

A Week in the Horn

18th November 2016

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News in Brief

Africa and the African Union

The twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 22) continued in Marrakech, Morocco, this week. The high-level segment of COP 22 opened on Tuesday (November 15), and a side event this week included "**Africa Action Summit**" and the **Action Day for Agriculture and Food Security** on Wednesday (November 16). The Conference issued the Marrakech Action Proclamation for Our Climate and Sustainable Development on Friday (November 18). (See article)

Ethiopia

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn briefed the diplomatic community on Thursday (November 17) on the current situation in Ethiopia, the effect of the State of Emergency and the reforms being pursued by the government to fulfil the pledges made to the public. (See article)

King Mohammed VI of Morocco arrived in Addis Ababa on Friday (November 18) on a State Visit. He will be holding talks with President Dr Mulatu, Prime Minister Hailemariam as well as with the African Union Commission. In July this year, the King announced Morocco's intention to rejoin the African Union, which it left in 1984.

The Vice-President of the People's Republic of China, Mr Li Yuanchao, arrived in Addis Ababa for a two-day visit on Thursday (November 17). During his visit, he met with President Dr Mulatu and held talks with Prime Minister Hailemariam and Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen. (See article)

Canada's Foreign Minister, Stéphane Dion, visited Ethiopia at the end of last week meeting Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn, Foreign Minister Dr Workeneh Gebeyehu and other senior officials for discussions on enhancement of bilateral relations and cooperation, regional peace and stability, humanitarian assistance, immigration and the current situation of Ethiopia. (See article)

State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie received a copy of credentials of the newly appointed Swedish Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Ambassador Urban Andersson on Friday (November 11). Discussions focused on the promotion of peace and security in the Horn of Africa.

State Minister Ambassador Taye received the Honorary Consul of Ethiopia in Sri Lanka, Ms Senani Dienesha on Tuesday (November 15). Ms Senani was visiting Ethiopia to organize a business delegation visit to Ethiopia in January 2017. There are currently four **Sri Lankan investors**, including two joint ventures with a total capital of more than 200 million birr, operating in Ethiopia.

The 6th International Conference on Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices opened in Addis Ababa this week on Thursday (Nov 17) under the theme: "Agri-commodity marketing for sustainable global trade." (See article)

An Ethio-German Business Roundtable was held on Monday (November 14) at the Hilton Hotel in Addis Ababa, with a twenty-person delegation from Germany and the State of Bavaria being briefed on investment and business opportunities in Ethiopia. State Minister for Business and Diaspora Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Regasa Kefale, opened the roundtable. (See article).

Ethiopia is to partner with OCP, the Moroccan world phosphate company, in a joint \$2.5 billion project to build a fertilizer plant in Shinile zone in the Somali Regional State. The plant is expected to produce 1.1 million tons of urea and 1.5 million tons of fertilizer a year. 60% of the financing will come from bank loans, the rest from OCP and the Ethiopian government.

Remembrance Sunday at the Gulele War Cemetery in Addis Ababa this year took place on Sunday (November 13) to commemorate all those who were killed in the First World War and all the many millions of soldiers who have been killed in subsequent wars up to the present day. (See article)

Djibouti

President Ismail Omar Guelleh met with Ethiopia's Transport Minister, Ahmed Shideh, on a working visit to Djibouti on Thursday (November 10). Discussions covered collaboration on the management of the recently opened Djiboutian-Ethiopian railway. Also present were Djibouti's Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and of Equipment and Transport, Ethiopia's Ambassador to Djibouti, the President of the Port Authority and the Free Zones of Djibouti, and the Director General of Djibouti Railways.

Yemen's Head of State, President Abdi-Rabbo Mansour Hadi, made an official visit to Djibouti at the weekend, holding talks with President Ismail Omar Guelleh on Saturday (November 12). President Hadi briefed President Guelleh on the latest developments in Yemen and they exchanged views on the Arab world. They welcomed the close ties between their two countries and peoples. President Guelleh expressed his "full support" for efforts to restore the security and stability of Yemen.

Air Djibouti made its first flight to Bosasso in Puntland two days after it resumed service to Mogadishu on Tuesday (November 15) after a break of 25 years. The airline currently flies to Addis Ababa, Hargeisa, Bossaso and Dire Dawa in Ethiopia.

Eritrea

The UN Security Council adopted resolution 2317 (2016) on Thursday (November 10), renewing the arms embargo on Eritrea and on Somalia until November 15, 2017, and the mandate of the UN Monitoring Group for Somalia and Eritrea until December 15, 2017. Ten members of the Security Council voted for the resolution and five abstained. (See article)

Kenya

President Uhuru Kenyatta has warned politicians against spreading hatred among Kenyans ahead of next year's General Election in Kenya, and instead [urged] debate on real issues. A State House spokesman said at the weekend: "The President has been emphasizing that politicians must watch their tongues; incitement in this season is the last thing we want." The President has asked law enforcement agencies to act firmly against those found spreading hate speech.

At the COP22 meeting in Marrakech, President Kenyatta met with 30 African leaders to ask for support for Ambassador Amina Mohamed, Kenya's candidate for the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

Kenya has postponed the deadline to close Dadaab refugee camp by six months. Interior Cabinet Secretary Joseph Nkaissery said the move followed a request by the UNHCR commissioner of refugees Filippo Grandi to extend the time for repatriation and closure. 262,000 refugees still remain in the camp. A taskforce will oversee the repatriation process. Mr Nkaissery said Kenya plans a special IGAD summit to discuss the refugee situation and other regional security issues.

The Office of the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) has welcomed the government's decision to delay closing Dadaab camp. It praised the commitment to "voluntary, human, safe and dignified returns in accordance with international law." It urged all stakeholders to focus their attention on implementation of the action plan.

Somalia

In a statement on Sunday (November 13) President Mohamud appealed to the international community for aid as the impact of drought continues to worsen. A UN report two months ago said the total number of people facing acute food insecurity across Somalia has risen to five million, and more than 40% of the country's population does not have sufficient food. This included over 300,000 children under five who are acutely malnourished.

Elections for the House of the People have continued this week with Hir Shebelle starting its voting for MPs on Wednesday. Voting for 8 seats in Hir Shebelle on Thursday included two women. 29 out of 37 seats have still to be decided. Jubaland elected five more MPs on Tuesday, including two women. Jubaland has now elected 31 MPs with 12 more to be decided. Galmudug held a second round of voting this week bringing to 13 the number of MPs elected with another 23 seats yet to be decided. By the beginning of the week, Puntland had elected 18 out of its 37 MPs.

With the Upper House election completed in Hir-Shebelle, 43 out of the 54 seats for the Senate have now been filled, leaving only the seats reserved for Somaliland to be allocated.

AMISOM has called for additional forces to facilitate operations in Somalia after a meeting between Chiefs of Defense Forces of Troop-Contributing Countries on Friday (November 11), in Addis Ababa. The meeting reviewed the provision of security in support of the electoral process in Somalia and considered options for strengthening AMISOM's operational effectiveness. It called for the UN and the international community to support 4,000 additional troops for up to six months. Chiefs of the Defense forces of the Troop-Contributing Countries, Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, and the defense representative of Uganda, attended the meeting.

A joint statement from envoys of the United Nations Somali Office and the African Union, issued on Wednesday (November 16), said that talks between President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gaas of Puntland and President Abdikarim Hussein Guled of Galmudug had resumed on Tuesday to try to secure a ceasefire in Galkayo.

Brigadier General Berhe Tesfaye, Ethiopia's Consul-General in Somaliland said that Ethiopia and Somaliland had a common understanding of the need to fight terrorism and control human trafficking and other criminal activity. He said Ethiopia supports Somaliland in areas of Defense, Police, and Intelligence, Coast Guard, and Immigration as well as providing capacity building training and 130 scholarships in graduate and post graduate programs.

Air Djibouti's first flight to Mogadishu for 25 years landed on Tuesday (November 15). The Djibouti Ambassador to Somalia, Aden Ali Aden, said this signaled "our commitment to the reconstruction and stabilization of Somalia. We hope this will also encourage other investors to establish themselves in Somalia."

South Sudan

The UN Security Council on Tuesday (November 15) extended the mandate of the Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), for another six months, to May 15, 2017, recognizing the situation in Abyei as a serious threat to international peace. (See article)

The guarantors of the South Sudan Peace Agreement held another high-level meeting, their fourth, in Kampala on Thursday last week (November 10) and called on the Transitional Government of National Unity to take urgent steps to facilitate the deployment of the Regional Protection Force and allow UNMISS to fulfil its mandate without restrictions or bureaucratic impediments. (See article)

Adama Dieng, UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, told a press conference in Juba on Friday (November 11) that South Sudan violence risks spiraling into genocide. (See article)

Kenya said it would continue to support efforts to restore peace in South Sudan despite pulling its troops out of UNMISS. A spokesperson for President Kenyatta said on Sunday (November 13) that Kenya would work with South Sudan bilaterally, in the framework of IGAD, the East African Community, and the African Union: "There would not, however, be any future engagement of the Kenyan army in UNMISS."

Sudan

Yemeni Deputy President Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, who has been on a three-day official visit to Sudan, met with President al-Bashir on Sunday (November 13) and handed the President a letter from President Abd-Rabbuh Mansur Hadi of Yemen. After talks on Monday, Sudan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Obeid-Allah Mohamed Obeid-Allah said, "Sudan is keen to strengthen and enhance bilateral relations with Yemen and spares no efforts to restore stability and alleviate the suffering of the sisterly Yemeni people."

President Omer al-Bashir on Monday (November 14) travelled to Morocco to participate in the UN climate change conference (COP22) in Marrakech. The Sudan delegation included the Minister of the Presidency Fadl Abdulla Fadl, Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour, Agriculture Minister Ibrahim Al-Dikhairi and Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources Muataz Musa.

Envoys from the Troika countries, the US, the UK and Norway, met with the heads of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and a Sudan Liberation Movement faction on Friday (November 11), to discuss ways to break the deadlock in the peace talks with the Sudan government. Norway's special envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, Jens-Peter Kjemprud, also met Sunday in Khartoum with the Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour and other officials.

Prime Minister Hailemariam briefs Addis Ababa-based diplomats on the current situation

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn briefed the diplomatic community on Thursday (November 17) on the current situation in Ethiopia, the effect of the State of Emergency and the reforms being pursued by the government to fulfil the pledges made to the public. The government, he said, had been obliged to declare the State of Emergency because of the effect of destructive forces on the lives of people and the attacks on hard-won investment projects and infrastructure developments. He emphasized that since the authorization of the State of Emergency the country had been able to restore law and order. It was now back to normalcy as the recently lifted restrictions on diplomatic travelling without permission clearly underlined. He re-affirmed that regular business could now be carried out as usual. The Prime Minister pointed out that during the first ten days of the State of Emergency, seventy percent of those involved in the violence had handed themselves in to the security forces. They were being pardoned after being given the necessary education to help them integrate properly with their communities.

While the State of Emergency addressed the violence, it provided a breathing space for the government to deal with the root causes of the disturbances. Referring to the key reform programs being carried out by the government, the Prime Minister said there are three major categories: shared and equitable economic growth, expansion of democratic space, and economic restructuring. The recent cabinet changes had also brought into government new people who would, he said, be able to deliver reforms effectively. The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of delivery and of the need for competence and technical ability at all levels. This was something under consideration, and he noted that the recent ministerial changes address this issue.

The Prime Minister noted that some sections of the population, notably the youth, had not benefitted from the economic progress of the last few years despite the country's achievement of seven of the eight Millennium Development Goals and long-term double-digit growth. Youth accounted for 99% of those engaged in violent

activities; youth, aged 15 to 30, also made up 50% of the population. There had been a massive expansion in university education in the last fifteen years, and half a million youngsters graduated from tertiary-level education and vocational training last year. However, there were still not enough jobs. The government was, therefore, working aggressively, allocating billions of birr, to provide increased job opportunities for the youth.

In regard to opening up the democratic space, the Prime Minister made it clear that the government fully understood the importance of enhancing civic participation and encouraging engagement with government. The government accepted that the electoral system was not in tune with the reality on the ground and it planned changes to take place before the next election. There would be increased co-operation between political parties and proper engagement. He underlined the need to accommodate those unrepresented in the next parliament and to increase transparency and strengthen democratic institutions including such organs as the Human Rights Commission, the Ombudsman, the Office of the Federal Auditor General, as well as the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission and other bodies. This would build up their capacity and improve their ability to report to Parliament.

Prime Minister Hailemariam said the economy of the country continued to perform well over all, despite the recent violence. The last Ethiopian calendar year saw eight percent growth, and the country had managed to overcome the worst effects of the El-Nino drought. The impact on the agricultural sector had been controlled. The good news was that country could now expect a bumper harvest with agriculture production back to normal, even reaching 12% this year. The inflow of Foreign Direct Investment still remained one of the best on the continent with \$3.4 billion last year. The government was working hard to ensure that the current situation will not affect this. He called on the diplomatic community to encourage their nationals to continue investing in the country, reminding them that the twelve industrial parks being built are expected to provide job opportunities for more than 1.2 million people. There had, he said, been no slow down in the construction of the country's mega projects.

The Prime Minister, responding to questions and comments from participants, said that the Command Post was evaluating the situation on a regular basis. The State of Emergency was a process and the details were considered on a monthly basis. The period of six months was a constitutional requirement and it could be extended but he did not think that would be necessary. The Prime Minister said that he thought that the reforms would largely satisfy the discontented youth but, he added, people resident abroad had encouraged much of the violence calling for ethnic conflict and violence through social media. These, in fact, were people who were instigating terrorism. This was of great concern. He said Ethiopia's partners and friends could help by controlling the instigators of violence who were found in their countries. There was some 'combustible' material inside Ethiopia, but instigation of violence from abroad also needed to be checked. Tourism had inevitably been affected, but tourists were already beginning to return now that the situation had returned to normal. The Prime Minister said he hoped that countries would now adjust their travel advice and withdraw their travel warnings. He also appealed for support in the provision of jobs for the youth.

A statement by the Ambassador of the European Union on behalf of the EU and its member states thanked the Prime Minister for the initiative and welcomed his briefing. It emphasized the importance of implementing the State of Emergency with caution and maximum restraint and with full respect for the international human rights standards in the Ethiopian Constitution. It was important to find a balance between security measures to protect the people and property and the initiation of political and social reforms to address root causes of dissatisfaction, including corruption. The EU welcomed the Government's commitments to political and electoral reform, reflecting the desire of the people to see the opening up of the political space and freeing up of electoral systems in advance of the next elections in 2018. The statement noted the current unrest highlighted the growing appetite of the Ethiopian public for trustworthy, reliable and freely available information. It highlighted the dangers of an empty media space. The EU strongly encouraged the earliest possible lifting of the 3G restrictions. The statement said the EU was very interested to work with the Prime Minister and his new Cabinet, to help to address the political reform, economic investment and media development challenges. The European Union Ambassadorial group would be very happy to further explore Ethiopia's needs and its support in the regular Article 8 Dialogue under the Cotonou Agreement.

Chinese Vice-President Li Yuanchao visits Ethiopia

Vice-President of the People's Republic of China, Mr Li Yuanchao, arrived in Addis Ababa for a two-day visit on Thursday (November 17). His visit underlines the commitment of both countries to the practical

implementation of the consensus reached at the Johannesburg Summit of the Forum for Africa-China Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2015. During his visit, Vice-President Yuanchao held meetings with Prime Minister Hailemariam and Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen, attending a signing ceremony of an agreement between the Communist Party of China and the EPRDF as well as a seminar co-hosted by the two parties. He also visited the Eastern Industrial Zone and the operational control center of the Addis Ababa Light railway as well as signing a number of bilateral agreements. Vice-President Yuanchao paid a courtesy call on President Dr Mulatu on Thursday (November 17).

Prime Minister Hailemariam's bilateral meeting with Vice-President Yuanchao recalled the ten cooperation plans proposed by President Xi Jinping at the FOCAC Summit in Johannesburg. The Prime Minister emphasized that these plans conformed to Ethiopia's Second Growth and Transformation Plan, which aims to transform Ethiopia's economy. This was indicative of the complementary nature of their respective national visions as well, underlining the benefit to Africa's industrial vision and integration through strengthening cooperation. It also underpins the comprehensive cooperative partnership of China and Ethiopia. Enhancing production capacity complements Ethiopia's efforts to create more jobs for the youth and the place of Ethiopia's economy in the industrial value chain, the Prime Minister said. In this regard, Ethiopia seeks Chinese government support to encourage more Chinese enterprises to invest in Ethiopia's industrial parks, its agriculture and infrastructure. Prime Minister Hailemariam welcomed China's support for human resource development. He also affirmed that Ethiopia is committed to working together with China on the reform of the Security Council, and noted that Ethiopia is keen to collaborate on international issues of common interest.

Mr Li Yuanchao said the China-Africa Forum held last year had laid a solid foundation for further growth of cooperation. He said China viewed Ethiopia as a key partner in Africa. Expressing the commonalities shared by the two peoples and countries as well as their ancient links, the Vice-President drew attention to the need for the rejuvenation based on political trust, mutual learning and beneficial cooperation, as well as collaboration at multilateral levels. The Vice-President said the direction of their bilateral ties was geared into the development of infrastructure as a solid foundation for economic transformation and industrialization. He said the newly built Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway and Hawassa Industrial Park were features of the successes arising from their exemplary cooperative partnership. He stressed that China would encourage Ethiopia to make full use of the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Corridor.

Mr Li Yuanchao said that China was a country ready to share experience and strengthen cooperation in areas ranging from infrastructure and industrial parks to agriculture, food security and renewable energy. He said China was encouraging enterprises to invest in Ethiopia, adding that it was extending US\$100 million to build the **China-Africa railway academy**. He suggested the need to enhance people-to-people ties, student exchanges and mutual learning. The Vice-President emphasized that China was committed to strengthening cooperation on global issues to uphold the common interests of developing countries. It was also committed to working in concert to deepen China-Africa relations, and it was also keen to collaborate on the reform of the UN Security Council.

In his meeting, President Dr Mulatu told Vice President Yuanchao that his visit was a reflection of the excellent and historic relations of the two countries. The President said Ethiopia attached great importance to its relations with China and noted that mutual cooperation and understanding defined the links of both the two peoples and the two governments. The Vice President underlined that the comprehensive strategic partnership of China and Ethiopia was moving on a fast lane of development, exemplified by frequent high-level visits and cultural exchanges. He said that Ethio-Chinese ties provided an exemplary model for other countries in Africa.

Canada appreciates Ethiopia's efforts for people-centered development

Canada's Foreign Minister, Stéphane Dion, visited Ethiopia at the end of last week as part of a seven-day visit to three African countries: Nigeria, Kenya and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, he met with Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn, Foreign Minister Dr Workeneh Gebeyehu and other senior officials for discussions covering the enhancement of bilateral relations and cooperation, regional peace and stability, humanitarian assistance, immigration and the current situation in Ethiopia.

Prime Minister Hailemariam assured Foreign Minister Dion of Ethiopia's full determination to strengthen its partnership with Canada in the areas of peace, security and the fight against terrorism as well as in trade, investment and other areas. The Prime Minister also underlined that his government remained committed to

providing the necessary support for Canadian investors in Ethiopia. He briefed the Foreign Minister on the way his government was handling the current situation of the country and the State of Emergency, through the principles of the rule of law and with extreme care. He emphasized that democracy, development, peace and stability were the alpha and omega of Ethiopia's vital national interests.

Foreign Minister Dion stressed his concerns over the deaths and violence arising from the recent unrest, particularly in the Oromia and Amhara regions. He underlined his support for all Ethiopians to engage in a peaceful and inclusive dialogue as well as the importance of undertaking real and constructive reforms through democratic processes for the benefit of all Ethiopians, particularly its youth, in support of the country's growth and prosperity. In this connection, he appreciated the willingness of the Ethiopian government to make genuine improvements for the benefit of the people. Mr Dion also pledged to encourage and exert every possible effort to ensure the success of the Ethiopia-Canada Partnership. He said the Government of Canada is committed to further enhancing and strengthening cooperation in the areas of peace, stability, security and the rule of law. He noted that Ethiopia and Canada shared common goals in promoting peace and security in East Africa. Canada, he said, valued Ethiopia's efforts in the maintenance of peace and security in Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, and he commended Ethiopia's role in peacekeeping operations within the region as well as more widely across the continent.

Foreign Minister Dr Workneh Gebeyehu met with Mr Dion on Friday (November 11). The two ministers agreed to cooperate on technology transfer, infrastructural development, and creation of employment opportunities for the youth as well as ensuring regional peace and security. Mr Dion further pledged to encourage Canadian investors to invest their finance into Ethiopia and do business with it. Dr Workneh noted that the strategic friendship and cooperation that has existed between Ethiopia and Canada for over half a century has been based on a firm foundation of mutual understanding, win-win formulation and genuine respect. He underscored Ethiopia's determination to make every possible effort to ensure the success of the Ethiopia-Canada Partnership. Foreign Minister Dion again praised Ethiopia's role in peacekeeping operations within the region as well as across the continent. He welcomed the recent Ethiopian cabinet reshuffle which he said signaled the firm position the government was taking to satisfy public demands and assure sustainable development, good governance and democracy.

Ethiopia and Canada's official diplomatic relations trace their establishment back to 1965 when they established diplomatic representations in each other's territory. Last year they held a series of events to celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relationship and friendship. These included a Business Forum which brought a trade mission to Ethiopia in February 2015. Another Ethio-Canadian Business Forum, jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ethiopian Embassy in Canada and the Canadian Embassy in Addis Ababa, took place at the Intercontinental Addis Hotel in Addis Ababa in June, providing the opportunity for further networking of Ethiopian and Canadian business representatives and investors. Ambassador Baker, Canadian Ambassador to Ethiopia, said this underscored the growing relationship between Ethiopia and Canada, through a growing partnership and co-operation on development, trade and investment. The Ambassador reiterated the importance of the role of trade and commerce in boosting relations between the two countries and emphasized the way trade could be an important agent of change in empowering people. He noted that Ethiopia was one of the largest recipients of Canada's global development assistance in various fields of cooperative intervention among which was maternal and child health.

Ethiopia is a country of focus for Canada's international development assistance, and Canada is the third largest bilateral country donor to Ethiopia. Canada's bilateral development cooperation program is focused on food security, agricultural growth and sustainable economic growth. It has also provided aid to assist in advancing democracy and human rights to ensure that Ethiopia's development progress is inclusive and sustainable. In 2011-2012, Canada provided \$207.64 million in development and humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia through bilateral and multilateral channels as well as through Canadian non-governmental organizations. Foreign Minister Dion's visit demonstrates the importance Canada attaches to Ethiopia as the headquarters of the African Union, the UNECA, and as a center of international diplomacy next to Geneva and New York, as well as in its own right as representative of Africa and the African Union, a 'green' and environmentally friendly economy, a major contributor to peacekeeping operations, and a representative of African-led efforts to address the pressing challenges facing the continent in the areas of security and the rule of law. Ethiopia and Canada are also, of course, both members of the Forum of Federations and Ethiopia hosted the Fifth International Conference on Federalism in conjunction with the Forum in 2010 under the theme "Equality and Unity in Diversity for Development".

The second week of COP 22 in Marrakech, Morocco

Heads of State, Government delegations, intergovernmental bodies, climate negotiators, environmental activists, international organizations, civil society and members of the press, and all the parties to the convention (including regional bodies that have ratified the convention) are attending the second week conferences and side events of the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 22) in Marrakech, Morocco. Besides the COP 22 sessions, the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP); sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), and the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA) were also holding important meetings.

The high-level segment of Marrakech opened on Tuesday (November 15) with world leaders showing strong support for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, said, "Countries have strongly supported the Agreement because they realize their own national interest is best secured by pursuing the common good. Now we have to translate words into effective policies and actions." He went on: "This is critical to protect our planet, safeguard the most vulnerable and drive shared prosperity. Low-emission development and climate resilience will advance all the Sustainable Development Goals." Mr Ban said that the United Nations would help countries implement the Agreement and he called on developed countries "to honor their commitment to mobilize climate finance, \$100 billion by 2020, to help developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate vulnerability."

The President of the UN General Assembly, Peter Thomson, encouraged all Parties to the Paris Agreement to implement and enhance ambition of their nationally determined contributions "without delay." He added that urgent action on climate change "must be seen as a moral, environmental, scientific, and developmental imperative, guided by ambition, action and equity." The Executive Secretary of UNFCCC [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change], Patricia Espinosa, stressed the need to "accelerate climate action" and "to make climate action a cornerstone of the transformation to truly sustainable development." She added: "This profound transformation will not be easy and will involve difficult decisions. Leadership is needed now more than ever. And the contribution to this transformation by business, subnational governments, indigenous people, youth, women and many others cannot be overlooked."

The principal focus of the week has been on how to reach agreement on the next steps in the global efforts to address climate change, following from the Paris Agreement, reached in Paris last year. The Paris Agreement entered into force on November 4, less than a year after it was adopted, and as of the opening of COP22 on November 7, 100 of the 197 parties to the convention had ratified the agreement. Many others are in the process of ratifying. The entry into force of the Paris Agreement (of COP 21) only days before the 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP22) is a positive step, given the urgency of the need for global action. Equally, it also posed a challenge, as much of the work needed to create the rules for the functioning of the Paris Agreement had not been worked out. This is something that has been preoccupying the Marrakech conference, which has been engaged in developing the rules, to operationalize the Paris Agreement.

Among the important side events of Marrakech, has been the "**Africa Action Summit**" on November 16. It was widely seen as an excellent opportunity for African countries to develop a common vision regarding funding and technology transfer. The chair of the Summit, King Mohammed VI of Morocco, in his opening remarks, underlined the importance of African countries speaking with one voice, to demand climate justice as well as to mobilize the necessary resources and submit concerted proposals in connection with the fight against climate change. King Mohammed warned that "Africa is paying a heavy price in the climate equation" and added that it was, undoubtedly, the continent that was suffering the most: "rising temperatures, shifting seasons and successive droughts are depleting the biodiversity of our continent, destroying ecosystems and jeopardizing Africa's progress, security and stability." The severe effects of the climate-driven El-Nino drought, which caused the worst drought in fifty years in Ethiopia and other parts of the Horn of Africa, underlined the point. Gebru Jembere, who represented Ethiopia at the "African Action Summit", said **Ethiopia, current chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum**, was fulfilling its responsibility in echoing the voices of the Forum's member states. It has already announced that it will create a carbon neutral economy and reduce emissions by 64% by 2030. The African Action Summit brought together representatives of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the USA, France, the African Union, the World Bank (WB) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) and was attended by Heads of State and Government and delegations from 50 African countries.

Aziz Akhannouche, Moroccan Minister for Agriculture and Fishing, launched the Action Day for Agriculture and Food Security on Wednesday (November 16), in the presence of José Graziano da Silva, Director General

of the United Nations for Food and Agriculture Organization, and Mme Laura Tuck, Vice-President of the World Bank for Sustainable Development. The objectives of the Action Day for Agriculture and Food Security included presentation of three new initiatives: to ignite ambition for the adaptation of agriculture to climate change; food security and positioning the agricultural community as an essential opportunity for climate action; and addressing the challenges linked to climate change. The event also aimed to improve the acceleration of adaptation of small-scale farms to climate change and improving food security. The initiative for **Adaptation for Agriculture (AAA)**, driven by Morocco, was launched in April 2016. It has taken on the tasks of guaranteeing adaptation finance for African agriculture and of raising agricultural productivity on the continent. It expects to raise 30% of the investment required from 2020 for the adaptation of developing countries. That represents 30 billion dollars a year for the development of Africa. The meeting underlined that particular attention should be given to knowledge-sharing and dissemination through public-private partners and South-South cooperation, to reinforcement of capacities through climate finance and the strengthening of institutions.

A number of other key decisions on adaptation are being considered in Marrakech, including on the third review of the Adaptation Fund. This is a fund established under the Kyoto Protocol and it is an important source of funding for developing countries. Another decision has been the agreement for a two-year work program for enhancing the participation of women and gender responsive climate actions.

On Friday (November 18) the assembled Heads of State and Government and Delegations issued the **Marrakech Action Proclamation for Our Climate and Sustainable Development**. This welcomed the Paris Agreement and the momentum established in 2016. It called for the highest political commitment to combat climate change and for strong solidarity with those countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and underscored the need to support efforts to enhance their adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability. It called for all Parties to strengthen and support efforts to eradicate poverty, ensure food security and to take stringent action to deal with climate change challenges in agriculture. It called for strengthened cooperation to close the gap between current emissions trajectories and the pathway needed to meet the long-term temperature goals of the Paris Agreement, and for an increase in the volume, flow and access to finance for climate projects. The Developed Country Parties reaffirmed the USD \$100 billion mobilization goal. The Action Proclamation also called for further climate action and support, well in advance of 2020, to take into account the specific needs and special circumstances of developing countries, least developed countries and those particularly vulnerable. It encouraged the ratification of the Doha Amendment and called on all non-state actors to join in immediate action and mobilization, building on their important achievements, including the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action itself. The Proclamation said the transition in economies required to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement provided a substantial positive opportunity for increased prosperity and sustainable development. The Marrakech Conference marked an important inflection point in the commitment to bring together the whole international community to tackle one of the greatest challenges of our time and added that "as we now turn towards implementation and action, we reiterate our resolve to inspire solidarity, hope and opportunity for current and future generations."

Serious concerns continue over the situation in South Sudan...

The United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Mr Adama Dieng, has warned the international community in general, and the government of South Sudan in particular, that there is a strong risk of violence escalating along ethnic lines in South Sudan and the potential for genocide. After a five-day visit to South Sudan last week, he also added that there was a pressing need to investigate ongoing grave human rights violations in Yei State. Mr Dieng said the country was witnessing mass killings and rape of members of particular ethnic groups. He said: "I am extremely saddened and disturbed to see South Sudan in its current state and I fear for its people. Even as the conflict becomes ever more complex, the effects of the December 2013 outbreak of violence linger, and human rights violations committed at that time have not been accounted for. On the contrary, there is renewed violence on a daily basis, and any hope of reconciliation is elusive." Talking to journalists in Juba, he continued: "I am dismayed to report that what I have seen and heard here has confirmed my concerns that there is a strong risk of violence escalating along ethnic lines, with the potential for genocide." He suggested that the gravity of the situation demanded that the international community and the government of South Sudan act to provide a full fact-finding investigation as well as provide enhanced humanitarian support.

South Sudan's Information Minister, Michael Makuei, did not agree with Mr Dieng's assertions. He said the judgment of the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide was "very unfortunate." Mr Makuei said: "Here in South Sudan, what is happening has nothing to do with genocide."

On Thursday last week (November 10), a high-level meeting on the Deployment of a Regional Protection Force in South Sudan, was held in Kampala. In attendance were representatives of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, China, Ethiopia as Chair of IGAD, Nigeria, Norway, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, the UK, the US, Uganda, the European Union, the IGAD Partners Forum represented by Canada, Germany and the Netherlands and the United Nations. These guarantors of South Sudan's August 2015 Peace Agreement welcomed the decision of the Transitional Government of National Unity to accept the Deployment of the Regional Protection Force from the neighboring countries. Nevertheless, they have also expressed deep concern with the manner in which the process to deploy the Regional Protection Force has been moving since the United Nations Security Council approved the force. They rejected suggestions of bureaucratic impediment for the deployment of the force (RPF) and said: "The Transitional Government of National Unity must take urgent steps to facilitate the deployment of the Regional Protection Force and allow the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to fulfil its mandate without restrictions or bureaucratic impediments. A failure to do this cannot and will not be tolerated by the regional and international community. The TGNU has a responsibility to deliver on the commitments it has made to its all people and to the international community."

The statement issued after the high-level meeting also warned that the security situation would continue, unless immediate actions were taken to stop violations of the ceasefire signed by the warring factions. The statement said: "We remain gravely concerned about the fragile security environment and the desperate economic and humanitarian situation in South Sudan. We particularly recognize the role played by neighboring countries in hosting large numbers of refugees from the current crisis." It went on to say that continued violations of the ceasefire and the hindrance of humanitarian assistance were exacerbating the suffering of civilians and these "cannot be tolerated." It insisted that all parties must take urgent steps to ensure that humanitarian actors were granted "free, safe and unhindered access to people in need, in compliance with international obligations, and allow the people of South Sudan return safely to their homes and livelihoods."

...and the UN Security Council extends the mandate of UNISFA

The UN Security Council on Tuesday (November 15) extended the mandate of the Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), for another six months, to May 15, 2017, recognizing the situation in Abyei as a serious threat to international peace. The Council underlined the critical need for the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to cooperate over Abyei.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2318 (2016), the Council reiterated its demands to Sudan and South Sudan that the two parties must immediately resolve the dispute over the Abyei Area Agreement and the Abyei Area Council, and establish the Abyei Area Administration and Abyei Police Service to take over policing functions throughout the area, including the protection of the oil infrastructure. It reiterated its demands that immediately and without preconditions the Government of South Sudan should fully redeploy its security service personnel from the Abyei Area and that the Government of Sudan redeploy the Oil Police in Diffra from the Abyei Area. It also urged the two governments to take all necessary steps to ensure that Abyei is effectively demilitarized and reiterated its request for the UNISFA document and report on the movement of weapons into Abyei as well as the destruction and confiscation of weapons within Abyei.

It stressed the need for regular meetings of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism and other joint mechanisms, including the Joint Border Commission and Joint Demarcation Committee, to discuss border security. It acknowledged the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan's acceptance of the map relating to the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone and the agreement that the centre-line is only the location of the separation line between armed forces. It reiterated that this line would in no way prejudice the legal status of the border, nor would it have any impact on the ongoing negotiations on the disputed and claimed areas, or on the future demarcation of the borders. It also encouraged the two sides to agree on the coordinates and demilitarize the Border Zone, including the "14 Mile Area", and expressed concerns over the delays to fully implement the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. It urged the two parties to cooperate in allowing UNISFA to fulfil its responsibility to provide security for the Monitoring Mechanism's monitoring of the Border Zone.

The Security Council underlined that the future status of Abyei must be resolved by negotiations between the parties in a manner consistent with the CPA and not by the unilateral actions of either party. It urged the two Governments to take immediate steps to implement confidence-building measures among the Abyei Area

communities. It strongly welcomed engagement between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities and strongly urged all Abyei communities to exercise maximum restraint and to desist from inflammatory acts or statements that might lead to violent clashes.

The Security Council underlined that UNISFA's protection-of-civilians mandate, defined in resolution 1990 (2011), also included taking the necessary actions to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. It called upon Sudan and South Sudan to ensure the free, unhindered and expeditious movement of all UNISFA personnel and equipment. It commended UNISFA, whose troops are all drawn from Ethiopia, for effectively carrying out its mandate, including its ongoing facilitation of peaceful migration throughout the Abyei Area, conflict prevention, mediation and deterrence, as well as its efforts to support and strengthen community protection committees. It demanded that both Governments facilitate the deployment of the United Nations Mine Action Service in Abyei. It also demanded that humanitarian personnel be given full, safe and unhindered access to civilians needing assistance wherever they might be. Humanitarian organizations in Abyei provide assistance to 139,000 people.

After the vote, the representative of Sudan said that UNISFA's efforts had resulted in improvement of the security situation in Abyei and better relations between the Misseriya and the Ngok-Dinka communities. He called upon the Government of South Sudan to positively engage with the Sudan government to establish the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, the Joint Police and other institutions. He stressed that Abyei was Sudanese territory under Sudanese sovereignty and underlined that this could only be amended through a referendum agreed on by both countries. He also pointed out that South Sudan was still harboring rebel groups which were involved in launching operations in Sudan. He called on the United Nations and the African Union to redouble their efforts to urge South Sudan to enable the work of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.

The representative of South Sudan said cooperation between Sudan and his State was crucial to any constructive efforts in Abyei and hoped that the recent improvement in relations between the two nations would develop into even greater cooperation. He said the promotion and consolidation of peace, security and stability were the responsibilities of the two governments. He said his government did what it could to assist the people of Abyei despite limited resources and current crises. He noted that that Sudan had imposed restrictions on non-governmental organizations in the area. He asked for the committee that had investigated the killing of the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief in May 2013 to make its report public.

UN Security Council's resolution 2317 extending the sanctions on Eritrea and Somalia

The UN Security Council adopted resolution 2317 (2016) on Thursday (November 10). This renewed the arms embargo on Eritrea and on Somalia until November 15, 2017, and the mandate of the UN Monitoring Group for Somalia and Eritrea until December 15, 2017. Of the fifteen members of the Security Council, ten voted for the resolution, none against, but there were five abstentions from Angola, China, Egypt, Russian Federation, and Venezuela, over concern about the continuation of the sanctions on Eritrea.

On Somalia, the Council underlined the need for Member States to strictly follow the notification procedures for providing assistance to the security sector, and urged increased cooperation with AMISOM in documenting and registering all captured military equipment. It underlined the importance for the Somali government of putting a resource-sharing agreement and a credible legal framework in place. It expressed concern about al-Shabaab's increasing reliance on revenues from taxes on the illicit sugar trade, on agricultural produce and livestock, and reaffirmed the ban on any export or import of charcoal in or out of Somalia. It expressed concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation and increased attacks on humanitarian actors as well as about the continued reports of corruption, diversion of public resources and financial impropriety in Somalia. It said individuals engaged in acts that threatened Somalia's peace and reconciliation processes might be listed for targeted sanctions.

On Eritrea, the Council took note of the two meetings and six letters between representatives of the Government of Eritrea and the SEMG, but expressed concern that the SEMG had been unable to visit Eritrea since 2011. This meant it could not fully discharge its mandate. It called on Eritrea to cooperate fully with the SEMG. It urged the Government of Eritrea to facilitate a visit of the SEMG to Eritrea, and thereafter to support regular visits to Eritrea by the SEMG. The Council said deepened cooperation would help the Security Council be better informed about Eritrea's compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The resolution expressed serious concern at the reports of Djiboutian combatants missing in action since the clashes in 2008. It stressed its demand that the Government of Eritrea allow access and make available any detailed information, including to the SEMG, pertaining to the Djiboutian combatants missing in action since the clashes of 2008 so that those concerned may ascertain the presence and conditions of any remaining Djiboutian prisoners of war. It welcomed the release of four prisoners of war by Eritrea in March 2016, expressed support for the Qatari mediation efforts and encouraged further mediation efforts by the State of Qatar in order to reach a final and binding solution to resolve this issue as well as the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea. It also underlined the importance the Council attached to all Member States complying with the terms of the arms embargo imposed on Eritrea by resolution 1907 (2009), and determined that the dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea, continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region.

The Council did note that the SEMG, in its current mandate and in the previous two, had not found any evidence that the Government of Eritrea was supporting al-Shabaab, but it also expressed concern over the reports of ongoing Eritrean support for certain regional armed groups. It encouraged the SEMG to provide further detailed reporting and evidence on this.

It reaffirmed the arms embargo on Eritrea imposed by paragraphs 5 and 6 of resolution 1907 (2009). It also expressed its intention to review measures on Eritrea in light of the upcoming midterm update by the SEMG due by 30 April 2017, and taking into account relevant Security Council resolutions.

The resolution requested that the SEMG provide monthly updates to the Committee, and a comprehensive midterm update, and submit, for the Security Council's consideration, through the Committee, two final reports, one focusing on Somalia, the other on Eritrea by 15 October 2017.

Addressing the Security Council, the Charge d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the UN, Amanuel Giorgio, once again accused the Security Council of committing "grave injustice against the people of Eritrea by extending the unjustified sanction", and arguing that there was no reason for imposing sanctions as the Monitoring Group had said "there is no evidence of Eritrean support to al-Shabaab in Somalia." He also claimed Eritrea remained committed to the mediation of the State of Qatar, which, he said, had resulted in the release of all Djiboutian prisoners of war last March. He said, "in light of the reports of the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group and serious regional developments, it is incumbent on the UN Security Council to lift the unfair, unjust and counter-productive sanction on Eritrea without further delay." He claimed the *sanctions*, in place for the past seven years, had been detrimental not only to Eritrea, but also to the Horn of Africa region, emboldening some countries to "violate international law as well as externalize their problems instead of cooperating with their neighbors to address the serious challenges of regional peace and security". He said the UN Security Council had once again missed the opportunity to contribute positively to regional peace, stability and amity. However, he said, "Eritrea will continue making its positive contribution to regional peace, stability and security in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea."

Eritrea has certainly been lobbying hard to have sanctions lifted, though without allowing the SEMG access to Eritrea or indeed demonstrating any changes in policy. The Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, which proposed resolution 2317, underlined the lack of cooperation on the part of the Eritrean authorities. That, he said, had "tied the international community's hands". The representative of the United States echoed that sentiment, stressing that non-cooperation was not the path to getting the sanctions lifted. She also noted that while no evidence had been found that Eritrea was supporting al-Shabaab, it was difficult to corroborate this because the Monitoring Group had not been allowed into the country. The permanent representative of the United States emphasized her strong support for the resolution, which she said targeted causes of instability in the Horn of Africa, and noted that the sanctions regimes were an important part of the international community's response to the situation there.

Djibouti's representative underlined that no information had been provided on the fate of a number of the Djiboutian prisoners of war, stressing that while Eritrea continued its past practices, Djibouti therefore supported extending the sanctions regime. The Qatari mediation has gone through many rounds of shuttle diplomacy and bilateral meetings with President Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea and President Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti, but it has yet to resolve the dispute and eight years after the fighting, there has been no progress on the border issue between Eritrea and Djibouti. So far, the mediation resulted in the release of four prisoners, but there are still 12 Djiboutian troops unaccounted for and about which Eritrea refuses to provide any information. Eritrea and Djibouti took prisoners of war when the two countries clashed when Eritrea invaded Djibouti territory in June 2008. Though Djibouti has released the Eritrean POWs, it took Eritrea eight

years to release four prisoners in March this year. It has announced that one had died. Two others had escaped. It now denies that it holds any prisoners.

One of the issues underlined by the Security Council was "concern over reports by the SEMG of ongoing Eritrean support for certain regional armed groups". The Council, therefore, encouraged the SEMG to provide further detailed reporting and evidence on this issue. In fact, only a couple of months earlier, there had been considerable corroboration when a reporter of the *New York Times* visited Eritrea and accompanied Berhanu Nega, of Ginbot 7 to the military camps in Eritrea close to the Ethiopian border where Ginbot 7 fighters were being supported, armed and trained under the auspices of Eritrea in preparation for cross-border terrorist operations into Ethiopia.

Of the countries that abstained, China said it encouraged countries in the region to take the "big picture" into account, to strengthen neighborly relationships and avoid confrontation. China hoped that the Security Council would pay close attention to changes on the ground and make timely adjustments, while remaining responsive to the legitimate concerns of States. China had proposed to address the issue of a roadmap to lift sanctions but others suggested this was not yet appropriate. Angola suggested a constructive roadmap towards changing the sanctions regime would encourage the Government of Eritrea to engage with the international community. The Angolan representative said he had abstained from the vote because the Monitoring Group had found no evidence of Eritrea's support for al-Shabaab. The Russian Federation said it had abstained for the same reason. The Russian representative also affirmed that the allegations of Eritrea's support for regional armed groups simply did not exist anymore.

Egypt thought the resolution's wording should have been more balanced. The Egyptian Representative acknowledged positive developments including the absence of support for al-Shabaab. He called on Council members to use clear criteria when determining sanctions, adding that it should be done in such a way as to promote peace and security, while resolving regional concerns. Stressing that sanctions must not continue forever, he said, they must be flexible enough to be responsive to changes on the ground. Venezuela thought the sanctions on Eritrea were unfair. Sanctions should not be used for the collective punishment of a country, he said, arguing that the sanctions imposed on Eritrea had no further political purpose beyond serving the national interests of permanent members. The Monitoring Group, the Venezuelan representative said, had submitted a professional opinion that pointed to the case for lifting the sanctions with no evidence of Eritrea lending support to al-Shabaab. In addition, Qatar was working to obtain the release of the remaining prisoners of war and settle the dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti. A roadmap, it said, for lifting the sanctions was now needed.

The 6th International Conference on Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices

The 6th International Conference on Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices opened in Addis Ababa this week on Thursday (Nov 17) under the theme: "Agri-commodity marketing for sustainable global trade." Co-organized by the Ethiopian Ministry of Trade and the Ethiopian Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices Producers and Exporters Association (EPOSPEA), the two-day conference aims to strengthen and expand existing and new market linkages and outlets as well as diversify product varieties through consolidating the foundation that has already been laid down. It also intends to nurture a common concern of the major policy makers, international buyers, potential investors, research institutes, development partners and other actors in the value chain who have been engaged in tapping the full potential of the sector.

Opening the conference, the State Minister of the Ministry of Trade, Assad Zayed, underlined the rationale behind organizing such an event. This was to enhance the comparative advantage of the sector by creating a conducive platform for key industry players, produce positive results with regard to enhancing the country's image abroad and further boosting the sector's export market linkages. The Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices sector in Ethiopia is one of potentially abundant resources in relative terms along with other various components of the agricultural sector. Together these have real potential to contribute immensely to the country's overall development. Last fiscal year, the State Minister added, Ethiopia earned US\$722.4 million from export of pulses, oilseeds and spices, despite the volatility of the international price for agricultural commodities. This was the result of the integrated efforts pursued by a range of stakeholders.

However, the State Minister called on stakeholders to further step up efforts to meet the targets of the Second Growth and Transformation Plan given the current performance still falls short of the targeted US\$1.26 billion. Ethiopia, he said, was paying full priority to enhancing production and productivity, exporting value-added items, and widening and diversifying market destinations during the country's current Growth and

Transformation Plan. He emphasized that the progress made in the sub-sector and the market modernization at the **Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX)** for online trading and implementation of traceability had become a benchmark for many African countries. He said it was high time for the sector to widen and diversify market linkages, not only by strengthening the country's existing market destinations, but also through exploring and expanding to new frontier markets by networking with business clients in platforms like this conference. Expanding and leveraging market opportunities for Ethiopia's pulses, oilseeds and spices sub-sector of the country at international market was key to benefitting from the current upward trend of agricultural commodities in the global market. The State Minister said Ethiopia had plenty of suitable, unexploited land that could produce pulses, oilseeds and spices as well as suitable climatic conditions available for investment opportunities.

The President of the Ethiopian Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices Producers Exporters Association (EPOSPEA), Haile Berhe, noted that the conference would be instrumental in the sense that it would create enabling platforms for both existing and new clients to expand market and business linkages. It would also offer further opportunities to address the current challenges facing the sector. He said, "the market opportunity that both our exporters and importers will have at the end of the deliberations through business-to-business linkages and networking is the central milestone this conference intends to achieve." The President noted that the association was working to raise the quantity of export produce as part of its efforts to address the gaps in earnings, which he said was mainly ascribed to price fluctuations in the international market. He said it was also trying to diversify market linkages through arranging correspondence among business delegations and hosting various trade missions across the globe.

The Ethiopian Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices Processors-Exporters Association (EPOSPEA) was established in 1998 with the objective of building up the capacity of its members and making them competitive in the global market. Currently EPOSPEA has more than 100 active members who take advantage of the favorable policies the government provides for the sector. The Association serves to promote and protect the interests of its members, to build their capacity to participate and compete in the global market and contribute to the economic development of the country. It provides up-to-date local and foreign market information, trends and analysis of the sector to build up the competitive position of its members; it delivers advocacy services to create an enabling environment and encourage policy reforms relevant to sector activity; creates international opportunities to enhance the place of members in global export business; and enhances the capacity of members to carry out activity through the provision of essential business development models. The President of the Global Pulse Confederation, Huseyin Arslan, said that the developing world should export more pulses, oil seeds and spices products in order to ensure increased revenue from the sector. He said governments should give due emphasis to activities that can save the wastage of the products during harvesting period.

The 6th International Conference on Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices brought together over 200 participants including international importers from 20 countries, representatives of public enterprises and the private sector. It provides the opportunity for stakeholders to network with peers, learn about newest market trends, discuss the challenges and opportunities in the local and global market, and learn new ways of increasing quality, productivity and marketability.

Ethio-German Business Roundtable held in Addis Ababa

An Ethio-German Business Roundtable was held on Monday (November 14) at Hilton Addis, with a twenty-person delegation from Germany and the State of Bavaria being briefed on investment and business opportunities in Ethiopia. The State Minister for Business and Diaspora Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Regasa Kefale, emphasized the longstanding relations of the two countries, pointing out that Ethiopia and Germany have enjoyed excellent diplomatic relations over more than a century. He expressed Ethiopia's appreciation for the meaningful support extended by the German Government in the past half a century, support which included one billion Euros under technical and financial cooperation in education, food security and agriculture. Mr Regasa pointed out that Ethio-German trade exchange has witnessed a continuous growth in volume, last year reaching half a billion US dollars. Equally, he emphasized the "need to further increase and diversify trade opportunities" between the businesses and governments of the two countries.

The head of the Bavarian delegation, Mr Ulrich Konstantin Rieger, Deputy Head of the Department for Internalization in the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Media, Energy and Technology, also emphasized that the longstanding historic relationship between the two countries should be further

strengthened in the fields of business and trade ties. The delegation, which included Bavarian state officials, business company leaders from the energy, construction and manufacturing sectors as well as a number of academic professors, would help enhance the already strong economic relations that existed between the two countries, he added.

The delegation included representatives of **Bosch**, the engineering and electronics' company and the world's largest supplier of automotive components, and **Siemens**, the largest engineering company in Europe. Richard Schurink, Regional Director for Foreign and Public Affairs of BOSCH, described the investment climate in Ethiopia as "very positive along with the economic growth which helps foreign companies, especially German companies, to be interested in investment opportunities in the country." He commended the investment opportunities in Ethiopia and the possibility of BOSCH products boosting the development programs of Ethiopia in the future. He said, "We are considering next year to be here with the BOSCH department heads." Lukas Duursema, Chief Executive Officer of SIEMENS East Africa Region said, "Currently we are in the process of setting a branch office here in Ethiopia. Some of the investment incentives are very attractive and most definitely we can start concentrating on certain industries. We consider Ethiopia as an appropriate country for mutual benefits from which we can collectively gain. This has attracted our attention."

Mr Fitsum Arega, the Commissioner of Ethiopian Investment Commission briefed the roundtable on investment opportunities in Ethiopia, particularly the manufacturing, agro- processing, energy and pharmaceutical sectors. The Commissioner stressed the favorable investment conditions ranging from Ethiopia's fast growing economy, which he pointed out was attracting massive FDI, up to the well-oriented investment policy of the government. He said Bavarian state companies which were engaged in the manufacturing, energy and construction sectors would be successful in Ethiopia's conducive investment environment. The Bavarian state delegation was also meeting with government officials from the Ministries of Education, Health, and Science and Technology as well as other senior officials during its visit.

Meanwhile, Germany's Development Minister, Gerd Mueller, said on Friday (November 11) that Germany would in the coming weeks release details of what he called a new "**Marshall Plan with Africa**". Mr Mueller was referring to the huge U.S. investment program in Germany and Europe after World War Two. He urged other developed countries to support a plan Germany is finalizing to bolster the economies of Africa, create jobs and slow the flow of migrants from the continent to Europe. The International Organization for Migration said last week that nearly 160,000 people had crossed the Mediterranean from Africa to Italy this year, while 4,220 had died trying. Mr Mueller told a news conference: "We have to invest in these countries in Africa and give people perspectives for the future", adding "if the youth of Africa can't find work or a future in their own countries, it won't be hundreds of thousands, but millions that make their way to Europe." Mr Mueller noted that in addition to the migrants already looking to come to Europe, there were about 20 million displaced people in Africa. He said his plan was aimed at developing joint solutions with African countries, with a big focus on program for youth, education and training and on strengthening economies and the rule of law. These were issues, he added, that needed to be recognized by the international community, and Africa should have representation on the U.N. Security Council. Mr Mueller said a significant share of his ministry's proposed budget increase of over 1 billion euros for 2017 would be earmarked for projects in Africa. Earlier in the week, Germany also pledged a 61-million-Euro (\$67 million) rise in funding for U.N. relief operations in Africa.

Remembrance Day Service at the Gulele War Cemetery in Addis Ababa

Remembrance Day is a special day originally set aside to remember the 18 million people who were killed in the First World War, 11 million of them soldiers, the rest civilians. It was then expanded to remember all the many millions of soldiers who have been killed in subsequent wars including the Second World War and other conflicts up to the present day. It has been observed in Commonwealth member states since the end of the First World War, and in many other nations, to remember all those members of the armed forces who have died in the line of duty. "At the going down sun and in the morning: We will remember them." Originally called Armistice Day and sometimes known as Poppy Day, Remembrance Day is observed on November 11 in most countries to recall the end of hostilities of World War I on that date in 1918. Hostilities on the Western front formally ended "at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month", when the armistice between Germany and the Entente was signed. The First World War, however, only officially ended with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919.

The emblem of Remembrance Day is the Red Poppy and this has become familiar around the world. It was chosen because of the red poppies which bloomed across some of the worst battlefields of World War I in

Flanders, and their brilliant red color is a symbol for the blood spilled in that war and in all other conflicts. "In Flanders Fields the poppies blow between the crosses row on row."

Remembrance Day is also marked with special church services held on the nearest Sunday to November 11 at war memorials and churches in the UK and the Commonwealth and at war cemeteries across the world. Wreaths of poppies are laid on war memorials and a Two Minute Silence is observed at 11.00 am. The first Two Minute Silence in London, on November 11, 1919, was reported in the *Manchester Guardian* newspaper: "The first stroke of eleven produced a magical effect. The train cars glided into stillness, motors ceased to cough and fume and stopped dead, and the mighty-limbed dray-horses hunched back upon their loads and stopped also, seeming to do it of their own volition. Someone took off his hat, and with a nervous hesitancy the rest of the men bowed their heads also. Here and there an old soldier could be detected slipping unconsciously into the posture of attention. An elderly woman, not far away, wiped her eyes and the man beside her looked white and stern. Everyone stood very still. The hush deepened. It had spread over the whole city and become so pronounced as to impress one with a sense of audibility. It was a silence which was almost pain. And the spirit of memory brooded over it all."

This year, on Sunday (November 13), at 11.0 am, trumpeters of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces, sounded the Last Post at the Gulele War Cemetery in Addis Ababa. Ambassadors of countries accredited to Ethiopia, and all those present, observed the Two Minute Silence in remembrance of all those who have died in war. The Ambassadors then laid wreaths on the memorial in the cemetery. The UK Ambassador also laid a special wreath separately to commemorate the Ethiopian Patriots who died in the struggle to restore the independence of Ethiopia after the Fascist invasion. Gulele is one of the many war cemeteries maintained around the world and the UK Ambassador, Ambassador Susanna Moorehead, noted the occasion also commemorated the war dead buried at Dire Dawa, Gambella and Harar. A similar commemoration had been held earlier in the week at the Cemetery in Djibouti. Ambassador Moorehead underlined that the occasion commemorated in particular those who sacrificed themselves for the independence of Ethiopia in 1941. 297 graves in the Gulele War Cemetery date from the Second World War, but buried there are a total of 357 Christians, Muslims, Jews and Hindus, from several countries, united in death and in having died while serving as soldiers.

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."