

## **A Week in the Horn**

**25<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

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### **News in Brief**

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

The Airport Infrastructure and Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) Africa conference was held in Addis Ababa this week (September 22-24). (See article)

#### **Ethiopia**

Pope Tawadros II of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St Mark, Egypt, starts a six-day visit to Ethiopia on Saturday (September 26). During his visit he will meet Abune Mathias I, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the President and members of Ethiopia's Public Diplomacy Delegation which visited Egypt last year. He will also visit a number of Ethiopian monasteries as well as attend the Festival of the Finding of the True Cross, on Monday September 27.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn is attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York at the head of a delegation that includes Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom. The Prime Minister will be participating in the three-day Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda which opens today (Friday, September 25) as well as speaking at the General Assembly next week.

Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom opened Ethiopia's National Day celebrations on September 22 at the Milano Universal Exposition 2015. The previous day he spoke at the Ethiopia Trade and Investment Forum in Milan attended by over 300 Italian firms. (See article)

Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros, addressed the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 in New York on Thursday (September 24).(See article)

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Berhane met a visiting delegation from the EU, led by the Deputy Ambassador of Finland, Mrs Terhi Lehtinen, on Tuesday (September 22).

Discussions covered the need for a comprehensive response to the current problems of migration and refugees, and the importance of enhancing cooperation. (See article)

The newly appointed Ambassador of Spain to Ethiopia, Ambassador Montesino Martwez del Cerro, and the new Belgian Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union, Didier Nagant De Deuxchaisnes, presented copies of their Letters of Credence to State Minister, Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos, this week.

The State Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Liberia, Mrs Wede Elliot Brownell, met with Foreign Affairs State Minister, Dr Yinager Dessie, on Friday (September 18). Mrs Elliot Brownell said Liberia was keen to see the opening of an Ethiopian Embassy in Liberia and the commencement of Ethiopian Airline flights to Liberia.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, has nominated the CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, Tewolde GebreMariam, to serve as a co-chair on his High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport.

Sub-Saharan Africa's first ever Light Railway began operations in Addis Ababa on Sunday (September 20) with the opening of the north-south section of the 34.25 kilometer line. The east-west line will start next month.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism expects over a million tourists to visit Ethiopia this fiscal year and it expects earnings from tourism to top US\$3.2 billion. Last year, 774,000 tourists visited the country and earnings were US\$2.9 billion.

### **Eritrea**

Foreign Minister, Osman Mohammed Saleh, met with UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon on Monday (September 21) and "exchanged views on sanctions imposed on the country and the peace and security situation in the region. The Secretary-General encouraged further engagement between Eritrea and the United Nations in furthering human rights in the country."

### **Kenya**

President Kenyatta arrived in New York on Wednesday (September 23) to attend the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. He is expected to meet Pope Francis and British Prime Minister David Cameron. He is addressing the General Assembly on September 25 and 28, and will join other world leaders at a meeting on Peace and International Security chaired by President Obama on Saturday (September 26).

The European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, said on Monday (September 21) that Kenya will be one of the recipients for the Euro 1.8 billion EU Emergency Trust Fund. The fund will foster stability and counter radicalization, as well as address the refugee crisis in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and North Africa.

The UNHCR said last weekend that it had repatriated 4,108 Somali refugees from Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya to Somalia since December last year under the voluntary return process. It also said 4,878 refugees had confirmed their intention to return to Somalia.

## **Somalia**

The three-day National Consultative Conference in Mogadishu concluded on Monday (September 21) with an agreement to establish a National Consultative Forum for the electoral process for 2016. The conference was attended by President Mohamed and the leaders of Puntland, Jubaland, South West and Galmudug states. (See article)

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said on Sunday (September 20) he wished Somaliland could be part of an electoral process and his administration is working on plans to provide political space for it. He expected another round of the Turkish-brokered talks between the Federal Government and Somaliland to take place soon.

The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, Ambassador Maman Sidikou, appealed for concerted efforts in peace building initiatives in Somalia on the World International Day of peace on Monday (September 21). The theme of this year's commemoration was "Partnerships for Peace, dignity for all."

Eleven people died as the result of a suicide car bomb attack on the Presidential compound, Villa Somalia, in Mogadishu on Monday (September 21).

## **South Sudan**

The South Sudanese army announced on Tuesday (September 22) that the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) will start to withdraw from the country next week. The decision was reached at the Ceasefire Workshop held last week in Addis Ababa, and attended by commanders from the Government and the SPLM-in-Opposition. (See article)

## **Sudan**

President Omer al-Bashir, on Tuesday (September 22), issued a decree granting general amnesty for the leaders and members of armed movements taking part in the national dialogue conference. Another decree declared a two-month cease fire which covers the fighting in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur.

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## **Dr Tedros addresses the Ministerial meeting of the G-77 in New York**

The 70<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the UN General Assembly opened at the UN Headquarters in New York on Tuesday, last week (September 15). The three-day Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda convenes today, Friday (September 25), and the General Debate of the General Assembly will open on Monday (September 28) and last until October 6. His Holiness, Pope Francis, will address the General Assembly on Friday (September 25) and address the Assembly immediately ahead of the official opening of the UN Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda.

With the UN General Assembly taking place in New York, there is an unequalled opportunity for other bilateral and multilateral meetings to be held. One of those that is regularly held on the

sidelines of the Assembly is the Annual Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 at the beginning of the regular session of the General Assembly.

The Group of 77 (G-77) was established on 15 June 1964 by seventy-seven developing countries, the signatories of the “Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Developing Countries” issued at the end of the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva. It held its first ministerial meeting in Algiers in 1967 and adopted the Charter of Algiers, setting up a permanent institutional structure. The membership of the G-77 currently stands at 134 countries but it keeps its original name. The G-77 is the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the United Nations. It provides a means by which the countries of the South can articulate and promote their collective economic interests and enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues within the United Nations system. The Group also emphasizes the importance of and promotes South-South cooperation for development.

On Thursday (September 24), Ethiopia’s Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, addressed the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77. Congratulating, the Kingdom of Thailand on its election to assume the chairmanship of the G-77 for 2016, taking over from the Republic of South Africa, Dr Tedros emphasized that this year’s annual ministerial meeting came at a very critical time. He said the alignment of events, whose outcomes were of great significance to developing countries, afforded the G-77 the opportunity “to strive with greater resolve to ensure the creation of a fairer world and conditions that allow addressing our common but differentiated responsibilities.” He noted that since its foundation just over 50 years ago, the founding principles of the G-77 had stood the test of time and served well to project “our positions in the critical intergovernmental negotiations this year.”

Dr Tedros said the post-2015 development agenda, which would be adopted at the Summit, was the product of hard-fought negotiations and three years of laborious work. He said the G-77 hadn’t achieved everything it would have liked, pointing out that the 2030 Development Agenda “does not lay the basis for a just and equitable global economic and trading system,” and the world would continue to be characterized by the lack of level playing field. He stressed that the developing world still needed to make determined and prolonged efforts to address the systemic and structural challenges that the developing countries face in international economic relations. He said it remained most appropriate, for both moral and pragmatic reasons, to demand adherence to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities broadly and beyond climate change.

Equally, there was no doubt that the 2030 Development Agenda, with its 17 Goals and 169 targets, is **not** a major achievement. The commitment to eradicate extreme poverty in 15 years by consensus, he said, was major progress towards the basis for more meaningful international cooperation. To a large extent, the goals and targets also reflect the transformative and ambitious nature of the 2030 Agenda. Dr Tedros emphasized that the key factor would be the means of implementation to provide effective mobilization and provision for a much more strengthened international partnership. An adequate and strengthened means of implementation was therefore pivotal. Dr Tedros said Ethiopia believed that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda which was

adopted in July should now be activated, to begin the task of getting the necessary means for implementation of this ambitious and transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Dr Tedros also noted that there was one critical affair which deserved the utmost attention of the G-77. This was the efforts to get a legally binding agreement on climate change in Paris. This, he said, was another development agenda that the international community “has to get right”, adding that “we in developing world cannot afford to continue to suffer from the effects of climate change”. This would “cost us not only our hard-fought development gains of today but those of the future.” Dr Tedros said the ambitious post-2015 Development Agenda clearly indicated the seriousness of this situation and it called for urgent measures to be taken to address this challenge. He said he believed that it would be possible to build on the good start already made this year and aim “to achieve a successful outcome at the climate negotiations in Paris.”

Dr Tedros concluded by referring to the development of the economies of some of the members of the G-77 shifting to “a higher trajectory” and developing the capacity to be a real bulwark for South-South cooperation. He said these were success stories from which critical lessons could be drawn and with whom genuine partnership could be forged. South-South cooperation was something that should further be enhanced and strengthened. He said the G-77 now stood at the “dawn of the new development era” and it must continue to stand firm in its resolve to further strengthen its solidarity and unity “to ensure that our collective interests, needs and aspirations are advanced and promoted in the years to come.”

### **The Ethio-Italy Investment and Trade Forum in Milan....**

The Ethio-Italy Investment and Trade Forum, organized and facilitated by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and its Embassy in Addis Ababa, the Italian Trade Agency (ICE) and the Ethiopian Embassy in Rome, was held in Milan on Monday (September 21). The objective of this successful meeting was to enhance business-to-business relations, improve mutual trade and investment and provide ample information to potential Italian investors. An Ethiopian delegation led by Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, including more than a hundred official and private sector participants, attended the Forum.

The President of the Italian Trade Agency (ICE), Ricardo M. Monti, addressing the opening session of the Ethio-Italy Investment and Trade Forum, noted that Italy was determined to have strong relations with Ethiopia, a strong and stable country which was attracting significant FDI. The ICE President noted that Ethiopia and Italy shared longstanding relations, a bond which in his view had seen tremendous developments in the last few years. He said Ethiopia was one of the leading African countries in offering a conducive business environment. He pointed out that the Italian Trade Agency had opened its first trade office in Addis Ababa for this very reason. Foreign Affairs [Minister], Dr Tedros Adhanom, told the Forum that Ethio-Italy relations were not only historic, long-standing and cordial, but also had been gradually expanding, covering economic cooperation, regional peace and security and global issues of common interest. He congratulated the Government and people of Italy for staging the successful and on-going Universal Exposition Milano 2015, under the theme of “Feeding the Planet and Energy for Life”.

The Minister emphasized that the Ethio-Italy Business Forum would intensify the existing investment and trade exchanges between the two countries. He said “Ethiopia is changing for the better. It is one of the ten fastest growing economies in the world, with inclusive development, which has resulted in a lower Gini co-efficient ratio.” It was in the process of transforming its economy from an agricultural-led economy to an industrialized one with particular focus on the manufacturing sector, modernization of agriculture and expanding infrastructure, while simultaneously aiming to reach zero-net carbon emissions and also becoming the energy hub of East Africa, inter-connecting its infrastructure and power lines with neighboring countries. All this needs "fresh capital and new technologies" and, he added, "we are ready to welcome Italian entrepreneurs, with a red carpet."

Italian Foreign Minister, Mr Paolo Gentiloni, said that Ethiopia is among Italy’s two or three major foci in Africa, largely due to its political and institutional stability, which are precious assets for investors. He said the level of business interactions between the two countries, however, did not reflect the century-old relationship. He underlined Ethiopia was a nation "with a very high growth rate, and extraordinary potential," with a population of 90 million, a low average age, and good access to lucrative markets. The Italian Foreign minister urged Italian entrepreneurs to make use of this opportunity. He indicated Italy's keen interest to engage more with Ethiopia, mentioning the recent visit of the Italian Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi. He added that Italy sees Ethiopia as one of the countries on the priority list for 2015-2017. Trade currently involves an exchange of 300-400 million Euros, but this, he said, is not enough “we can do much more”.

Various presentations were also made on the current status and future prospects on trade and investment relations between Ethiopia and Italy. Ambassador Mulugeta Alemsegad, Ethiopian Ambassador to the Republic of Italy, explained Ethiopia’s efforts made to expand investment and trade cooperation, by conducting a number of business promotion programs. He invited more companies to do business in Ethiopia. Mr Zemedeneh Nigatu, of Ernst and Young Ethiopia, presented an overview of the reasons for investing in Ethiopia: its robust economic growth and its huge population, availability of labor, rapid urbanization, and the aim of becoming a manufacturing hub of Africa, and its infrastructure expansion. All were major reasons for Italian investors to prefer Ethiopia. Mr Fitsum Arega, from the Ethiopian Investment Commission, dealt at length with the incentives and special advantages for investors in Ethiopia, noting the developing industrial parks, one-shop-services and massive infrastructure expansion. He invited potential Italian investors to use these opportunities. Dr Mebrahtu Meles, State Minister of Industry, also noted Ethiopia’s aim of becoming a regional agro-industrial power. He indicated that Ethiopia’s industry road map was now laid out for the years 2013-2025 with agro-processing, leather and leather products, textile and infrastructural expansions at the top of the list of priorities. The State Minister praised the involvement of the Italian government in building agro-industrial parks in Ethiopia and called for their further involvement in the sector.

The representatives of the Italian Trade Agency in Addis Ababa, of SIMEST and SACE, also made presentations on the opportunities of doing business in Ethiopia, promising to provide insurance and financial support for companies interested in investing in Ethiopia. SIMEST was set up in 1991 to promote foreign investments by Italian companies and to provide technical and financial support to investment projects; SACE offers a wide range of insurance and financial

products for Italian companies. In addition, Salini-Impregilo spa also outlines its success story of doing business in Ethiopia. At the end of the Forum, more than 250 Italian companies were given the opportunity to meet with Ethiopian companies representing the country's major economic sectors - infrastructure, agro-processing, textile and garment, leather industries, manufacturing in wood and metal, and the construction sector. They held numerous successful business-to-business meetings. Dr Tedros met with representatives of more than ten individual Italian companies to provide first-hand information on how to do business in Ethiopia. Dr Mebrahtu Meles, State Minister of Industry, also met with representatives of more than 15 Italian Companies working in the infrastructure, construction and energy sectors.

The Ethiopian business delegation also participated in the EU-sub-Saharan Africa Business Forum that took place from September 18-19. More than 200 major European companies participated and there were many successful business-to-business meetings with their Ethiopian counterparts. The delegation had a field visit to Parma to visit a tomato processing company. State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dewano Kadir, led the Coffee Business Group, of 21 Ethiopian coffee growing and exporting companies, to Trieste, famous in the EU for its coffee processing. Ato Dewano reminded Trieste coffee processing and importing companies that Ethiopia, the origin of Arabica coffee, had provided this as a gift to the world. He noted that Ethiopia was a founding member of the International Coffee Organization (ICO) and would be hosting the 4<sup>th</sup> World Coffee Conference, the first time the conference had been held in Africa, and he encouraged his listeners to attend. He also mentioned Ethiopia's keen interest in expanding existing business linkages among the two countries' coffee selling and buying companies through increasing commercial deals and joint ventures. The group had a chance to visit three major coffee processing companies. At the end of the visit, the President of the Trieste Coffee Association promised to attend the Coffee Conference in Ethiopia and to mobilize his members to strengthen links with Ethiopia's coffee business community.

### **...and Dr Tedros opens Ethiopia's National Day at the Milan Universal Exposition 2015**

Dr Tedros opened the National Day dedicated to Ethiopia at the Milan Universal Exposition 2015 on Tuesday (September 22). He described it as a "showcase for the world to allow people get to know us and to show our progress to everybody." It is also, he said, "an excellent opportunity to strengthen bilateral relations with Italy, a country to which we are deeply linked." Dr Tedros noted that Ethiopia was participating in various thematic programs related to the event with high-level representation in the agriculture, industry, culture and private sector event as well. He mentioned that Ethiopia had been playing a leading role in addressing global challenges like climate change, food security etc. through crafting environment and human friendly policies.

Italy's Economic Undersecretary, Paola De Micheli, while welcoming Dr Tedros at the Expo, noted that Italy pays special attention to Ethiopia because Italy has followed the country's economic success with particular interest. He said Ethiopia has great importance for the stabilization of the Horn of Africa and added that his government was strongly encouraging and supporting companies to invest in Ethiopia. Dr Tedros noted there had been a rise in investment recently from Italy and from other parts of the world. He expressed the government's commitment to welcoming investors and investment and its readiness to accommodate more in the future.

Ethiopia's National Day was celebrated colourfully, with members of the Ethiopian community in Milan and friends of Ethiopia joining the Ethiopian business delegation at the event. The occasion included a guided tour of the Ethiopian and Italian pavilions, an Ethiopian cultural performance, the signing of the Honour Book and exchanges of gifts.

On the occasion of the visit to Milan, Dr Tedros also met for bilateral discussions with Italy's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Paolo Gentiloni. The Ministers discussed migration issues, regional matters in the Horn of Africa, including South Sudan and Somalia, and Eritrea which is the origin of a very large percentage of the refugee flow to Europe. They also discussed bilateral relations, emphasizing economic-commercial aspects and the development outlook. Minister Gentiloni emphasized that Italy views Ethiopia as a vital partner with an important role to play in the stabilization of the region. This, he said, was partly due to its close involvement in the African Union and in regional organizations such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for the Horn of Africa. He noted that Italy and Ethiopia's close bilateral relations and their common interest in the stabilization and development of the region were also evidenced by the two countries' role in co-chairing the IGAD Partners' Forum on Somalia.

The Ministers agreed on the importance of the forthcoming EU-Africa summit on migration and refugee issues that will take place in Valletta, Malta, in November. That meeting will be significant both for a European strategy framework and in terms of responding to an issue that also concerns the Horn of Africa as a whole. As their meeting underlined, Ethiopia is a key partner for Italy in the Khartoum Process, which is also important for providing a positive influence on the stabilization of the area. Italian Development Cooperation is now funding programs by international agencies in East Africa to help refugees and migrants and to support the reception work being done by the countries of the region. Other areas of intervention by Italian Development Cooperation in Ethiopia are food security and support for small and micro-businesses run by women. Focusing on economic and commercial relations, Foreign Minister Gentiloni said Italy had also identified investment opportunities in Ethiopia for medium-sized companies, especially in the energy, infrastructure and agro-food sectors. He said that Italy would continue to view Ethiopia as a priority country for economic collaboration.

### **Somalia's National Consultative Conference in Mogadishu**

The National Consultative Conference to discuss and formally launch the process for the 2016 election due to be held by August 2016 was held over three days last weekend (September 19-21) in Mogadishu. The conference was attended by the Federal Government President, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud; the Speaker of the Federal Parliament, Mohamed Osman Jawari; Federal Prime Minister, Omar Sharmarke; and President Dr Abdiweli Mohamed Ali of Puntland; President Sharif Hassan of South-West State; President Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Islam of Jubaland; and Abdikarim Hussein Guled, head of the Interim Galmudug Administration. In addition to the federal government and state delegations, the conference was also attended by members of the International Community and Civil Society representatives. The international community, including representatives of IGAD, the UN, USA, UK, EU and AU, among others, participated in a facilitating role.

In the communiqué issued at the end of the Conference by the Prime Minister's Office, the leaders agreed to launch a National Consultative Forum, affirming their commitment to a "democratic, representative, all inclusive" process as outlined by the agreed principles and work plan from the High-Level Partnership Forum in Mogadishu in July. The communiqué notes that the establishment of the Forum is in line with the provisions of Vision 2016 and the policy guidelines agreed in July, as well as the call by the United Nations Security Council (Resolution 2232 (2015) that there should be no extension or delay to elections in 2016. The leaders agreed on the basis of these declarations to form the Structural Form and Terms of Reference for the National Consultative Forum.

The National Consultative Forum will be made up of 78 members and include the President and Prime Minister of Somalia and the presidents of the four regional states being established - Jubaland, South West, Puntland and Galmudug. Middle Shabelle and Hiiraan, which is just beginning the process of state formation, will contribute four members, and Banadir has been allocated three slots. The Forum will also include officials of the federal government, and regional administrations, members of the federal parliament, and regional assemblies, from regions that do not have regional governance, and representatives from civil society. The leaders agreed to let Somali communities abroad and in the country participate in the consultative forum, including women, youth, clan elders and media professionals in order "to make the process Somali-owned". The first meeting of the Forum will be on October 14 at which discussions will be on the best formula for the upcoming electoral processes for 2016.

The Forum will set up two committees, a Working Committee, and a Technical Committee to prepare a Work-Plan prior to the next Forum meeting. This will define the description of the National Consultative Process and the Electoral Process options that are possible for 2016. Once the National Consultative Forum approves the Work-Plan, the Working Committee will embark on consultative meetings with the different sectors of the public across the nation in the months of October and November. The next meeting of the Forum will be on October 14 to discuss options for a fair and peaceful electoral process for 2016.

In the absence of any possibility of holding a one-person-one-vote election, the most likely compromise will be to allow elders from the main clans as well as various minority clans to act as representative electors, selecting MPs who in turn will elect the President in 2012. Alternative possibilities include allowing the regional states to provide representatives according to an agreed formula. Security, of course, remains a major consideration. While Al-Shabaab has been largely driven out of the urban areas, it still maintains support in some rural areas, and remains capable of launching terrorist attacks. On Monday this week, shortly after the close of the Conference, a car bomb at the Presidential complex in Mogadishu killed 11 people.

The leaders agreed that the National Consultative Conference should meet again in December this year when the leaders will review the outcome of the consultation with the general public and look at the various options discussed in the consultative meetings. They will then choose the most acceptable and viable as well as the most inclusive and transparent Electoral Process. The Leaders agreed that "the chosen electoral process will then be enacted by regulatory framework into legislation." This should take place in January next year. The final point of the communiqué

emphasized that special preference should be given for women, youth and minority groups to have a visible role in the consultative process. It noted that the outcome of the Consultative Forum will be representative of the Somali people and will reflect their needs and inspirations for an all-inclusive and transparent Electoral Process.

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia, Nicholas Kay, welcomed the agreement to establish the National Consultative Forum. He said the Forum would be critically important to Somalia peace-building and state-building efforts, and would lead to “a political transition when the mandates of the Somali executive and legislature end next year”. He said he was especially delighted that the progress had been achieved on International Peace Day. He added “I salute the efforts of the Federal Government, Federal Parliament and the leaders of Puntland, Jubaland, Galmudug and the South West Administration. Today they were united for peace.”

The Special Representative underlined several key elements for the consultative process, noting it should be Somali-led, open and transparent and consistent with the Guiding Principles that were agreed to at the High-level Partnership Forum in July 2015. SRSK Kay also stressed the importance of inclusivity and representation in the next Parliament to be formed in 2016, noting that the Somali people want to see a Parliament that reflects the diversity of Somalia. Women, youths, and minorities should be properly represented to ensure a more united and more dynamic Somalia than ever before, he said. He also noted that the timetable was “very ambitious”, and affirmed the United Nations would support the consultation process, together with the Federal Government and Partners.

The Conference was not without some disagreement and on the Sunday Puntland and Jubaland briefly withdrew. Puntland walked out of the meeting in protest over the formation of the Government-backed Galmudug administration and the future of Mudug, currently divided between Puntland and Galmudug. The President of Puntland, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gas, said his administration would issue a statement later on Puntland’s position towards the Galmudug administration. Galmudug has already indicated its desire to hold talks with Puntland. The President of Jubaland, Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Islam ‘Madobe’ also withdrew over the failure to reach a solution to the crisis created by the Federal Assembly when it earlier passed a no confidence vote in the Jubaland regional assembly. Efforts by the international representatives facilitating the conference, however, persuaded both to return and to agree to the final communiqué.

Following the Conference, Puntland set out its own specific viewpoint on the electoral process. In a statement issued on Tuesday (September 22), the Puntland Government underlined nine points that it said were particularly important to be resolved to help Somalia prepare for elections prior to August 2016. These included restoration of the place of the 2012 Provisional Federal Constitution, no term extension for the current leadership, clarification of the parliamentary selection process, the choice of members of the Upper House, the status of the capital, the planned federal commissions, and the legitimacy of some interim administrations and the power-sharing quotas of each federal member state.

The statement stressed that the constitution, signed by the Road Map signatories on June 22, 2012 remained the agreed upon draft for the constitution. It emphasized that the election should be held on the agreed date without any term extension for the current leadership and parliament. The new parliamentary selection process, it said, should be based on the 18 regions and districts of the pre-1991 period; and the process should be carried out with the consent of federal member states and the outcome of grass-roots consultation to make it binding. The membership of the Upper House should be based on regions that existed before 1991. The statement insisted that a final decision must be reached on the location, status and boundaries of the Somalia capital. The statement also called for the re-formation of all the key commissions being set up to organize the electoral process, including the Electoral Board, the Boundary Commission, the Committee on Justice and the Constitutional Review Commission. It demanded that the creation of the federal member states meet constitutional criteria and that the formulation of the other states must also be determined. It called for close observation by the United Nations, African Union, Arab League, IGAD, European Union, US, UK, Sweden and Italy in the run-up to the election.

In its statement, as at the Conference, Puntland endorsed the creation of the Consultative Forum on the Electoral Process and the other proposed bodies. It expressed its wish to work with the suggested new Working Committee task force to devise strategies for the electoral process, and to implement the outcomes of Consultative Forum. This committee will be made up of five members from the Federal Government and eleven others representing existing federal member states and interim regional administrations. It will be accountable to the Office of the Prime Minister. Puntland also expressed its intent to work with the other proposed body, the eleven person Technical Committee.

### **South Sudan Ceasefire Workshop agrees on removal of foreign troops**

A Ceasefire Workshop for military commanders was held in Addis Ababa last week under the IGAD Compromise Peace Agreement between the South Sudan Government and the rebel SPLM-in-Opposition. The workshop discussed various security issues and was due to sign an agreement to form the joint command, as required as part of the security arrangements. Progress was made on a number of issues, including the presence of foreign troops in South Sudan, but the workshop failed to reach a consensus over a number of contentious matters and there was no agreement over a joint command. A Summit on South Sudan is due to be held in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly next week. It is expected that the representatives of the two sides will be able to continue the discussions on unresolved security issues that remain outstanding.

In regard to the presence of foreign troops, following the agreement reached at the Ceasefire Workshop, the South Sudanese army announced on Tuesday (September 22) that the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) will start to withdraw from the country next week. Lieutenant General Malek Ruben, South Sudan's Deputy Chief of General Staff for Logistics said it had been agreed that by the 10<sup>th</sup> October, "the UPDF forces will be out of the country. The timeline of their withdrawal is to be between September 27 and October 10". According to the recently signed IGAD-mediated Peace Agreement to end the fighting, all foreign forces, whether government or opposition, are supposed to leave the country within 45 days after the signing of the peace agreement. The agreement is not confined to the Ugandan forces in South Sudan. In

addition to the UPDF, any Sudan rebel forces inside South Sudan will be demobilized and repatriated back to Sudan in accordance with the agreement. Others groups that are included in this are the Sudanese Revolutionary Forces (SPLM-North) that is fighting the Sudan Government in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, and the Darfur-based rebels, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the Sudan Liberation Army-Minawi (SLA-MM) and SLA-AW led by Abdul Wahid.

General Ruben said the issue had been decided during the discussions at the Ceasefire Workshop attended by the military commanders from both the Government and the SPLM-in-Opposition last week in Addis Ababa. This was also in accordance with implementation of the security arrangements provided for in the Peace Agreement. Ugandan troops were originally deployed in South Sudan to evacuate Ugandan nationals after the outbreak of fighting and provide protection to key installations and institutions, including the airports in Juba. The agreement does exempt the Uganda People's Defence Forces based in Yambio, South Sudan's Western Equatoria state, because they were deployed in 2010 as part of the African Union Joint Force to pursue Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army. Representatives of both sides cited differences over the size and composition of the protection force to remain in Juba during the transitional period. The Compromise Peace Agreement calls for the demobilization of Juba and the deployment of a joint police force but it does not give numbers for the presidential guard or the joint police force which would be in Juba. This was left to the two parties to negotiate.

The two sides accused each other of responsibility for failing to reach a consensus to sign a security arrangement matrix on the implementation of a permanent ceasefire. One of the SPLM-in-Opposition commanders, General Dau Aturjong Nyuol, told the Sudan Tribune that the Government's suggestions amounted to militarization of the capital. He claimed "The team that went to the workshop from Juba was either not ready for a consensus or was not given the opportunity to read the document (peace agreement)." General Aturjong said that demilitarization meant taking the army out of the capital city and not deploying more forces contrary to the provisions of the peace agreement which he said clearly states "that Juba will be demilitarized." The two sides disagreed over the nature of the Joint Integrated Police Unit and the number of presidential guards.

While General Aturjong blamed the government side for intransigence, South Sudan's Minister of Information, speaking on South Sudan Television, on Friday last week, said the government delegation that went to Addis Ababa to attend the workshop on the implementation of a permanent ceasefire had returned with information that the rebels had refused to sign the security arrangements. The government delegation, he said, had signed the agreement on the implementation of the permanent ceasefire, so had the former detainee delegation; the rebels had refused to do so.

Meanwhile, the latest report of the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism for South Sudan has confirmed that each side has violated the ceasefire since the agreement was signed last month; a helicopter attack by government forces in Upper Nile on September 2, and an attack in Unity State by Machar forces on August 23. The original Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed in January last year. Since February 2014 the monitors have documented 48 violations. Of these, 28 were attributed to Government forces and 24 to the SPLM-in-Opposition. Some

incidents involved violations by both sides. The majority of the incidents occurred in Upper Nile and Unity States. The Monitoring and Verification Mechanism was set up shortly after the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed by the Government of South Sudan and the SPLM-in-Opposition in January 2014. Its mission is to support the mediation process by monitoring, investigating and reporting on the two Parties' compliance with the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

### **The driving factors for Ethiopia's multi-dimensional development**

At the beginning of last week, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the UK's leading independent think-tank on international development, released a report on Ethiopia: "One foot on the ground: one foot in the air". The report, is part of a four-year research project - Development Progress - funded by the Gates Foundation to measure, understand and communicate progress in development.

Highlighting a number of significant developments including massive agricultural investment, and the Government's commitment to pro-poor spending, it explores the progress achieved [in] poverty reduction and key contributions to material well-being, including education and employment. It states: "Ethiopia's stability and consequent ability to make long-term plans and investments in education, agriculture and infrastructure over the past 20 years has allowed the country to make great strides in development." It suggests Ethiopia is on course to become the world's fastest growing economy with an economy that will significantly accelerate in the next three years. It also notes that "Ethiopia stands out as one of the few countries in Africa on track to meet most of the Millennium Development Goals", adding that this is "an impressive achievement for a country that started out with some of the lowest levels of human development in the world leading up to 2000."

Certainly, since 1991 Ethiopia has made a paradigm shift both politically and economically. Political reforms have brought a radical change in the structure of the government making a real break with the past. This has been reinforced by the adoption of the new constitution that paved the way for a series of nation-wide elections and the establishment of elected federal and regional governments. The federal system provided for devolution of power and the creation of an association of states to satisfy the aspiration and needs of the peoples of Ethiopia, enhance citizens' participation in government, make government relevant to localized needs and place greater restraint on the Federal Government. The Constitution, in fact, provided for the restructuring of the Ethiopian state on the basis of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the people, recognizing the existence of diverse identities and using this as the foundation of a new social contract. It, therefore, contains specific provisions to safeguard human and democratic rights, promote the rule of law and create an environment of democratic governance.

On the economic front, the Government adopted long-term development sectoral policies and strategies designed in accordance with Agricultural Development-led Industrialization (ADLI), a strategy that considered agriculture as the basis for development and for the acceleration of economic growth and the reduction of poverty, a core element of Government policy. The major element of strategy lies in shifting a central element of the nation's investment into the sector to increase productivity and invest in pro-poor activity. The ADLI strategy calls for both growth

and employment involving basic need, food security and income distribution programs and industrialization. It also involves better distribution of incomes and accelerated expansion of food grain production along with massive rural infrastructure development. It allows for increased agricultural inputs, encouraging major investments in water conservation, the expansion of trained manpower to assist small-holder farmers, facilitation of small and medium scale industries through investment in infrastructure, both transport and power, expanding and diversifying exports to cover increased imports. It also involves the promotion of private investment along with improvement of government structures and procedures and the introduction of a wide range of incentives.

As the ODI report underlines, with a wealth of statistical information, this has been remarkably successful. Ethiopia is one of the few countries in Africa projected to be on target for the Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty. In 1995, only 37% of the population had an income of \$1.25 or above. By 2011 the figure was 63%, one of the largest declines in Africa. Even more important, the Gini coefficient declined from 0.40 to 0.34 in the same period. This means that Ethiopia has managed to maintain one of the lowest levels of income inequality in the developing world, and suggests that the gains are being made at the lower income levels.

Very significant progress was made in primary school enrollment, “an unprecedented acceleration”, the fastest rate of increase in Africa, from 26% in 1994/5 to 95% in 2012/2013. Particularly notable has been the often swift improvements in regional disparities. The report notes that “in the Somali region, the primary school GER [gross enrollment rate] increased from just 32.7% to 96.9% between 2007/8 and 2012/12, an extraordinary achievement. There has also been a very significant and impressive increase in secondary school enrollment to 34%, approaching the sub-Saharan average, despite starting with one of the lowest rates in the region. Again, the report notes that the Somali region achieved the highest rates of growth in the country over the past five years.

The tertiary sector also provides evidence of massive expansion. By 2012/13, over 700,000 students were enrolled in university undergraduate programs, with another 300,000 in Technical-Vocational Education and Training. The number of universities has increased, of course, from 3 to 21 with another ten being built. The report also notes that there is a “wide consensus” that improved access to primary and secondary education has not been reflected in a similar improvement in attainment. As a result the Government has launched the General Education Quality Improvement Project which is dedicated to improving teaching and learning conditions through a teacher development program curriculum support and textbook provision.

The report says that Ethiopia has also made remarkable progress in employment quantity and quality, with urban unemployment decreasing from 26% in 1999 to 16.5% in 2013 and overall underemployment dropping from 48% to 28% between 1999 and 2005. Equally, it points out that substantial challenges to achieve stable, high-quality employment remain. It indicates that employment performance since 2005, particularly in rural areas, highlights the difficulty of sustaining progress in employment even with high growth rates.

The ODI report stresses that it is focused largely on government-initiated policies that have contributed to progress in the areas of poverty, education and employment, it does not cover issues of governance. It points out that Ethiopia's development planning recognized the need for a multi-dimensional approach to policy formulation and implementation. Poverty reduction has been at the core of government policy, with education and employment as key drivers. The Sustainable Development Poverty Reduction Strategy (SDPRP) 2002/03-2004/05 specifically links human capital development, agricultural productivity and economic growth as joint goals. Ethiopia was one of the first countries to integrate the MDGs into the Poverty Reduction Strategy process and it has kept comparatively strong national ownership of the PRSP process rather than let donors take it over. The subsequent Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) 2005/06-2009/10 pursued an eight pillar strategy, putting economic growth and private sector development alongside the social aims of the MDGs, and pushing for stronger links between agriculture and industry. This was repeated by the Growth and Transformation Plan 1 2010/11-2014/15 and it will be continued in the GTP 11 now under final consideration. The report notes that "Many countries claim such synergies in their planning processes, but few actually implement them successfully."

The report concludes that "structural change towards services has been one of the main determinants of economic growth". This has been "growth enhancing", but it finds the role of industry remains limited. Indeed, while the latest studies indicate this is changing, the report suggests "manufacturing may still be in need of policies that can address its major bottlenecks to further employment and productivity growth, and create conditions for industry to drive economic growth."

In line with the central aim of poverty reduction, much of the growth strategy has been centered on the Agricultural Development-Led Industrialization (ADLI) strategy. This is centered on agriculture supplying commodities for export, domestic food supply and industrial output and expansion of the market for domestic manufactured goods. Elements include the commercialization of smallholder agriculture through product diversification, a shift to value added crops and the promotion of high-value export crops, support for large-scale commercial agricultural development, and integration of farm production with internal and external markets. A key element is the deployment of agricultural extension workers to every *kebele* in the country supported by an extensive TVET program in agriculture and the establishment of farmer training centers. Between 2004/05 and 2009/10, 61,785 agricultural extension agents were trained and 9,265 farmer training centers were established. A very large part of the finance for this came from the government which meant it was able to keep control of its agricultural extension programs.

Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) is the largest social protection program in Africa and a key driver of poverty reduction; it has also prevented impoverishment. PSNP was introduced in 2005 as a response to the inefficient use of food aid, which was then being used to resolve periodic crises resulting in food shortages, and also to address chronic food deficits in the country's poorest areas. The PSNP targets the most vulnerable areas and households in order to increase rural poor families' long-term resilience to food shortages. The program provides unconditional, predictable transfers (in cash or food) in periods of food deficit and requires adult able-bodied household members to participate in communal productive activities, such as

rehabilitating land and water resources and developing community infrastructure, such as roads, schools and clinics.

The report identifies a number of cross-cutting factors that underpin Ethiopia's progress in well-being and development. One is the ambitious and multi-dimensional policy approach which aims for equitable poverty reduction and has made significant progress towards this aim. Another is the process of decentralization devolving power to regional states and down to *woredas*. A third point is the way education policies have been embedded into broader economic planning, with education harnessed to improve agricultural productivity and reduce poverty. Overall, there are forward-looking policies aiming for the structural transformation of the economy.

The report also notes that a number of challenges remain. The transformation is, of course, far from complete. The depth and breadth of chronic poverty is still very considerable. The quality of education needs to be dealt with as does the levels of attendance, particularly at higher education levels. The economy has yet to be fully transformed. International competitiveness is hampered by regulations. There are still issues of unemployment in urban areas and of low-quality employment in rural areas. Manufacturing growth is affected by production inefficiencies and corruption, and competition is still limited. All this needs to be addressed, and the ODI report suggests "a threefold strategy that combines further support to agricultural productivity, expansion of labor-intensive manufacturing industries and creation of additional sources of skilled labor". Part of this strategy is already in place, with the government looking to create industrial parks to attract FDI for labor-intensive manufacturing industries, but the report says it has yet to produce the expected results. Next week we will look at what the Government is doing on these issues and at the Growth and Transformation Plan II.

The ODI report sees important lessons to be drawn from Ethiopia's experience, which it says "demonstrates the effectiveness of centering government policy on a single unifying goal – poverty reduction – and how a multi-dimensional approach can begin to encourage ministries to work more comprehensively and consistently." It defines Ethiopia's progress as showing the importance of integrating social sectors into broader economic planning and demonstrating just how high rates of pro-poor spending also benefits the economy. Ethiopia, in fact, "exemplifies how long-term planning and a clear division of responsibilities can build the foundation for broader transformation." It concludes: "Although the country has not yet reached the level of change needed, a clear strategy is in place and the 'stepping stones' are being laid."

## **EU and Ethiopia discuss the crises of migration and refugees**

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Berhane, met a visiting delegation from the EU, led jointly by the Deputy Head of the EU Mission in Ethiopia, Mrs Terhi Lehtinen, and Ambassador Rimmelzwaal, Ambassador of the Netherlands to the AU, on Tuesday this week (September 22). The discussions covered, in particular, EU and Ethiopia and African cooperation on the migration and refugee crisis, looking at the current challenges and at ways to enhance the cooperation and responses between European countries with Ethiopia, with countries in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere in Africa.

Asked about Ethiopia's current position with regard to addressing the issues of migration, mobility and refugees, State Minister, Ambassador Berhane said these were challenges but they also provided opportunities. He elucidated possible solutions and shared details of Ethiopia's role as the largest host of refugees in Africa. As far as Ethiopia was concerned, Ambassador Berhane said, it had not introduced any policy changes as a result of the current expansion of the refugee crisis "Ethiopia's policy is as it was before", he said. He noted migration and mobility of people would certainly continue now that the world was "becoming a village with the emergence of globalization." This, like the problem of refugees, provided the opportunity to produce partnerships and to look for permanent solutions.

He detailed Ethiopia's own commitments to refugees, its existing open-door policy and its familiarity with the problem. Ethiopia, he said "is a country that shares the concerns of the EU in concrete terms". He pointed out that if it had not managed the problem effectively, Ethiopia might have been even more seriously affected than the EU countries because of the instability of the region. Ambassador Berhane noted that "Ethiopia today hosts refugees from many countries" and the number is approaching a million, and it shares the overall concerns of the EU about the impact of such numbers. One of the current problems, Ambassador Berhane said, was the devastation of forests and green fields in areas where the refugees were settled. Nevertheless, he emphasized that Ethiopia is grateful that it was able to handle and host the refugees, whatever the number.

Mrs Lehtinen welcomed Ambassador Berhane's response and clarifications. She said that the migration or mobility issue is the priority area of discussion for the EU and partnerships were needed with African countries to work together to minimize the challenges in a comprehensive manner. The EU delegates requested that Ambassador Berhane share his thoughts on the factors affecting migration from Africa and on the flow of refugees, and suggest possible recommendations on how to cooperate to handle these. The delegates mentioned some the specific projects the EU is implementing to provide assistance and support for African countries in addressing the issue of mobility, migration and refugees. The EU has, for example, just allocated Euros 1.8 billion to set up an Emergency Trust Fund to address the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons. The fund will assist countries in the Sahel region and Lake Chad area, the Horn of Africa, including Tanzania and Uganda, and North Africa.

Ambassador Berhane noted that Ethiopia was affected by two circles of crisis that resulted in refugee flows or migration, the problems of the Horn of Africa instability in the Sahel region. He categorized those involved as either economic migrants or refugees. On the issue of economic migrants and those who left because of economic instability, he said Europe should consider mobilizing investment for the emerging economies of Africa. That would help to enable Africans to live a sufficient life in Africa and provide the necessary benefits. In regard to the second category of refugees, Ambassador Berhane said these should be treated specifically according to the reasons for their flight. Some, he said, were driven to escape because of conflict and war, others fled from the lack of good governance or repression in their country of origin. Referring to the Horn of Africa, he described the two major reasons for refugee flows were war and instability, and lack of good governance. Refugees and migrants should be treated differently, and the treatments for refugees, he said, should not be confined to no more than "the usual blanket and food support".

In conclusion, Ambassador Berhane listed the major priority areas for cooperation and partnership between the EU and Ethiopia, and for the EU and Africa, in this respect. These should include, but not be limited to, cooperation in training and education, capacity building for efforts to minimize illegal human trafficking, and education of officials and others in rural areas on illegal human traffickers. The two sides agreed to bring the options raised in the discussion to their next meeting and to continue consideration of the issues in other meetings including the Article 8 consultations.

### **AIMA Africa: an aviation conference in Addis Ababa**

AIMA Africa, a three-day conference on Airport Infrastructure and Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) Aviation Africa, was held in Addis Ababa this week (September 22-24). Focusing on the three major issues, Airport Infrastructure, Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO), and Training, the conference concluded with a visit to Ethiopian Airlines. The AIMA Africa conference, organized by BCI Aerospace and Abe events, with support from Ethiopian Airports' Enterprise, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the African Airlines Association, Ethiopian Airlines and other stakeholders, brought together industry professionals from all across the MRO industry and Airport Infrastructure. The AIMA Africa described the conference as “a rare opportunity in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to meet with both local and global industry professionals, [with] a comprehensive program put together and presented by industry professionals tackling the main challenges, issues and developments happening in MRO and Airport infrastructure development.”

It was also a great opportunity for the rapidly expanding Ethiopian Aviation Industry, and the CEO of Ethiopian Airports' Enterprise, Ato Tewodros Dawit, commented that Ethiopian Airlines, whose significant growth is facilitating the country's trade and investment, needs to exploit such opportunities to fulfill its dream to become the number one aviation hub in Africa. Ethiopian Airlines is currently the largest and most successful airline in Africa. It is currently flying 13 B787 Dreamliners and has received two Gold level Boeing Performance Excellence Awards for its Wire Kits Harness Manufacturing Plant, which supplies different types of interior wires to Boeing. It is rated sixth “among the 22 most dependable airlines in the world”, and has won the “Airline of the Year Award”, the ATW “Best Regional Airline in the World” and numerous other awards. It is not resting on its laurels, and is working hard to respond to existing challenges and possible future problems. Among these problems, mentioned in a paper presented by Ato Zemene, Managing Director of Ethiopian MRO Services, are the increasing competition from new entrants to the market and license agreement restrictions as well as other impediments.

While Ethiopian Airlines has boosted the Ethiopian economy, it has also benefitted from the GDP growth in the country, the increase in urbanization, huge foreign investment, highly skilled manpower, relatively low-priced tickets, and endorsements from international regulatory bodies like FAA/ EASA. The result has been significant development in the growth and profits of Ethiopian Airlines, while its main competitors, in Kenya and South Africa, have posted losses. An analysis of the fare revenues of African airlines for last year disclosed that while Ethiopian

Airlines achieved a profit of US\$175 million, Kenyan and South African Airways lost US\$251.1 million and US\$124.4 million respectively.

A paper on the “State of the aviation industry in Africa”, presented at the conference, by Mr Kebour Ghenna, the Executive Director of the Pan-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, painted a depressing picture of African Airlines, past and present. He outlined stories of the aviation industries of Africa a few years previously, with the East African Airlines Corporation, Air-Afrique, Benin Airlines, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Nigerian Airlines and many others either gone or at risk. It is a record, he suggested, that should alert the African Aviation Industry to do better. As many aviation professionals agree, it is time for Africans to do something crucial, like revisiting the Yamoussoukro Declaration. First signed in 1999, the Yamoussoukro Declaration provides for an African Civil Aviation Policy, advocating a comprehensive reform of the air transport industry and the unification of the fragmented African air transport market. In other respects, it suggests strong aviation companies like Ethiopian Airlines should join in the efforts to support aviation companies in Africa in order not to repeat the failures of the past and the history of collapsed air transport companies in Africa.

What is Ethiopian Airlines doing in this regard? Ato Samuel Ayana, Vice President of the Ethiopian Aviation Academy, told the conference that the Academy was now contributing largely to the manpower of the African air industry, training aviation professionals from 40 African countries. Numbers were now up to 2,000 at the Academy. In addition, Ethiopian MRO services, which has the capacity to deal with airframes, engines, component maintenance, modification and upgrading, as well as total care, is providing its services in Kigali, Duala, Lome, Lilongwe, Malabo and other African countries. Beyond these efforts to improve the continent’s aviation industry, Ethiopian Airlines is also actively engaged in encouraging implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration. This, indeed, is expected to be on the agenda at the next AU Summit in January.

Ethiopian Airlines’ Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul services and its training programs have made impressive gains, as has the air transport service, which has grown exponentially in its efforts to meet its Vision 2025. It aims to reach a figure of 120 international flight destinations and increase its passenger capacity from the current 6.4 million to 120 million per year by 2025 after further expansion. MRO services are developing at the same pace. It has recently brought in the latest MRO-IT, integration activities and increased automation technology. The MRO service sector is expected to triple or quadruple its efforts to meet its goal to become the leading provider of MRO services in Africa and generate an income of US\$520 million per year by 2025.

The conference, which included numerous business-to-business meetings and workshops, provided the ideal opportunity to exchange views, promote business, learn and update expertise of the aviation world. It demonstrated the increasing sophistication of the industry, the advanced baggage handling systems, and the increasingly complex security displayed in cockpit systems, navigation computers, satellite communication, in-flight entertainment and electrical systems. Among the companies at the conference were ASA (Airport Services Association), Royal Air Maroc, Safe Gate Germany, South African Airways, Vanderlande, Airbus, GIFAS, Kenyan Airways, Boeing, ADPI, Business France, Aquarius aviation, National Airways, Thales Group, Turkish technic, Vinci Energies, EPSON, IATA and other important aviation companies.

African aviation is the least developed of the continental aviation industries. It should benefit greatly from the AIMA Africa Conference and use it as a stepping stone for meaningful change. The industry has had to cope with the impact of “terrorism ordeals, accommodating new and constantly evolving security requirements, huge spikes in fuel prices,” despite the overall continental profit margin of 0.8%, the lowest of all regions and continents. Now, with lower oil prices, it must think of new ways of increasing profits. Elijah Chingosho, Secretary General for the African Airlines Association, underlined the point when he said African MROs should think of creating partnerships as Ethiopian Airlines has been doing, “using aircraft maintenance not just as a cost center but as a business”. The AIMA Africa Conference offered options for African airlines, as well as other aviation industries outside Africa, to improve the returns of the international aviation industry which is still struggling to recover from the 2008 world economic crisis.