

## A Week in the Horn

### 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016

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#### News in Brief

##### Africa and the African Union

- Burundi has agreed to the deployment of 100 human rights observers and 100 military monitors following efforts for peace and dialogue by a High-Level Delegation from the African Union. ([See article](#))
- The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, Ambassador Francisco Caetano Madeira (February 1, 2016) has strongly condemned terror attack by Al-Shabaab in Baidoa in which civilians have lost their lives.

##### Ethiopia

- The 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Victory of Adwa, marking the victory of the Ethiopian people over fascist Italy, was celebrated colorfully across the country this week (March 2, 2016). ([See article](#))
- Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Tedros Adhanom (March 4, 2016) held talks with H.E. Mrs Lilane Ploumen, Minister for Trade and Development Cooperation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The two sides discussed issues of migration, regional security and the recent drought in Ethiopia.
- Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Tedros Adhanom (March 4, 2016) received the President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly, H.E Mr MogensLykketoft at his offices. Mr MogensLykketoft commended Ethiopia for taking the lead on refugee matters and further called for continued support.
- H.E. Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn was interviewed by Reed Kramer of AllAfrica Media Group (March 1, 2016). ([See article](#))
- State Minister of Foreign affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-selassie received copies of letters of credence of the Newly Appointed Burundian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Dieudonne Ndabarushimana (March 1, 2016).

- Ethiopia's bid for a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council was officially launched this week (February 29, 2016) with a cultural troupe organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FDRE at the Sheraton Hotel in Addis Ababa. ([See article](#))
- Addis Ababa has finalized preparations to host the Fourth World Coffee Conference next week (March 6-8, 2016), an event which is going to be held on African soil for the first time. ([See article](#))
- The 2016 Pan-African Executive Summit - one of Africa's most 'unique and high', which draws business leaders from 35 countries across Africa and all around the globe, is set to convene in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, March 15-16.
- RwandAir and Ethiopian Airlines signed an air service agreement last week to fly without restrictions in Ethiopia and Rwanda.

## **Djibouti**

- President Guelleh has left for Kigali (March 4, 2016) for talks with the Government of Rwanda. Guelleh is expected to visit the Special Economic Zone in Gasabo, Kigali, where Djibouti was offered land by the Rwandan Government.
- President Ismaïl Omar Guelleh of Djibouti on (March 3, 2016) laid the foundation stone for a new mega-gas project for the export of Ethiopian gas, comprising a natural gas pipeline, a liquefaction plant and an export terminal at Damerjog in Djibouti, APA learnt on Friday (March 4).
- A UK court has dismissed all charges against a Dubai-based businessman (March 3, 2016) in a corruption case brought by the government of Djibouti in East Africa. The government had alleged that Abdourahman Boreh took bribes and negotiated secret shareholdings during the development of a new port and free zone in Djibouti, operated by DP World.
- "The resolution of the dispute between Eritrea and my country will depend on the release of Djiboutian soldiers," The President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh "said on Monday (February 29, 2016) in Doha, during his three-day visit to Qatar, the mediator in the dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti.
- President Guelleh and Qatar's Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani held talks (February 29, 2016). The two sides discussed bilateral relations and ways of enhancing them in various fields.

## **Eritrea**

- "**The resolution of the dispute between Eritrea and my country will depend on the release of Djiboutian soldiers," The President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh "said on Monday (February 29, 2016) in Doha during his three-day visit to Qatar, the mediator in the dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti.**
- Reports went public (March 1, 2016) that eight legal cases have been launched in the Netherlands against individuals who dare to oppose the regime in Asmara. Eight such court cases have been launched against liberal newspapers, a radio station, a website, the Dutch government and an academic who have criticized the Eritrean regime.
- Eritreans living in the UK and the US held a public meeting (March 2, 2016), underscoring their commitment to the implementation of national programs in the homeland.

## **Kenya**

- Brazilian Ambassador to Kenya, Mercela Nicodemos has re-assured Kenyans over the Zika virus (March 4, 2016) ahead of the Rio Olympic Games in August. She said the Brazilian government had mobilized enormous resources to fight the virus and 300,000 health workers have been deployed to wipe out the mosquitoes.
- President Uhuru Kenyatta (March 4, 2016) has constituted a 19-member taskforce to come up with solutions to problems affecting the coffee sector within 20 days.

## **Somalia**

- The Summit of the Heads of State and Government of Troop Contributing countries to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was held in Djibouti on Sunday (February 28, 2016). ([See article](#))
- The Consultative Ministerial Meeting of IGAD on a Regional Security Cooperation Framework kicked off in Djibouti on Saturday (February 27, 2016). ([See article](#))
- A Somali military court (March 3, 2016) has sentenced to death a former journalist who helped al-Shabaab kill five fellow reporters. Hassan Hanafi assisted the Islamist militant group by indentifying possible targets amongst journalists between 2007 and 2011.
- **Somalia has for the first time in two decades directly exported livestock to Egypt (March 3, 2016) a move that will boost the country's economy.** A ship carrying over 2,000 head of camels arrived at the strategic port of Suez this week after the Egyptian government lifted a ban on the livestock.
- Witnesses and officials say 16 people died and at least 10 others were wounded (March1, 2016) in Al-Shabaab attacks. Reports claim four government soldiers died when a land mine exploded outside Mogadishu. The explosion hurt two other soldiers. At least five others were killed in fights between Al-Shabaab militants and local security forces in Somalia's central Galmudug region.

## **South Sudan**

- South Sudan's Presidential Spokesman Ateny Wek Ateny ( March 4, 2016) slammed a decision by the UN Security Council, Wednesday, renewing until 15 April sanctions including a travel ban and an asset freeze on designated individuals.
- The United Nations (March 4, 2016) said at least 25 people were killed and some 120 wounded in last month's attack on a U.N. civilian shelter in Malakal, South Sudan.
- Reports say the Republic of South Sudan was admitted (March 3, 2016) into the East African Community (EAC), increasing the membership of the common market to six with a population of an estimated 163 million people.
- The Ruling parties of Sudan and South Sudan (March 2, 2016) said they would sign a declaration of principles to develop joint political cooperation between the two forces.

## **Sudan**

- Germany and Sudan (March 3, 2016) signed a €51 million cooperation agreement for the implementation of development projects in the three states of eastern Sudan, and five states of Darfur.

- The Ruling parties of Sudan and South Sudan (March 2, 2016) said they would sign a declaration of principles to develop joint political cooperation between the two forces.
- The Sudanese foreign minister, Ibrahim Ghandour, told the official news agency SUNA (March 2, 2016) that he will start a new European tour in mid-March, including Germany, Poland and Switzerland to discuss issues of illegal immigration.

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### **The Nation commemorates the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Victory of Adwa**

The 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Victory of Adwa, marking the triumph of the Ethiopian people over fascist Italy was celebrated colorfully across the country this week (March 02, 2016). The event was observed at Menelik II Square in Addis Ababa in the presence of residents and patriots, including Speaker of the House of People's Representatives, Abadula Gemedo, and other senior government officials.

Laying a wreath of flowers at the Square, Abadula Gemedo noted that the victory opened a new era for black people, which in practical terms proved the instrumentality of a collective conviction to prevent injustice, adding that the victory at the Battle of Adwa prompted Western nations to change their attitude towards Africa and thus resort to a peaceful and diplomatic course. Abadula added that the Adwa victory is the victory of Africans as it helped them to achieve their independence through unity. Inspired by such a victory, Abadula added, the current generation is bound to actualize the country's renaissance. Lij Daniel Jote Mesfin, President of Ethiopian Patriots' Association (EPA), on his part called on the youth to intensify the fight against poverty. Speaker of the Addis Ababa City Administration Council, Dr Tabor Gebremedih, also noted that the celebration is an eternal festivity which in effect demonstrated the unity of Ethiopians, adding that today's generation is bestowed with the responsibility of creating a prosperous and democratic Ethiopia.

It all began with the Treaty of Wuchale, a cooperative agreement between Ethiopia and Italy. In 1889, fascist Italy signed the Treaty of Wuchale with Emperor Menelik II. A dispute later arose over the interpretation of the two versions of the document. The Italian-language version of the disputed Article XVII of the treaty stated that the Emperor of Ethiopia was obliged to conduct all foreign affairs through Italian authorities. This would in effect make Ethiopia a protectorate of the Kingdom of Italy. The Amharic version of the article however stated that the Emperor could use the good offices of the Kingdom of Italy in his relations with foreign nations if he wished. Yet, the Italian envoys claimed that the original Amharic text encompassed the clause and that King Menelik perceptively signed the treaty. Italy then decided on a military solution to force Ethiopia to abide by the Italian version of the treaty. Hence, Italy and Ethiopia faced off in what was later to be known as the First Italo-Ethiopian War.

The battle of Adwa was fought on March 1, 1896 between Ethiopia and fascist Italy near the town of Adwa, in Northern Ethiopia. Emperor Menelik declared, "Enemies have now come upon us to ruin our country and force us to change our religion. Our enemies have begun advancing and digging into the country like moles. With the help of God, I will not give away. Today let the strong fight on my side; and let the weak pray in our favor!"

What can be achieved by an Africa United was at last demonstrated at the Battle of Adwa. In the end, Emperor Menelik was able to buttress the support needed and could mobilize over 100,000 troops to face down the aggression and defeat the invading power.

### **Ethiopia officially launches its bid for a non-permanent seat at the UNSC**

Ethiopia's bid for a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council was officially launched this week (February 29, 2016) with a cultural troupe organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Sheraton Hotel in Addis Ababa. The official launch was marked in the presence of H.E. Dr Tedros Adhanom, Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E Mr Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union and Under-Secretary General Haile Menkorios, Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union. The event was also attended by representatives of UN agencies and members of the Addis Ababa-based diplomatic corps, including, Ambassador Patricia M. Haslach, US Ambassador to Ethiopia and Ambassador Susanna Moorehead, British Ambassador to Ethiopia and to Djibouti (non-resident) and Permanent Representative to the African Union and UN Economic Commission for Africa.

The official launch of Ethiopia's bid for a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council came following the unanimous endorsement of its candidacy to the UNSC at the 26<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government, held from 30-31 January 2016 in Addis Ababa. In 2015, the Government announced Ethiopia's bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2017–18. Dr Tedros, in his opening remarks, noted Ethiopia has always been a strong advocate of the principles of collective security and multilateralism. The Country's firm commitment and significant contributions to the United Nations and its principal organ, the Security Council, is a matter of record. Ethiopia was one of the 51 pioneer countries that founded the United Nations in 1945. He added that Ethiopia was also an active participant and a major contributor to the drafting and subsequent adoption of the organization's Charter at the San Francisco Conference, a Charter anchored on the creation of a global collective security system. He underlined Ethiopia's deep-seated conviction to the ideals of collective security which goes back further, noting that it was one of the only two African countries to have founded the League of Nations. He said his country has always striven for a strong and effective multilateralism that treats all member states on an equal basis and in accordance with international law, no matter how powerful or weak they might be.

Ethiopia's firm conviction and active participation in the United Nations, the Minister noted, has been consistent across successive Ethiopian governments, despite their contrasting ideologies and political systems over these seventy years. At the same time, although a founding member of the United Nations, Ethiopia has only twice served on the Security Council, from 1967 to 1968 and from 1989 to 1990. He said, "At a time when our African brothers were emerging from the shackles of colonialism, Ethiopia was able to seize the opportunity of its membership of both the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity to promote the continent's causes." During its Security Council membership, Ethiopia was at the forefront of the decolonization struggle, strongly advocating the self-determination and political autonomy, among others, of the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. Driven by its commitment to the principles of collective security, he added Ethiopia also consistently voiced firm opposition against the many examples of ruthless aggressions committed in Africa, the Middle East and beyond.

On Ethiopia's historic and leading contributions to Pan-Africanism and its longstanding commitment to enhanced multilateralism, Dr Tedros noted that Ethiopia has played an active and critical role in representing Africa in various multilateral fora and in promoting the continent's interests on such issues as climate change negotiations. He said, "Today, Ethiopia serves as the major hub of multilateral diplomacy in Africa, hosting the headquarters of the African Union, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and numerous other governmental and non-governmental international organizations. The United Nations System in Ethiopia is one of the largest in Africa. Addis Ababa is presently the third largest United Nations duty." Reflecting on the significant geopolitical changes the world has witnessed over the last two and a half decades, Dr Tedros underlined that threats to world peace and security have evolved in an unprecedented manner in the face of a larger number of simultaneous and complex security and humanitarian challenges. Exacerbated by the spread of internal conflict and bloody civil wars, the number of refugees and internally displaced persons has risen to unforeseen levels. The growing threats posed by terrorism have undermined the maintenance of international peace and security as never before. "Indeed," the Minister said, "Ethiopia strongly believes that these global challenges to peace and security necessitate a new level of collective action and enhanced international cooperation."

Dr Tedros reminded his listeners that Ethiopia's desire to be a member of the Security Council emanates from a strong and very real belief that its solid record of continued contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security puts the country in a well-placed position to shoulder the necessary responsibility. Ethiopia has always responded to UN calls for collective action on international peace and security. Since the inception of the United Nations, Ethiopia has deployed over 80,000 military and police personnel to more than ten peacekeeping missions worldwide. He also emphasized that Ethiopia upholds a long and proud history of promoting international peace and security. In the early 1950s and the 1960s, Ethiopia was one of the first countries to contribute to the United Nations peacekeeping operations in Korea and Congo, with these successful testing grounds proving the continued relevance of the principle of collective security. Throughout the 1990s and subsequently in this new millennium, Ethiopia had been able to provide forces for UN operations in Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Abyei, Darfur, South Sudan and Somalia. Currently, without including its involvement in Somalia, which is, of course, an AU Mission, Ethiopia is providing the second largest number of troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations, a total of 8,326 personnel. He said, "We are very proud of the fact that it is the **largest contributor of women peacekeepers** to UN missions."

Mindful of the fact that Ethiopia does not see the peace and stability of its neighbors and the region as different from its own, Dr Tedros noted that Ethiopia's role in the maintenance of peace and security is not confined to the wider international sphere. In fact, this has been the driving force for the country's peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts in the sub-region and, indeed, in Africa at large. Within the framework of IGAD and the AU, Ethiopia is playing a leading mediation role to resolve the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, he said, adding that it is also at the forefront of fighting against terrorism in Somalia and supporting its state-building process; and taking an active part in the creation of the East African Standby Force. He said, "At a time when the world faces unprecedented levels of migration, Ethiopia is shouldering its responsibility, hosting more than **800,000 refugees** from neighboring countries, the largest number in Africa." Taking note of the fact that Ethiopia will serve all members of the United Nations in discharging the charter-mandated responsibilities bestowed upon it in a true spirit

of partnership and transparency, the Minister underlined Ethiopia's firm conviction that it upholds the commitment, the strength and the ability to offer real and valuable support to multilateralism, and to Pan-Africanism. He said, "Today, I would ask for the commitment of your countries to voting in favor of Ethiopia as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the term 2017-2018, during the election to be held in New York in June. Indeed, we count on your valuable support and it is in this respect that we would like to close by announcing the official launch of Ethiopia's campaign." Ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, said Ethiopia can contribute largely and effectively to the operations of the United Nations, given the opportunity to serve on the Security Council, adding that the country will continue to make meaningful contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security, in line with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Ambassador Chergui said, "Africa should mobilize itself to support the Ethiopian candidature for membership at the UNSC."

### **The Summit of the Heads of State and Government of Troops Contributing countries to AMISOM**

The Summit of the Heads of State and Government of Troops Contributing countries to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was held at the end of last week (February 28, 2016) in Djibouti. The Summit, which was aimed at reinforcing military operations in Somalia, to effectively counter threats from Al Shabaab, was attended by Ethiopia's Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Kenya's President, Uhuru Kenyatta, the President of Djibouti, Ismaïl Omar Guelleh, Somalia's President, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and the Defense Ministers of Uganda, Burundi and Nigeria, alongside other key stakeholders and Somalia's partners.

The Summit of the Heads of State and Government of Troops Contributing countries to AMISOM urged stakeholders to increase and provide timely, enhanced and better-coordinated support to the Somali National Security Forces. The Summit urged the AU Commission and the International Community, to identify and disable channels utilized to finance Al Shabaab and other terror groups, as well as curtail the recruitment and training of foreign fighters in Somalia. Capacity building of the Somali National Army and stabilization of newly liberated areas were pinpointed as priority areas requiring immediate attention.

Opening the Summit, H.E Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, commended the efforts of all stakeholders who are taking part in the ongoing stabilization of Somalia and urged the international community to further strengthen the mission. He said, "This Summit has been hosted here in Djibouti at a very critical time for the political and security processes in Somalia. The meeting here shows the decisive efforts at consolidating peace in Somalia. Somalia is currently implementing Vision 2016 and we are delighted to see the results of this culminating in the September elections. This process is essential in accelerating key reforms, including public finance management, security, progress towards the elections and the formation of federal states [and] is all very critical". The AU Commissioner further expressed confidence that resolutions made at the Summit would fast track critical security operations in Somalia.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn also hailed AMISOM's determination, often evident in the realization of peace and stability in Somalia. The Prime Minister further acknowledged the efforts of all troop contributing countries to AMISOM, underlining that the mission has been run in a true spirit of Pan Africanism. Djiboutian President, Ismail Omar Guelleh, while stressing the instrumentality of the Summit in reinforcing both AMISOM and the Somali

National Army, said, "By this Summit, we want to reiterate our commitment and engagement and the political will necessary for the reinforcement of AMISOM and the Somali National Army. We decided to meet together, to establish a common political goal for the realization of the mission but also to analyze the challenges that AMISOM faces." Commending the contribution of troop contributing countries to AMISOM in their endeavor to achieve peace and stability in Somalia, the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud, noted that significant achievements have been registered in Somalia since the deployment of AMISOM troops in 2007 which, he said, was a success in view of cultivating the notion of embarking on an African Solution for an African Problem. He added that the sacrifice that has been paid by AMISOM troops will remain part and parcel of the country's history. He said, "Today, because of the presence of AMISOM and because of international support to this mission, Somalia is moving forward. Somalia is moving to a form of elections that has not happened in 47 years. This is a major indicator of the success of the AMISOM mission in Somalia. Yes, it was costly, we lost a lot of great men and women, who have sacrificed their lives, but Somalia is today close to standing on its own feet and becoming an active member of the world community, a peaceful place where its people can live a better life".

### **....and IGAD's consultative ministerial meeting on Regional Security Cooperation Framework**

IGAD's Consultative Ministerial Meeting on Regional Security Cooperation Framework was held in Djibouti last Friday (February 27, 2016). The meeting came under the auspices of the 55<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers convened in Addis Ababa on January 30, 2016 wherein member states agreed to establish a Regional Security Co-operation Framework between Somalia and its neighbors and lay down the necessary platform for regular security dialogue and co-ordination efforts in a bid to address common security threats and challenges. Accordingly, the Foreign Ministers of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and the Republic of Uganda met in Djibouti over the weekend and discussed some of the challenges that the sub-region faces today.

IGAD's Consultative Ministerial Meeting commended the tremendous efforts that member states have put in place for the realization of peace and stability in Somalia. Emphasizing that the Region is facing inter-state and intra-state conflicts, Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chair of the IGAD Council of Ministers, Dr Tedros Adhanom, while recalling the 55<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers' directives for the establishment of the Regional Security Cooperation Framework, expressed his hope that the Framework would offer opportunities to tackle some of the major challenges in the sub-region.

The Consultative Ministerial Meeting made it clear that increased levels of terrorism and the rising levels of radicalization and extremism require a regional strategy to address the structural causes and drivers of violent extremisms and other challenges. Noting that limited political, military and security co-operation and coordination exists among member states, the Ministerial Meeting underlined the need to deliver coordinated offensive operations against the remaining Al-Shabaab strongholds and disrupt its ability to execute further attacks. It also reaffirmed its support to the Federal Government of Somalia in taking forward the integration of forces and development of inclusive security institutions and agencies capable of managing security in the country with a view to ensuring a successful AMISOM exit. On such a score, commitment was also expressed towards employing effective mechanisms for joint security

co-operation in tackling the most critical common security threats as opposed to resorting to reactive crisis responses.

### **Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn: "We Want 'Equitable, Broad-Based Growth"**

H.E Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn was interviewed by Reed Kramer of AllAfrica Media Group, which appeared this week (March 1, 2016). Responding to Kramer's questions, the premier dealt at length with updates of the various developments in the country, the new policy frontiers as well as the local and regional peace and security concerns, including the unrest in parts of the Oromia region and the El-Nino- induced drought.

Given that Addis was the host city for the recently held US-Africa Business Summit, Prime Minister Hailemariam was asked if trade and investment relations with the US were a priority for Ethiopia, to which the premier said, "We feel it is time to strengthen this relationship," adding that "Ethiopia wants to diversify trade and investment with its traditional partners including the United States of America." Mindful of the fact that Ethiopia is a fast-growing economy and that it was investing heavily in infrastructure, the Prime Minister added, "If we want to harvest the infrastructure dividend, we need to attract more investment." In such a line, Prime Minister Hailemariam noted that the US is a major market for Ethiopia's light manufacturing, floriculture, coffee and other high value crops. In all these, the Prime Minister underlined that the advantages are mutual. The PM further noted that U.S. investors, with high-quality production, could support his country in terms of building local capacity, alongside the pursuit of technology transfer. On the prospect of technology, expertise and skills transfer in particular, the Premier said, "We have a vibrant, young, dynamic population that needs more skill, know-how, and technology transfer into the country."

Reflecting on the ever-changing face of his country's potential for Ethio-US trade and investment ties, the Prime Minister noted that Ethiopia had been trying for years to attract U.S. investors, and that there was a growing number of them coming, particularly companies like KKR in the floriculture sector, companies investing in light manufacturing, like PVP and Vanity Fair, and the involvement of anchor investors, such as GE and Boeing and Black Rhino. The Premier said, "We want to make Ethiopia a hub for this kind of manufacturing and maintenance services." This is a good time for us to push forward and get more investors and this is a good time for more companies to come into our country."

Responding to whether his country's success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals would once again be sustained in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Premier made it clear that all it takes is "putting the people at the center." "If we put people at the center," he added, "we can achieve those [the Sustainable Development] Goals". He said, "For the Millennium Development Goals, we successfully achieved all except one. And we'll continue to do this in the coming 15 years with the Sustainable Development Goals as well. We have made this progress because we engage our people fully into the system. In health, for example, our women are very active in the process."

On the part agriculture plays in Ethiopia's economic priorities, the Prime Minister said, "Agriculture is the backbone of this economy. It's going to continue as the backbone for the economy." On the kind of mechanisms that the government is embarking on tapping to transform the sector, the Premier highlighted two areas of intervention. The first key area, he noted, was small-holder farming, which is integrated with private sector contract farming, while the other has to do with big companies investing in large-scale farming and intensive

agriculture like floriculture, where some of the U.S. companies have already started. He added, "The combination of small-holder farming and big companies involved with livestock development processing and also in large-scale farming in soybean and other crops that are very high value – this combination helps us to further our agriculture modernization program. Vertical integration is very important, and manufacturing comes as one of the pillars." The Prime Minister also touched upon other investment frontiers and the business environment in Ethiopia, among which are textile and apparel, cash crops and leather. He said, "Ethiopia is very good in leather production and shoe manufacturing – we are the best in Africa, and we are exporting to the United States, to Europe and China." On the country's energy potentials and the prospects of building a green economy, the Premier said, "As far as power production is concerned, our objective is to have zero-net carbon emissions by **2025**. So we need to produce our power entirely from renewable sources. Ethiopia wants to show to the global community that we contribute as a global citizen. In this regard, we have abundant resources from hydro, geothermal, wind and solar."

On local and regional security concerns, Prime Minister Hailemariam underscored, "We believe poverty is the worst enemy that brings insecurity. The more you reduce the poverty rate, the more secure the country will be." On the recent unrest in parts of the Oromia Region, Prime Minister Hailemariam made it clear that "the root cause of the protests in the country is not politics," ascribing it to the ills of good governance and unemployment. Accordingly, the Premier stressed the need to focus more on the youth and thus create jobs as quickly as possible. In this regard, he noted that Ethiopia is massively working on the development of industrial parks which, he said, could create up to 60,000 jobs. On the impacts of the El-Nino-induced drought, the Premier said, "The government has long invested in building the resiliency of our people in those areas through a safety net program that has helped withstand the shocks for quite some time now. The early warning system we had put in place, and the strategic grain reserve we had built over the years, have also gone a long way to giving us a fighting chance throughout the last few seasons." He noted that Ethiopia was spending its own resources to avert the worst effects, though the responses of the international community have not been sufficient to date. The Premier added, "In the event that the lackluster response continues, the government will take every step necessary to avert humanitarian disaster, including diverting funds from other priorities, if that is what it takes."

### **Burundi agrees to the deployment of African Union monitors**

A High-Level African Union delegation to Burundi, comprising five Heads of State, went to Bujumbura, Burundi last week to consult the government and other actors on the prospect of promoting an inclusive dialogue, and on the deployment of an African Union Mission in Burundi. Following the visit of the High-Level AU delegation, Burundi agreed to the deployment of 100 human rights observers and 100 military monitors from the African Union as part of peace restoring efforts.

Although in December the African Union's Peace and Security Council was explicit in its condemnation of the violence in Burundi and pledged to send a 5,000-strong peacekeeping force, regardless of what the government thought, just over a month later, AU leaders opted to send a delegation instead to hold the peace talks. At the initiative of Idriss Deby Itno, the President of Chad and Current Chairman of the African Union and in consultation with the Heads of State and the Commission, a High-Level Delegation, including Ethiopia's Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn and the Presidents of the Republic of South Africa, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of Gabon, was able to meet

Burundian political stakeholders. The meeting was also attended by Ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security, Mr Cryspus Kiyonga - special envoy of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, facilitator of the Inter-Burundian Dialogue, and Professor Ibrahima Fall, AU Special representative for the Great Lakes Region.

The High-Level AU Delegation deplored the continuing violations of human rights, the acts of violence against civilians and public security forces, as well as the deterioration of the already alarming humanitarian situation. In this regard, it requested that the government and the armed groups put an end to acts of violence. The delegation, however, welcomed the strong commitment of all parties towards resolving differences. It also commended the decision of the withdrawal of the international arrest warrants issued against some Burundian citizens, the reopening of a private radio station and radio-television broadcasting station as well as the announcement of the imminent release of detainees. It also called upon the international community to support the people of Burundi in their efforts to find lasting peace and stability in the country.

The crisis in Burundi began as the ruling political party, the National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), announced that the incumbent would run for a third term in the 2015 presidential election. The Arusha Peace Agreement, on which the current constitution is based, stipulates a two-term limit, which means that seeking a third term is a violation of both the agreement and the constitution. Nkurunziza and his supporters claim he is eligible to run as he was elected by Parliament and not "by universal direct suffrage" as indicated in the agreement. Although the constitution of Burundi prohibits a president from running for more than two terms, the judges of the constitutional court approved Nkurunziza's claim to run for a third term in office. Members of the opposition however described the court's ruling as being "manipulated."

### **The 4<sup>th</sup> World Coffee Conference due to unfold in Addis Ababa**

Addis Ababa has finalized preparations to host the Fourth World Coffee Conference next week (March 6-8, 2016), an event which is going to be held on African soil for the first time. The Conference, which is being co-organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Trade and the International Coffee Organization, is set to convene at the United Nations Conference Center. The Fourth World Coffee Conference, that will be held under the theme: 'Nurturing Coffee Culture & Diversity', is expected to draw over 1,500 foreign and local coffee producers, exporters, buyers and researchers for extended discussions on coffee production, marketing, and finance and environment protection agendas. An exhibition involving 120 companies and visits to coffee producing localities and tourism sites are included in the week-long program.

Indeed, the conference creates an opportunity to bring together all stakeholders in the sector to review key production and marketing issues and forward solutions that will shape the future of the coffee industry. The conference is one such event, dedicated to creating the platform for intergovernmental consultations to facilitate international trade and to promote a sustainable coffee economy for the benefit of all stakeholders, and particularly of small-scale farmers in coffee producing countries. It is an important instrument for forging development cooperation and promoting awareness of the need for a sustainable coffee economy, of the threat to sustainability posed by negative economic conditions for producers, and on markers of quality, promotion and diversification. Members comprise exporting and importing Governments (including the European Union with 28 member states) and many coffee producing countries.

Improving the living standards of coffee producers, especially smallholders, is a priority for Governments, as highlighted at the last World Coffee Conference. Ahead of the Conference, the Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ato [Mr] Tefera Derebew, said, "As a source of livelihood for millions of coffee growers, processors and traders in the world, our continent and my country Ethiopia, the economic and social significance of coffee is immense". He added, "The Government of Ethiopia and the coffee growers in the country have long been exerting concerted efforts to improving the productivity and quality of coffee with our development partners and coffee consumers". Ethiopia is the world's fifth largest coffee producer and Africa's top producer and exporter. Ethiopia, with a per capita consumption of 2.40kg, leads the African continent in domestic consumption and up to 20% of the population, one way or the other depends on coffee production and trading for a living. Coffee is primarily cultivated by small-scale farmers and is often exposed to price fluctuations and environmental impacts. Despite some improvement in its pricing over the past few years, domestic and world coffee prices have declined and remained very low for much of the late 1990s and 2000s. Ethiopia is the home and cradle of biodiversity of Arabica coffee seeds, of which most are often identified by their distinct and characteristic flavor and aroma. More genetically diverse strains of Coffee Arabica exist in Ethiopia than anywhere else in the world [over 6,000]; a country which botanists and scientists believe was the centre of origin, diversification and dissemination of the coffee plant. Ethiopian farmers normally produce various types of single-origin coffee Arabica, and conventional producers offer nine distinct spectra of single-origin-speciality coffee (Jimma, Nekemte, Illubabor, Limu, Tepi, Bebeka, Yirga Chefe, Sidamo and Harar), which have long been diffused into the trade circuits of the global coffee market. Among them the sundried coffee beans from Harar, aka "Mocca" and the washed beans from Yirga Chefe are considered as the finest brands.

The Fourth World Coffee Conference will also feature the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX), the first of its kind in Africa, which has modernized the country's coffee trading since its debut in 2008. This venture has improved Ethiopia's economy and has inspired other African countries to follow suit. ECX ascertains order, integrity, transparency and efficiency in the coffee market, which has motivated market players to come to the formal channel. As a dynamic and forward-looking institution, ECX is ready and willing to adapt to current global practices and initiatives.

As coffee is a major source of income to millions of farmers and one of the key sources of export earnings for many developing countries, the Fourth World Coffee Conference is expected to lay down a platform of discussions on the Sustainable Development Goals, and other global and national agendas that are aligned to the coffee industry. Accordingly, improving cultivation, processing, storage, transportation and marketing practices make up one of the key agendas at the Fourth World Coffee Conference. On such a score, the efforts of the International Coffee Organization should help strengthen regional capacity in the field of coffee certification and verification projects in Eastern Africa, with activities related to production such as developing drought and disease-resistant varieties, improving the living standards of coffee producers and adopting environmentally-friendly technologies.