaments.

Under the agreed timetable, the list of elders has now been reviewed and completed, as has the appointment of the Federal and State Level Electoral Implementation Teams. Workshops for the Electoral Implementation Teams are being held before these are due to start public awareness activities and registration processes at the beginning of the month. By July 10, the technical procedures of registration of candidates, setting up of polling booths, ballot papers and observers should be agreed and completed. This week should see the appointment of the Board of Arbitration and the completion of the process of conflict reconciliation.

Candidates running for the Upper House will make their campaign speeches on July 14 and 15. On July 15 the National Leadership Forum will approve the 30% quota list of women for parliament. The voting delegates to choose MPs will be selected during the first two weeks of July and approved on July 16. Over the following week their names will be checked by the Federal Electoral Implementation Team to ensure it is properly inclusive of civil society, youth and women. The printing of ballot papers for the election of the members of the Upper House will be followed, on July 20, by the vote for members. A speaker for the Upper House will be chosen on July 27 at the first session of the House.

The polling stations for the Lower House election will be prepared in the last week of July and delegated briefed. After ballot papers are printed, candidates will make speeches August 7 to 12. The election will follow the next week, and a Speaker for the Lower House of Parliament will be chosen in the last week of August.

This will be followed by the electoral process for the president in the first week of September, and the inauguration of the new president by September 10.

It is a formidable timetable and a number of issues remain to be settled, including the process of state formation in Hiiraan and Middle Shabelle, which remains unfinished due to disagreements over clan representation, an issue that has relevance in other areas. The Forum also agreed on a detailed budget and time schedule.

During their discussions, the leaders agreed to allot an additional two members for Benadir, a subject that has been a matter of controversy. It is not clear if this means the numbers of the Upper House will be made to increase from 54 to 56 or whether some other arrangement has been decided upon. It also agreed on the formation of a committee of 19 members to consider the status of Benadir province and of the capital, Mogadishu. The Federal Government will appoint five members and the regions and states the remainder. The Committee is to report back by July 17.

The Forum stressed their commitment to work for the realization of the 30% quota of seats reserved for women in both the Upper and Lower Houses, and set out the proposed dates for votes by the Electoral Colleges, and for the relevant vetting and oversight committees. It also discarded the role of politicians in Electoral Implementation Teams at federal and regional levels.

Security is another issue that continues to cause concern. Last weekend, an Al-Shabaab terrorist attack on the Nasa Hablood Hotel, Mogadishu, resulted in 20 deaths, including the death of Bur'i Mohamed Hamza, State Minister for Environment Affairs and Former Foreign Minister, and dozens more injuries. A statement by the UN Security Council on Monday stressed the need to take measures to prevent and suppress the financing of Al-Shabaab, and any other terrorist group in Somalia. The Council condemned the terrorist attack in the strongest terms. The Council which expressed its deep sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims, as well as to the people and Government of Somalia, reaffirmed that "terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security." It underlined the need to bring perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism to justice. It said "those responsible for these killings should be held accountable, and urged all States, in accordance with their obligations under international law and relevant Security Council resolutions, to cooperate actively with all relevant authorities in this regard."

Equally, AMISOM have made it clear they will be fully deployed to ensure security for the elections, and it has had some considerable successes in recent months. The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, emphasized recently that AMISOM is gearing up to provide security to ensure a peaceful vote during the electoral process. He said AMISOM had already begun working with the Somali Government and Somali security forces to establish a technical security committee to oversee security arrangements for the August ballot.