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The 12th Ethiopia-Djibouti Joint Ministerial Commission Meeting

On Thursday last week (July 4), the 12th Ethiopia-Djibouti Joint Ministerial Commission Meeting was held in Addis Ababa, with the delegations led respectively by Dr. Tedros Adhanom, Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs and by Mr. Mahmoud Ali Yousuf, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti.

Dr. Tedros who extended a warm welcome to the Djiboutian Delegation expressed Ethiopia's satisfaction at the unique level of relations between the two countries which included cooperation on joint mega-projects. He cited railway and road developments, construction of new ports and joint power and water projects, yielding immense benefit for both countries and working towards ensuring regional peace and security as well as further strengthening and cementing the bilateral relationship by diversifying and widening the scope of cooperation. Mr. Mahmoud Ali Yousuf also emphasized the special relationship and expressed Djibouti's desire to strengthen the existing relationship and raise it to a higher level. He highlighted the common interest of the two countries to realize strong regional economic ties and increased economic integration between the two countries. He noted the need to demonstrate wise and effective leadership to carry out these demanding projects in infrastructural development, and expressed the satisfaction of his Government at the level of cooperation between the two countries on issues of regional peace and stability.

Both Ministers expressed their hope that the Joint Ministerial Commission Meeting's focus on strategic issues that could help to speed up joint projects. There was agreement on the long term common strategic vision for the development and integration of the two countries as initiated at the

11th Joint Experts meeting in Addis Ababa. The Ministers appreciated the existing close co-operation and consultation between the two countries on bilateral and regional matters within the IGAD framework and agreed to further strengthen their ties through continuous consultation on matters of common interest. Djibouti presented a Strategic Integration Plan in the context of global and regional strategy, and recommended preparing the detailed document of this strategic vision jointly as soon as possible. It emphasized that this global strategic plan aimed to facilitate the realization of economic integration of the region and between the two countries to set-up a model of regional integration. Ethiopia appreciated the initiative and accepted the proposal.

The Ministers agreed to conduct a seminar on the implementation of the agreements in Judicial Cooperation and resolve any impediments to the agreements in the Justice Sector and prepare a joint action plan, to be initiated by Ethiopia, to cover judicial assistance, exchange of sentenced prisoners and extradition of offenders. The meeting also underlined the seriousness of illegal migration and human trafficking and agreed to work to eliminate traffickers. A joint technical committee is to build capacity to deal with this and follow up implementation of the agreement.

Issues covered included education and health. Djibouti requested that Djiboutian students should be treated as Ethiopians for entry into higher educational institutions in Ethiopia. The ongoing relationship between Addis Ababa University and the University of Djibouti was welcomed. Ethiopia raised the idea of building an Ethiopian community school in Djibouti and requested land for the project. The Ministers welcomed existing co-operation in health, particularly joint efforts to eradicate polio in border areas. They agreed to exchange information on cross border transmitted diseases. Djibouti's Minister of Health expressed his interest to strengthen the partnership with Ethiopia in training and capacity building.

The meeting discussed the importance of co-operation in communication, information and media. It discussed the status of the implementation of an earlier Memorandum of Understanding on manpower exchanges and agreed to formulate a joint action plan for implementation. The Ministers agreed on cooperation between Youth Associations, the Djiboutian Youth Council and the Ethiopia Youth Federation, and to establish a Joint Technical Committee to provide mechanisms to resolve issues on tourism, including movements of money and payments, and encourage tour operators to cooperate. Both sides agreed to make efforts to provide a lasting solution to all pending financial issues. They agreed the Technical Committee should meet soon to submit recommendations to the Ministers.

The Joint Ministerial Commission also discussed trade issues including a border trade protocol, investment and financial matters, and the forthcoming agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation. They discussed Ethiopia's livestock exports and agreed to form a joint technical committee to investigate any problems related to exports and related issues. To ensure the normal flow of production at the farm at Serofta, both parties agreed the customs of both countries should ensure the facilitation of traffic.

Other areas where the two sides agreed to work together included the Maritime and Transit Service, the issue of work permits for Ethiopians working in Djibouti, accommodating Djiboutians looking for job opportunities in Ethiopia and looking jointly at employment practices, facilitating training of manpower and experience sharing. A number of specific issues were raised over the Port and Transport and Transport Sector Cluster and the Ministers agreed on the need to improve effectiveness and efficiency. It was agreed that the Joint Operation Committee should be more pro-

active over corridor issues, and to establish a data center for logistics information and carry out a comprehensive study in order to amend the existing port utilization agreements as necessary. This would allow for proper participation in the port development process and the establishment of the Djibouti Transit Corridor Management Authority. With reference to pollution and the CCA contaminated soil disposal process, Ethiopia has signed a contract with NIRAS A/S, from Denmark for the removal and disposal of contaminated soil at Djibouti port.

With regard to the existing Ethio-Djibouti Railway, Ethiopia noted the line between Dire Dawa and Djibouti was under maintenance and would be operational in the coming weeks. Some former workers will be re-employed and a meeting of the Board of Directors will be called as soon as possible. Both sides confirmed all means will be employed to support operationalization of the standard gauge railway line within the specified time. A Joint Technical Committee has been established based on the agreement on the Road Fund issue reached at the 11th Joint Commission meeting. Ethiopia agreed in principle to increase of road fees and both sides have agreed to produce further proposals within two months.

The Ministers signed a protocol agreement submitted by the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation and Electricity of Djibouti for the construction of second interconnection line for 230 kV connecting Semera-Ethiopia to Jaban As-Djibouti. This will increase energy transfer between the two networks and the reliability of the power supply. In addition, a follow-up mechanism at experts' level has now been set up for the implementation of signed agreements, of the decisions of the Joint Ministerial Commission and the status of draft agreements. A Joint High Level body to oversee the implementation of large scale joint infrastructural projects has also been agreed.

Enhancing Regional Integration: Ethiopia-Djibouti Power and Rail links

In a groundbreaking ceremony on Sunday (July 7) in Djibouti, Djibouti's President Ismail Omar Guelleh and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn launched the construction of the new Nagad Railway Station. The inauguration of the station, which will form part of the 800km Addis Ababa - Dewele - Djibouti rail route, was also attended by Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom.

Prime Minister Hailemariam, speaking at the ceremony, said that the construction of this rail link would have a significant impact in bolstering regional economic integration. President Ismail Omar also noted that "the infrastructure will advance economic cooperation and social connections between the two sisterly countries". Both leaders described the occasion as a historic day for the region.

Dr. Tedros noted that the \$4.5 billion dollar railway construction project exemplified Ethiopia's foreign policy which aims to fight poverty and build a prosperous nation and a prosperous region. He explained that the costs of the massive rail project will be shared by both governments and, he added, on the Ethiopian side some 20% of the construction had already been completed, Dr. Tedros expressed his satisfaction that everything was ready on the Djiboutian side, including all necessary equipment, in order to begin construction of the Nagad Railway Station. He emphasized that July 7 was a great and historic day for both countries.

Another project, agreed this week, is the second electrical power system interconnection between Ethiopia and Djibouti. The agreement for this two billion dollar link was signed by Djibouti's Minister

of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti, Mohamed Ali Yousuf, and Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, during the 12th Joint Ministerial Meeting held last week. This interconnection, covering the area from Semera, in Ethiopia's Afar Regional State, to Jaban As-Djibouti, will be a 230kV electric power transmission project, similar to the first transmission line. The line will allow Djibouti to import an additional 35Mw to 70Mw of electricity from Ethiopia.

Currently Ethiopia is exporting electric power to Sudan and a power export agreement has been signed with Kenya. With the completion of a number of different hydro power production projects in the next few years, Ethiopia plans to export electricity to more neighboring countries as a way to strengthen regional economic integration schemes, especially in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) sub-region.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development provides an institutional framework for economic integration. Among the aims and objectives of IGAD are: creating an enabling environment for foreign, cross-border and domestic trade and investment; and developing a coordinated and complementary infrastructure in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy in the sub-region. In 2009, IGAD Member States adopted a Minimum Integration Plan with the aim of accelerating regional economic cooperation and integration. Increased cooperation and investment on key regional infrastructure projects is an important aspect of the plan; to this end the development of regional interconnectivity among the countries of the IGAD region is being actively supported by IGAD and by IGAD member states and development partners. Enhanced interconnectivity in transport, energy and water resources is expected to contribute to increase trade and contribute to alleviate poverty within the region, while the overall contribution to the peace and security is immense.

In fact, there is already significant increased volume of trade, market expansion and free movement in the IGAD sub-region. These are positive developments and they will be strengthened by a resurgence of regional mega-infrastructure projects including the recently launched railway project between Ethiopia and Djibouti, the Power Interconnection projects between Ethiopia and Djibouti, between Ethiopia and Kenya, and between Ethiopia and Sudan, the different cross border and internal road building projects among the region's countries, as well as the massive, US\$26 billion, LAPSET project covering port construction, oil pipeline, rail, highway and fibre-optic regional infrastructure. Ethiopia and Djibouti, for example, have also reached an agreement to develop the capacity of Djibouti Port to facilitate their growing volume of imports and exports. Even with some security concerns remaining in the region, its economic growth "is in full bloom".

Ethiopia's policy towards the region has the goal of encouraging broad-based and mutually-beneficial economic growth, aimed at alleviating poverty. This is understood to occur in the context of regional integration, and Ethiopia is working particularly to strengthen the levels of intra-regional trade and to build regional infrastructure significantly. It is after all expected to be one of the fastest growing economies in the world between 2011 and 2015, and the fastest in Africa, according to the Economist. Ethiopia, in fact, understands that regional integration can be properly enhanced by promoting interconnectivity across the region, in energy and in transport, through the building of roads, railways and power plants. Additional projects are now underway to generate enough power from the Nile, through the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, to keep the entire subcontinent operational.

South Sudan celebrates its second anniversary of independence

South Sudan celebrated its second Independence Day in Juba on Tuesday (July 9) in the presence of President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, President Sheikh Hassan Mohamud of Somalia, Botswana's President Lt. General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, Thabo Mbeki, former South African President, Ms. Hilde Johnson, the Special Representative of the United Nations' Secretary General, and Ato Demeke Mekonnen, Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister.

In his address to the nation, South Sudan's President Salva Kiir said that the country was enjoying its independence which, he underlined, had been gained through the bitter sacrifice of its brave children. He also underlined his government's determination to get rid of corruption: "As I stated before, I state it again now and will continue to say it...corruption will not be tolerated. Those implicated will be taken before the court of law". He went on: "the days when mistakes were being committed with impunity are gone. During our transitional period, obtaining independence was our priority. Now that we are a free nation, our fight against corruption shall not be confined at the national level only, but will extend to the states, counties and anywhere that there is public spending".

President Kiir also noted that a number of bills on human rights, freedom of expression, right of access to information, the media authority and information and broadcasting are currently passing through the Parliament and would soon be enacted. He said huge efforts were being made to professionalize and reorganize the security forces, including the SPLA, national security and police services. He admitted that services, including the provision of education, health, security and water have been unsatisfactory over the previous year and said "These scenarios must change. As your President, I promise you that we will work tirelessly to change them."

Referring to relations with the Sudan, President Kiir repeated the commitment of his government to the implementation of cooperation agreements and the implementation matrix. This, he said, was the only way to ensure the viability of the two states, but he also called on the Sudanese Government to work fully and unconditionally to implement those agreements and to reach an agreement over the "final status for Abyei", pointing out that this could not stay pending "indefinitely".

Uganda's President Museveni speaking on the occasion warned Africans against tribalism and divisions stressing they allow foreign interferences. He said if you are weak or divided then you invite foreigners to come and oppress you. He called for unity and quoted an African proverb that "the teeth with a gap never grind the meat well". Botswana's President Khama urged South Sudanese to continue with the visions of its martyrs and stressed that the national reconciliation process should develop a mechanism to boost unity among the young nation, while President Kagame encouraged the creation of greater inter-Africa infrastructure and larger economic blocks to promote social economic relationships. Ethiopia's Deputy Prime Minister Demeke underlined that relations between Ethiopia and South Sudan were growing steadily stronger especially in the areas of economic relations and diplomatic ties.

A day earlier the United Nations Security Council heard a briefing from Hilde Johnson, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) on a video link from South Sudan's capital, Juba. Ms. Johnson said South Sudan had made significant strides towards consolidating peace, creating an effective police force and establishing the rule of law. She noted that President Salva Kiir had issued a decree of amnesty on April 25 to the

leaders of six armed groups fighting the Government. The South Sudan Liberation Army, the South Sudan Democratic Army and the South Sudan Defence Force had accepted it, and thousands of militias had come forward for reintegration. This, she said, was “a very positive development for stability in the country and in particular for Unity and Upper Nile States.”

With support from UNMISS, the Government and the South Sudan National Police Service had registered more than 47,000 police officers, she added, setting new standards of professionalism. She said UNMISS had also helped the Government deal with more than 1,000 cases of prolonged, arbitrary detention, and create a national security policy as well as a national census for all the country’s 10 States. A joint road map on integrated United Nations support for the 2015 elections had been agreed. However, the austerity measures imposed after the oil-production shutdown of January 2012 as well as instability and divergences within the top echelons of the ruling Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) had made it difficult for the Government to implement intended political reforms and strengthen public institutions.

Ms. Johnson expressed “deep concern” over a number of issues of human rights violations by armed groups, arbitrary arrests, detentions and killings by security forces and the Government’s inability to hold those responsible to account. It was however an encouraging sign, she said, that President Kiir had issued a statement on May 17, condemning the violence by armed groups in Jonglei State and the abuses committed by ill-disciplined elements of the security forces, and committing the Government to bring those responsible to justice.

The Security Council was also briefed by Francis Mading Deng, Permanent Representative of South Sudan to the United Nations, who described how ongoing tensions between his country and neighboring Sudan, as well as intra-communal violence in Jonglei and other States, had severely constrained the Government’s ability to deliver much-needed basic services, ensure respect for human rights and protect civilians. Acknowledging the international community’s deep concern over those challenges, he said they were the result of the prolonged war in South Sudan. He noted the Government’s efforts to draft a new constitution, prepare for the 2015 elections and create a national census illustrated its determination to develop the necessary tools for democratic transformation. However, he admitted there was however a gap between aspirations and performances, which he put down largely to a lack of capacity.

He said dialogue and reconciliation was the only way to promote peace, security and stability, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration were essential. There was also a need to foster a culture of peace, mutual accommodation and tolerance, while developing capacity to “silence the guns” and promote socioeconomic development and prosperity. He said that despite difficult political and economic conditions and the unresolved issue of Abyei, including the recent assassination of the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief in Abyei, the Government of South Sudan remained optimistic about its recent efforts for peace with neighboring Sudan, including the recent consultations between their respective Vice Presidents.

At another meeting on Thursday (July 11) the United Nations Security Council renewed for a year the mandate of UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). The Council approved unanimously a resolution drafted by the United States extending the UNMISS mandate until 15 July 2014. The resolution demanded the South Sudanese government ensure unrestricted freedom of movement throughout its territory for the mission and its associated organizations. The Council welcomed

geographical reconfiguration of UNMISS' deployment" to focus on volatile high-risk areas and associated protection requirements".

Ethiopia "demonstrating strong leadership on Climate Change", French Minister Delegate for Development

Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros earlier this week met with M. Pascal Canfin, French Minister Delegate for Development. Discussions between the two ministers centered on the 2013 Africa-France Summit and the 2015 UN Conference on Climate Change both set to be held in Paris.

M. Canfin, highlighting the important leadership Ethiopia has consistently demonstrated on climate change, stated that having more partners like Ethiopia would go a long way in addressing the challenges of climate change. He said Ethiopia's policies could serve as an example to other countries in demonstrating that addressing climate change need not compromise a country's path to economic development. Dr. Tedros briefed the Minister on Ethiopia's green economic policy and its promotion of renewable sources of energy, re-forestation and large-scale soil and water conservation. Dr. Tedros noted that the Ethiopian government was currently scaling-up best practices so as to achieve its goals. He added that the government's current policies were yielding tangible results in the agricultural sector where productivity amongst small-holder farmers, an important part of the economy, was improving.

Regarding the upcoming UN Conference on Climate Change, the French Development Minister expressed his hope that the conference would act as a forum through which countries would share best practices and solutions for climate change. With regard to Africa and the developing world in general he explained that the climate change agenda would be legitimized only when Africans took ownership of the process, much like Ethiopia has already done. He stated that all stakeholders must commit to incorporating the agendas agreed at the conference into the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). He also emphasized that there would be ample room at the conference in Paris for the world to reach a more ambitious agreement on climate change.

M. Canfin also raised the issue of adoption of the FAO's Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security in relation to the recent G8 Summit held in Northern Ireland. Dr. Tedros assured M. Canfin that Ethiopia had a clear strategy in place that balanced the promotion of investments in large-scale farming and national food security. M. Canfin expressed the hope that more countries would follow the example of the Senegalese government, which recently began the process of harmonizing these guidelines with domestic laws and policies.

The two ministers also discussed recent developments in Egypt and Mali, with M. Canfin briefing Dr. Tedros on the success of the Brussels Conference on Mali, co-organized by France and the European Union. He expressed his view that the mobilization of €3.2 billion would go a long way towards supporting developments in the country. Dr. Tedros took the opportunity to thank the French government, on behalf of both the African Union and Ethiopia, for their timely intervention in the West African nation. He also expressed his view that hard-fought military gains had to be accompanied by political solutions in order to consolidate the progress that is currently being made in the country. Dr. Tedros added that political forces had to be prepared to listen and compromise in order to pacify conflicts. With regard to the way forward in Mali, both ministers agreed that security had to be accompanied by development.

Support for victims of abuse and human trafficking

During his recent official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, visited the Ethiopian Consulate in Jeddah, where over ninety Ethiopian women had taken refuge from abuse from their employers. They had come to Saudi Arabia to work in domestic service but had been forced to flee to this shelter from various physical and psychological attacks they had suffered from their employers. Dr. Tedros met these victims of abuse in the consulate shelter and heard their stories which ranged from denials of salary or sleep, physical and sexual assault, the withholding of passports, imprisonment, and even murder. Almost all had faced severe abuse and they wanted to return home. Diplomats in the consulate confirmed that many of the victims had been driven to despair and were suffering from psychological problems, even to the extent of cases of suicide.

Dr. Tedros was deeply saddened by their stories and the situation the women were in. Realizing their situation was aggravating serious mental and health problems, he immediately instructed the Mission officials to provide all necessary support and services to facilitate their return home to Ethiopia as soon as possible. This was done and within a matter of days a total of nearly ninety of these victims of abuse had been provided tickets and other necessary support. They arrived back in Addis Ababa at Bole International Air port on Monday this week (July 8).

Following this, Dr. Tedros has called for an urgent meeting with Ethiopia's Heads of Missions in the Middle East as well as community representatives and higher officials in the ministry. This, being held next week, is to discuss further the problems for victims of abuse or trafficking and what can be done as a matter of urgency for these people.

The Government is determined to deal with this problem. It is already taking strict measures to minimize and protect migrant domestic workers abroad especially in the Middle East. It has established a National Council against Human Trafficking, chaired at Deputy Prime Minister Level, to encourage awareness of the dangers of human trafficking, and set up a National Movement against Human Trafficking to reinforce its effort to put an end to this abominable practice.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has recently closed down a total of thirty three agencies for involvement in illegal trafficking of domestic workers. The Ministry has also banned travel for unregistered domestic workers to the Emirates. The Ministry reports that there was a fourfold increase in overseas job applications (from 20,000 to 80,000) in 2011. It estimates this might represent no more that 30 to 40 percent of those trying to get to the Middle East. The rest would go through illegal brokers, increasing the vulnerability of migrants to human trafficking and so to forced labour.

During his bilateral discussions in Saudi Arabia, Dr. Tedros requested the Kingdom's Foreign Minister, Prince Saud Al-Faisal, to extend the dead line for the proposed amnesty to enable undocumented Ethiopians to regularize their status or return home. The number of applicants were so large that the Embassy in Riyadh and the Consulate in Jeddah were unable to complete the necessary formalities for applicants before the original deadline. Prince Saud Al-Faisal subsequently extended the time limit by a further four months. More than 40,000 Ethiopians in Saudi Arabia are expected to take advantage of the concession.

Ethiopia at ECOSOC's High-Level Segment and WTO's Global Aid-for-Trade Review

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is holding its substantive session for 2013 in Geneva. The High-Level Segment was held from July 1–4 under the title “Contributions of the Economic and Social Council to the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda as a principal body for policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development and for the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals”. Mr. Nestor Osario, President of ECOSOC, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Vuk Jeremic, President of the UN General Assembly, Mr. Ueli Maurer, President of the Swiss Confederation, all made opening statements at the High-Level Segment.

Ethiopia was a lead presenter in the High Level Segment’s panel discussion on the role of ECOSOC in the elaboration of the Post-2015 Development Agenda as well as participating as a panelist in two side events of the segment. Ambassador Minelik Alemu Getahun, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations Office at Geneva highlighted the contributions of the Millennium Development Goals to the remarkable results achieved in reducing extreme poverty by putting forward an integrated set of quantitative development goals and targets. He also outlined the contributions of the global partnership to the progress made. However, he also underscored the significant finance gap in global development partnership. This, he said, was one of the major challenges of developing countries in achieving inclusive and sustainable development. He emphasized that ECOSOC should play an important role maintaining the focus on development finance, trade, debt relief and science and technology.

Ambassador Minelik said ECOSOC's advocacy and consensus building activities should therefore focus on creating an enabling international financial and economic environment, putting in place an improved system of review, monitoring and accountability framework. It should also include renewed partnership based on, among other things, fulfillment of the 0.7 % Gross National Income as Official Development Assistance, enhancing the capacity of developing countries for domestic resource mobilization, and promoting principles of partnership including non-conditionality and alignment with national development priorities and policy space for developing countries to pursue their development aspirations. The Ambassador noted that Ethiopia was implementing its Growth and Transformation Plan which included a Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy with the objectives of poverty reduction and of achieving structural transformation. These objectives should receive increased support from renewed global partnerships.

This week in Geneva, Ethiopia also took an active part in the debate at the World Trade Organization’s Fourth Global Review of Aid-for-Trade which was held from July 8-10 under the theme of “Connecting to Global Value Chains”. The Director-General of the World Trade Organization, Mr. Pascal Lamy said that “Aid-for-Trade is making a difference, but it can make more of a difference if it tackles the factors needed to get the business and investment climate right to connect the least connected in international Trade.” The Global Review highlighted the point that the least developed countries could benefit from international trade and the preferential market access if they built up their productive capacity and infrastructure, enhanced skills and created a conducive climate for investment to enable them to become integrated into the global value chains.

Ethiopia participated in the panel session on connecting Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to Global Value Chains. Ambassador Minelik stated that the global value chain was an important tool for poverty reduction and employment creation through the promotion of trade and access to markets,

to Foreign Direct Investment, to new technologies and beneficial integration into the global economic system. He briefed the session on Ethiopia's transformative agenda, including its conducive policy environment, ownership and participatory processes and its enhancement of agricultural productivity through modern inputs and practices. He noted it also encouraged the development of agribusinesses with the objective of adding value to major agricultural commodities and providing value addition as in coffee-using intellectual property tools. He outlined some of Ethiopia's initiatives to accelerate transformation through value addition, including revolutionizing commodity trading, enhancing competitiveness, increasing technology transfer and innovation. These operated through the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency, the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange, the Metals and Engineering Corporation which is made up of 15 integrated manufacturing companies, and the Engineering Capacity Building Program. Ambassador Minelik also detailed the progress of some of these initiatives, including the leather sector and horticultural businesses, in connecting to global markets; he stresses the potential in these and other agribusiness sectors.

In connection with the WTO's 4th Global Review of Aid-for-Trade, a very colorful traditional Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony was held at WTO Headquarters. Mr. José Maria Neves, Prime Minister of Cape Verde; Mr. Pascal Lamy, Director-General of the WTO; Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of UNDP; Ministers, Ambassadors and other officials took part; and the ceremony was also attended by more than 200 participants at the Global Review.

The third round of Somalia/Somaliland talks in Istanbul

The third round of talks between the Federal Government of Somalia and the Government of Somaliland took place in Istanbul July 7-9 under the auspices of the Government of Turkey. The talks followed framework reached at Chevening and then agreed in Dubai and in Ankara in April this year. The two delegations were led, respectively by Abdikarim Hussein Guleed, Somalia's Minister of Interior and National Security, and Dr. Muhammad Abdullahi Omar, Somaliland's Trade and International Investment Minister, Minister,. The talks were hosted by Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. The day before the talks opened both sides paid a courtesy visit on the Turkish Foreign minister, and presented their respective views on how the three-day meeting should proceed, with Somalia's Minister of Interior and National Security suggesting they should first work on making unity attractive and settle the grievances through negotiations, and Dr. Omar saying there should be a substantive discussion on the issue of Somaliland's recognition and on drawing up a roadmap for this.

The meeting follows the meeting held in April in Ankara when Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and Somaliland President Ahmed Silanyo came together for the first time and signed the Ankara communiqué, agreeing to a continuation of dialogue within three months. Foreign Minister Davutoğlu said "No matter how dense Turkey's agenda is, Turkey will always keep Somali and Somaliland dialogue on its agenda and will continue to strive to build strong bridges between them through humanitarian aid." The Turkish minister said that helping Somalis in every possible way was a historic responsibility for Turkey. "Irrespective of which country they live in, we will help all our Somali brothers and sisters in every possible way. This is our historic responsibility as well as a humanitarian responsibility and an indispensable part of our active diplomatic policy in Africa." Turkey opened its Embassy in Mogadishu in November 2011 following a visit by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in August 2011.

On Monday, after the day's closed door discussions, Hirsi Haji Ali Hassan, Somaliland's Minister of Presidency, gave a press briefing, and detailed the demands presented by the Government of Somaliland. These included: that the Federal Government of Somalia should reckon and accept the aspirations of self-determinations and full independence of Somaliland; that the Federal Government should prosecute all who took part in the unspeakable crimes against humanity under Siad Barre's regime all across Somaliland; that the Federal Government should accept special status for Somaliland in the UN as an observer on the international stage until full independence is reinstated; that the Federal Government of Somalia should accept Somaliland as the sole legitimate and decision-maker within Somaliland Airspace and that Somaliland Aviation Authorities should be solely responsible for collecting all charges and fees from airlines using its airspace and all airlines using their airports; and that the Federal Government of Somalia should acknowledge Somaliland's sovereign rights to administer and manage its own natural resources and as the legitimate decision maker in dealing with potential investors, local or international, within the borders of the Republic of Somaliland.

Speaking briefly to reporters after the meeting on Monday, Abdikarim Hussein Guleed, Somalia's Minister of Interior, said he was encouraged by the way the talks were proceeding. He was quoted as saying: "they seem to be taking the right direction every time". There were reports on the second day that the two sides had agreed on elements for a common agenda for future talks between the two side, and to facilitate the movement of the people from either side including politicians from Somaliland now holding positions in the Federal Government in Mogadishu, as well as to continue to hold talks either in Mogadishu or in Hargeisa.

If so, these elements did not appear in the final communiqué. This communiqué, issued on Tuesday evening (July 9), was brief. Its preamble noted that: "In accordance with the framework agreements reached in Chevening, Dubai and Ankara, delegations from Somaliland and Somalia met in Istanbul between 7 and 9 July 2013 with the assistance of the Turkish Government." It also noted that "In accordance with the agreements codified in the Ankara Communiqué of 13 April 2013, this round of the dialogue attempted to establish additional parameters to further clarify the relations between the two sides and gave a particular attention to issues that have arisen since the previous meeting."

One of these was of course, the issue of air traffic control. The United Nations took over responsibility for managing Somaliland's and Somalia's airspace following the collapse of the central government in 1991, and in 1996 the United Nations Development Program and the International Civil Aviation Organization jointly established the Nairobi-based Civil Aviation Caretaker Authority of Somalia to collect over-flight revenues for Somalia and Somaliland. After the UN announced unilaterally it was handing over control of Somaliland airspace to the Government in Mogadishu on May 14th, the Somaliland government promptly imposed a ban on UN flights to Hargeisa.

The communiqué itself merely said that Somalia and Somaliland had "Agreed to the return of the air traffic management from the UN and decided to establish a joint control body that is based in Hargeisa to lead the air traffic control of both sides. It is also agreed that this body will propose a mechanism for equitable revenue-sharing," and secondly were "Committed to the continuation of the talks." The communiqué added that the next meeting would be held in Turkey in 120 days.

AGOA and American views of trade with Africa

One of the most successful elements of US engagement in Africa has been the African Growth and Opportunity Act, (AGOA) signed in 2000. This allows 40 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to export products to the U.S. tariff-free. It has been a considerable success. Since 2001 African exports to the U.S. have grown by more than 500%, reaching US\$54 billion in 2011. The African Coalition for Trade estimates that it has created over a million jobs. The treaty expires at the end of next year, but there have been calls for President Obama to ask Congress to renew it now, and to expand its impact. Currently, most US imports under the agreement are petroleum products.

There is general agreement that the US could do more to improve trade relations. One of the four initiatives President Obama announced during his recent trip to Africa, Trade Africa, focused on the East African Community. In five years, trade among the EAC states has doubled, and over the last decade their combined output has quadrupled to \$80 billion. Next month, the Government of Ethiopia, in association with the US Government, will host the 12 AGOA Forum in Addis Ababa (August 9-13) under the theme of “Sustainable Transformation through Trade and Technology.” The Ministerial-level event will include a high level dialogue on the future of U.S.-Africa trade and economic cooperation as well as discussions about AGOA and assessment of the Africa/US trade picture. There will be opportunities to consider building on the ‘Trade Africa’ model and expanding it. Possible options include dropping more complex tariffs, doing away with unnecessary checkpoints and other customs barriers that impede cross-border trade.

On Monday this week (July 8), US Representative Karen Bass, ranking member of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations, called on Americans to rethink how they think about and engage with Africa’s 54 nations. She said all too often Africa’s trade and investment potential for American business is overshadowed by a false notion that the continent is a tinderbox, ready to ignite at any moment. She pointed out that President Barack Obama’s recent visit to South Africa, Senegal and Tanzania underscored that the time had finally come to dramatically reframe America’s ideas. She said that Americans must lose their “tunnel vision and learn to see Africa as a continent of immense opportunity.”

It is in the interest of the United States as much as of Africa to increase its trade with the continent, to boost American exports and lift millions out of poverty and expand the growing African middle class. Representative Bass said the data spoke for itself. For more than a decade now, she said, the world’s fastest-growing economies had been in Africa. Countries including Nigeria, Angola, Ethiopia and Mozambique had annual gross domestic product growth of 8 to 11 percent. With more than a billion people living in the continent and with a rapidly expanding middle-class and youth populations, opportunities abounded to leverage new consumers and engage new leaders to connect with each other and global markets. Representative Bass noted that in 2012 alone, there had been transitions of power in several African nations. It illustrated that peaceful changes in leadership were the norm rather than the exception. She pointed out that in Ethiopia, Malawi and Ghana, three African leaders had died in office, and their successors had taken over without military intervention or major protest.

Representative Bass went on to say that she believed the United States could not afford to let Africa’s economic momentum go to foreign competitors such as Brazil, Russia, India and China, the BRIC nations. She said that while the United States merely tinkered with its African policies, China, for example, continued to expand its trade with the continent. She pointed out that last year China’s

trade with Africa totaled US\$200 billion; the United States lagged behind with at less than half that, at US\$95 billion.

Representative Bass said this was particularly disappointing considering how much the US had done for Africa in the past. She noted President Clinton's signing into law the African Growth and Opportunities Act, which eliminated trade tariffs for African goods exported to the United States. President George W. Bush's efforts to address the HIV and AIDS crisis through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief had been an impressive success. President Obama has similarly contributed with efforts such as the Global Health Initiative, Feed the Future and the Young African Leaders Initiative, focusing on some of Africa's most enduring and persistent challenges. President Obama had also launched the Doing Business in Africa program to promote U.S. trade with the continent and announced the first-ever trade mission to Zambia. That, she noted, had doubled US-Zambia bilateral trade.

In the light of all this, Representative Bass said the United States must ensure that it doesn't lose ground to economic competitors. She pointed out that Africa was ready to leverage trade opportunities over the tired old aid paradigms. Africa and Africans, she said, now confidently signaled that they were ready to engage the United States on trade and investment terms that will have the ability to transform the continent far more than the aid-based solutions of the past. In this connection she pointed out that the next important event in trade relations was the reauthorization of the African Growth and Opportunities Act, set to expire in 2015. This was, she said, the US' pre-eminent trade arrangement with the continent. It had provided employment for hundreds of thousands of Africans, pulled millions of people out of poverty and created industries where none had previously existed. The challenge now for the United States was whether it was ready to participate in a new era of engagement or whether it would stand on the sidelines and let other nations take the lead.

News in Brief

Ethiopia

In discussions this week with Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros, UNHCR High Commissioner Antonio Guterres commended Ethiopia's open border and protection policy for refugees. While in Ethiopia he also had discussions with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn who said Ethiopia would always welcome Somali refugees.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn received Mr. Vang Chang Hi, Speaker of the Parliament of South Korea on Thursday (July 11). During discussions, Mr. Vang underlined the interest of South Korean business to become involved in various sectors of the Ethiopian economy.

Foreign Minister, Dr. Tedros, met with the French Minister Delegate for Development, Mr. Pascal Canfin, on Tuesday (July 9). **(See article)**

Former Minister of Transport, Ato Deriba Kuma, was elected Mayor of the City Government of Addis Ababa on Tuesday (July 9), and received the keys to the city from outgoing mayor, Kuma Demeksa.

Ambassador Birhanu Dinka, veteran Ethiopian diplomat, former UN Deputy Secretary General, and member of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission in Kenya passed away on Monday (July 8) in New York.

The Ministry of Trade announced that it expects Ethiopia's accession to WTO to be finalized in the third quarter of 2015 in accordance with the time frame set out in Growth and Transformation Plan.

African Union

The African Union Commission has appointed a high level committee chaired by former Chairperson of the AUC, Alpha Omar Konare to help restore constitutional order and make the transition in Egypt peaceful, participatory and inclusive. The African Union suspended Egypt's membership of the AU on Friday last week (July 5).

A Special Summit of the African Union on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria started in Abuja, Nigeria on July 12. The Summit which will conclude next week will be attended by Prime Minister Hailemariam and Dr. Tedros Adhanom.

Djibouti

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and President Ismail Omar Guelleh launched the construction of the new Nagad Railway Station in Djibouti on Sunday (July 7), for the new Djibouti/Ethopia rail link. **(See article)**

Ethiopia and Djibouti have concluded a two billion dollar electric power interconnection agreement. The agreement signed on July 3 in Addis Ababa during the 12th Joint Ministerial Meeting. The agreement is the second of its kind between the two countries. **(See article)**

African Development Group announced support amounting to US\$7.5mn for geothermal potential in Djibouti. A new project supported by the AfDB plans to exploit the geothermal potential in Djibouti's Lake Assal region to enable access to a reliable, renewable and affordable source of energy for the people of Djibouti.

Eritrea

On Friday last week (July 5) President Isaias Afewerki held talks with a Turkish delegation headed by Ambassador Fazil Corman who said later that Turkey would soon open an embassy in Asmara and that Turkish Airlines was planning to begin direct flights to Asmara.

Sixteen Eritrean students graduated from Makelle University in Ethiopia last weekend. They were among 150 attending the university, some of the 1,200 Eritrean refugees on scholarships at Ethiopian universities. Ethiopia is currently hosting some 80,000 refugees from Eritrea

Kenya

UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres met Kenya's Interior Minister Joseph ole Lenku on Thursday to discuss the situation in Somalia and Kenya's interests in seeing Somali refugees return home. Mr. Guterres told Kenyan officials it is time to move from "care and

maintenance" of Somali refugees in their country to solutions "where the return of refugees is fully voluntary, and conducted in safety and dignity."

Kenya is the fourth most corrupt country in the world, behind Sierra Leone, Liberia and Yemen, according to Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, released Tuesday (July 9).

Kenya's Wildlife Service and Kenya Revenue Authority intercepted a consignment of 3.2 tonnes of ivory at Mombasa this week. It was the largest consignment of ivory seized this year, and it follows the discovery of another illegal ivory shipment at Mombasa last week.

Somalia

The third round of talks between Somalia and Somaliland took place in Istanbul this week. The two sides agreed to set up a body for joint air traffic control and committed themselves to continue talks. **(See article)**

Following the latest round of Somali and Somaliland talks in Istanbul at the beginning of this week, the head of Somalia's delegation, Somalia's Minister of the Interior and National Security, Abdikarim Hussein Guleid, held talks with his Turkish counterpart, Muammer Guler on Wednesday (July 9).

On Monday (July 8) Air Uganda launched a thrice weekly service to Mogadishu joining Turkish Airlines which began twice-weekly flights last March. Several private East African airlines, as well as Somali-owned Jubba Airways and Daallo Airlines, also fly into Mogadishu.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, visited Mogadishu on Tuesday (July 9). He said the UNHCR would work with Somalia and neighboring countries to be prepared when the time comes to repatriate those who fled Somalia. He stressed that return to Somalia should be, first and foremost, voluntary.

South Sudan

South Sudan celebrated its second Independence Day in Juba on Tuesday (July 9). The Presidents of Uganda, Rwanda, Somalia and Botswana, former South African President Thabo Mbeki, Ms. Hilde Johnson, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen, were among those attending. **(See article)**

In his independence anniversary speech, South Sudan President Salva Kiir Mayardit reiterated that his government will no more tolerate corruption. "Now that we are a free nation, our fight against corruption shall not be confined at the national level only, but will extend to the states, counties and anywhere that there is public spending".

The UN Security Council discussed a report of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) on Monday. The report said the Mission had a crisis of engineering capacity and mobility that severely affected its ability to carry out its mandate to protect civilians and strengthen state authority. Head of Mission, Hilde Johnson urged the Security Council to take the necessary measures to remedy the situation.

Sudan

Sudan's former Director of National Intelligence and Security Services, Salah Gosh, was suddenly released from jail on Wednesday (July 10) with his aide Major General Abdalla. They were arrested last November accused of involvement in a coup attempt. Twice in recent months, President Al-Bashir issued decrees pardoning and commuting sentences for those involved.

Mohamed Ibn Chambas, head of the United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), has reiterated UNAMID's commitment to implement its mandate and to support the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), after a meeting Sudanese vice-president Al-Haj Adam on Wednesday (July 10).
