

## **A Week in the Horn** **26<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

### **News in Brief**

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

The First-Ever conference on Immunization in Africa was held this week (February 23-25) in Addis Ababa, at the African Union Plenary Hall under the theme: "Fulfilling a promise: ensuring Immunization for all Africa". (**See article**)

Presidents Jacob Zuma of South Africa, Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz of Mauritania, Macky Sall of Senegal, Ali Bongo Ondimba of Gabon and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn [gathered] in Bujumbura, Burundi on (Feb 25) to mediate between President Nkurunziza and opposition politicians.

The Africa 2016 Business Forum was held in the Egyptian Sinai resort city of Sharm el Sheikh at the end of last week (February 20-21). (**See article**)

#### **Ethiopia**

Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn has been in Bujumbura, Burundi attending peace negotiations between President Nkurunziza and opposition politicians since Thursday (Feb 25).

Dr Tedros Adhanom held discussions with the second permanent secretary of the UK home office, Mr Oliver Robbins, on Wednesday (February 24). Dr Tedros and the permanent secretary discussed several issues, ranging from migration to regional peace and security. The permanent secretary appreciated the Government of Ethiopia for its commendable leadership roles in the region, particularly on migration issues.

Prime Minister Hailemariam and the first vice president designate Rick Machar held discussions on Wednesday (February 24) on ways of realizing the implementation of the peace agreement in Addis Ababa. They also discussed ways of enhancing the establishment of a joint army in Juba, following the formation of the transitional government.

Co-organized by the African Union, World Health Organization and the Government of Ethiopia, the First-Ever Ministerial Conference on Immunization in Africa kicked off on Wednesday (February 24) at the African Union Plenary Hall. (**See article**)

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Atske-selassie held discussions with Mr Hayrettin Kaplan, CEO of Turk Exim Bank, on Tuesday (February 23,) on the margins of the High-Level Partnership Forum on Somalia held in Istanbul, Turkey. The discussions of the two sides covered the financing of Ethiopia's GTP-2 projects by the Turkish Exim Bank.

The Second Ethio-Qatar Joint Technical Committee Meeting opened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Tuesday (February 23). The two-day joint technical committee meeting deliberated on the progress of the First Joint Technical Committee meeting and on areas of cooperation in finance, investment and the social sector.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regassa Kefale, received a high-level delegation from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) today (February, 23).

The High-Level Partnership Forum on Somalia (HLPF) opened in Istanbul, Turkey on Tuesday (February 23) with a major focus on Somalia's progress. On this occasion, Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Aske-Selassie, arrived in Turkey to attend the High-Level Partnership Forum (HLPF) on Somalia. Ethiopia's participation in this ministerial meeting affirms the country's commitment to supporting international efforts towards a more stable, peaceful and resilient Somalia.

## **Eritrea**

A Feb 25 report said Eritrea won't shorten national service despite migration fears. It added the Asmara government insists conscription is vital for national security.

Eritrea (on Feb 23) denied it sent soldiers to fight with a Saudi Arabia-led coalition in Yemen, accusing the United Nations of reporting flawed and "unsubstantiated" allegations against the Horn of Africa country.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in collaboration with the Nairobi-based SAHAN Foundation in its new report (Feb 19) revealed that Eritrean diplomats including prominent Eritrean nationals are massively involved in human trafficking and smuggling activities in the Horn of Africa region. (**See article**)

## **Djibouti**

IOM Djibouti welcomed a delegation of European, North American and Asian diplomats and representatives of humanitarian aid agencies. Their mission was to learn about one of the world's most treacherous migration routes and the growing migrant crisis that is killing hundreds of migrants each year as they attempt to reach the Arabian Peninsula from the Horn of Africa.

## **Kenya**

Kenyans have mastered the art of stealing, promoting tribalism and hurling insults, President Uhuru Kenyatta said on Wednesday (Feb 24). Addressing Kenyan students in Israel, he admitted Kenya faces unending problems created by its own citizens.

## **Somalia**

The High-Level Partnership Forum on Somalia came to a close (Feb 24) in Istanbul, Turkey after two days of deliberations on Somalia's progress particularly on the security, political fronts.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said at least 180 Kenyan troops were killed when al-Shabab attacked the Kenyan base. The President gave the death toll of 180 in an interview with a Somali television station, while defending his attendance at a memorial for the soldiers in Kenya.

Somali cabinet members held their weekly cabinet meeting in Mogadishu on Thursday (Feb 25). The cabinet passed the Security and Defence Council for Somali Coasts bill as part of accelerated government policies in piracy-ridden waters in East Africa. Defence and Security Ministries briefed the cabinet on latest security developments in central and southern Somalia.

Somali government forces, aided by African Union peacekeepers, seized Middle Shabelle region village of El Baraf without resistance on Wednesday (Feb 24). The forces are in control of El Baraf, 40km off Middle Shabelle regional district of Mahaday according to witnesses. Al Shabaab militants are reported to have fled in advance of the onslaught.

## **South Sudan**

The United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, during his visit to Juba on (Feb 25), strongly condemned the most recent outbreak of violence at the UN protection of civilians' site in Malakal, the Upper Nile state capital, urging the South Sudanese government to conduct full investigations and bring the perpetrators to account.

South Sudanese first vice-president designate, Riek Machar, discussed with former president of Tanzania, Jakaya Kikwete, (Feb 25) the SPLM reunification process.

Police and military officers loyal to the SPLM-in-Opposition are expected to travel to Juba immediately, the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission said in a statement on its website on Tuesday following a meeting with the parties. The SPLM leader Riek Machar has assured the U.N. secretary-general by phone that he is ready to return to Juba in March to take up his position as first vice-president.

The South Sudanese government announced on Thursday (Feb 25) a decision to pull out excess presidential guards force division from its headquarters located south of the presidential palace in the national capital, Juba.

South Sudanese First Vice-President designate, Riek Machar, on Wednesday (Feb 24) met with the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn, in Addis Ababa. The meeting covered the status of the implementation of the peace agreement signed in August 2015.

## **Sudan**

Sudan's Justice Minister, on Thursday (Feb 25) formed a fact-finding committee on the alleged burial of radioactive waste in the northern Sudan desert during the construction of Merowe Dam.

The UN World Food Programme (WFP) in Sudan has welcomed a contribution of \$1 million from the Government of Japan to support food assistance activities in Darfur.

Belgium on Wednesday (Feb 24) signed a loan agreement of 551,000 euros with the Sudanese government to provide 1,200 water pumping stations to ten states.

South Africa is to pull its National Defence Force soldiers out of Darfur, Sudan, from April 1, the Presidency said on Wednesday (Feb 24). Presidency spokesperson Bongani Majola said in a statement, "President Jacob Zuma has terminated the employment of members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in Darfur, Sudan."

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## **The First Ever Ministerial Conference on Immunization in Africa**

The First-Ever conference on Immunization in Africa was held this week (February 23-25) in Addis Ababa, at the African Union Plenary Hall under the theme: "Fulfilling a promise: ensuring Immunization for all Africa". Co-organized by the African Union, World Health Organization and the Government of Ethiopia, the summit was attended by hundreds of participants, high-level political dignitaries and decision makers from all over Africa and stakeholders, partners and invited guests across the world.

Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO, in her televised address, commended the success evident in conducting the first-ever Ministerial conference on Immunization in Africa, and stressed the importance of immunization and vaccines development, the need for country ownership and accountability, as well as global access to Immunization. Dr Chan congratulated the WHO Regional Office for Africa and the Mediterranean and the African Union Commission for hosting such a "milestone event". She said, "Your presence creates a powerful political platform with a potentially huge impact". Underlining the instrumentality of immunization for the African continent, Dr Chan said, "In Africa, Universal access to Immunization is a nation building strategy." She added, "Immunization saves lives and it saves money; we can measure the impacts in striking ways." The Director General said African leaders had good reasons to celebrate since the continent had not reported a case of wild polio since August 2014, and polio was no longer endemic in Nigeria. She said, "If this situation could be maintained for the next two years, Africa will be certified polio free; you can celebrate the impact of the meningitis vaccine projects, which with outstanding support from partners has helped more than 30 million people across 16 countries in Africa since 2010, and as we make critical moves from campaigns to routine immunization, the alliance with support countries is planning to introduce the vaccine from this year onwards. We can do even more". Emphasizing the need to ensure country ownership, and noting that many countries allocate inadequate budgets to immunization, Dr Chan noted countries should put their immunization programs on a path to long-term sustainability by increasing domestic investments. The Director General also stressed the need for setting clear mechanisms and appropriate strategies so as to ensure accountability at all stages of immunization programs.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, in his address said, "Ethiopia is proud to host this landmark conference, which is being convened by the World Health Organization's Regional Offices for Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean in collaboration with the African Union Commission." He also thanked Government Ministers, Parliamentarians, religious leaders, civic society and international partners for their respective roles in bringing life-saving vaccines to all children across the African continent. The Prime Minister noting the purpose of the conference said, "We have all come together today for one simple reason. We have achieved great things so far, but we have much more to do" with respect to vaccines and access to immunization. He said, "Since 1990, we have achieved a 50% reduction in child death rates in Africa, thanks in large part to our expansion of infant immunization programs." Describing the success in Africa, the Prime Minister said, "We are currently in the process of reaching an historic milestone. Africa is celebrating 18 months without a case of polio, an important step toward making Africa polio-free forever."

And speaking about Ethiopia the Prime Minister noted "Africa's success in immunization is also mirrored here in Ethiopia." He said, "We first launched our national immunization

program 36 years ago," adding that in all these [years], the country had partnered with numerous health advocacy organizations, other stakeholders, and international agencies such as WHO, UNICEF, Gavi and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation." The Prime Minister further said these organizations contributed tremendously in expanding access to life-saving vaccines for several [million?] children in Ethiopia. On the need for investing in immunization programs, the Prime Minister said, "For every dollar, ever birr, and every franc invested in vaccination programs, 16 will be saved in reduced treatment costs for our health systems and increased productivity in our economies; frankly, we can't afford *not* to invest in universal access to immunization. The hard work will not be easy, but it all starts with all the people in this room. It all starts with our renewal of an important pledge. It all starts with every African nation reaffirming, at the highest levels of government that universal access to immunization is not an optional extra, or a luxury, but it is a fundamental human right".

### **Somalia: The High-Level Partnership Forum, Istanbul February 2016**

Organized by the Government of the Republic of Turkey, and co-chaired by the President of Somalia and the UN Deputy Secretary-General, H.E. Mr Jan Eliasson, the High-Level Partnership Forum (HLPF) on Somalia was held this week (February 23-24) in Istanbul, Turkey with the theme "Focusing on Progress in Somalia". The Forum, which reviewed Somalia's progress in the political, security and economic sectors aimed at addressing the challenges that the country faces in the implementation of speedy peace and state-building processes, brought together key international partners and 200 Representatives from 54 countries and 11 international organizations, leaders of the Somali Federal Government and Interim Regional Administrations. This year's forum followed the previous meetings held in Copenhagen in 2014 and Mogadishu in 2015.

Commending the progress in Somalia and referring to the country's political, security and development agenda, the President of the Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in his opening remarks said, "As you all know, Somalia is going through a critical period. ... On this rocky road, we need to support Somalia and never leave [Somalis] in the lurch".

Taking note of the fact that stability is vital for Somalia progress, Erdoğan called for the implementation of key 2016 milestones. Somalia's security needs are being addressed in efforts to seek tangible solutions to fight al-Shabaab terrorist activities in the country. Al-Shabaab is an al-Qaeda-linked militant group and was among the topics covered throughout the forum. He said, "I believe that the improvements that we will make for easing our Somali brothers' daily lives and increasing their welfare will also contribute to the country disposing of its terror problem. Essentially, the thing that lies under the success of the Turkish model in Somalia, which you all watch with interest, is our acting with this mentality. We also expect international cooperatives to support Somalia with the same attitude". Explaining that Turkey shouldered the country's reconstruction process through universities, orphanages, roads, hospitals and even street lamps that are put into service through humanitarian institutions, Erdoğan noted, "We will continue our work until Somalia finds tranquility and becomes a peaceful, stable country with the cooperation of the international community and regional countries, hopefully."

Stressing the tremendous progress Somalia has made over the last few years, Deputy-Secretary General of the United Nations, Jan Eliasson said Somalia, once mired in conflict, now has better functioning governance in relative terms. As this year marks the end of the Somalia Compact, and the mandate of the first Federal Institutions formed under Somalia's 2012 Provisional Constitution closes in, the Deputy-Secretary General said, "Yet, 2016 is not a finish

line," noting that the country had tough challenges ahead. The international community must move beyond crisis management and work together towards maximizing stronger partnership for sustainable peace and development, while also ensuring the rule of law, and respect for human rights. He noted Somalis have worked hard over the past four years to build the foundations of a new federal, democratic state. Jan Eliasson stressed the importance of forging a visible strategy, which he said was crucial in the promotion of peace and state building in the country. On Somalia election 2016, the Deputy–Secretary General commended the Federal Government's decision of working on a viable electoral model, particularly its commitment to making sure that women would make up 30 per cent of the seats in the new Parliament. In all these, the Deputy–Secretary General urged all national and international stakeholders to support implementation of such a decision, which should come in line with the Mogadishu Declaration and Security Council resolution 2232, adding that a secure, fair and transparent electoral process held on time would do much to sustain confidence in the process of Somalia's transformation.

The President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, detailed the positive achievements in the country, such as recovering most of Somalia from al-Shabaab, subsequently working to defeat extremism on its own soil, building institutions within all but one of the federal member states and forming the National Independent Commission along with the ongoing review of the Constitution and the upcoming action plan for the electoral process. He said, "The future of Somalia is embedded in democracy and will only be secured through inclusivity, diversity and equal access to democracy". The President however stressed the significance of the continued assistance of every Somali and of the international community for the promotion of sustainable peace and development in the country.

A high-level Ethiopian Delegation headed by State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Taye Aske-Selassie, attended the High-Level Partnership Forum on Somalia. Ethiopia is one of the key players in the process of bringing sustainable peace and development to the region and its participation in this ministerial meeting affirmed the country's longstanding commitment to supporting international efforts towards a more stable, peaceful and resilient Somalia. During the event, State Minister Ambassador Taye Aske-Selassie had made it clear that Ethiopia remains committed to consolidating its endeavor towards bringing lasting peace and stability in Somalia. He said the political landscape of Somalia has fundamentally changed in the last four years. Since the establishment of an internationally recognized government under the leadership of Hassan Sheik Mohammed in September 2012, Ambassador Taye said, "All witnessed the formation of three regional administrations and we are looking forward to the formation of one regional and one city administration in the coming months". According to the state minister, what is more significant in terms of political change in the last three and half years is the transformation of the violent political culture into a civil, peaceful and legal political mode of engagement. Ambassador Taye, however, added that the problem in the security sector has the potential to undermine all the political achievements. He said unless the security sector is strengthened, all our political and stabilization plans will be brought into distress. Moreover, H.E Ambassador Taye said, "The strategy is never wait for a deadly enemy to come and attack. Chase it! Isolate it, contain, degrade and finally eliminate it!" The state Minister stressed that this required commitment and resilience resource, potential will and support. It should be underlined that this is a strategic task that required a coordinated plan and action by all partners; and Ambassador Taye finally underlined, "While we are in charge of respective countries, we have to make sure that we support the cause of building of a strong and vibrant Somalia."

The High-Level Partnership Forum, in its communiqué, welcomed the second annual progress report of the New Deal Somali Compact and commended the detailed Compact Review process, the joint analysis of achievements and the challenges in the implementation, as well as identification of milestones for 2016. It also welcomed Somalia's progress in many areas and called for continued engagement and provision of assistance. Noting that the constitutionally-mandated terms of the Federal Government and Parliament close in, the communiqué noted 2016 was a decisive year for Somalia. Mindful of the fact that the one-person-one-vote elections would not be possible this year, it welcomed the inclusive and participatory processes that helped parties agree on the key principles and actions of the 2016 electoral process in line with the 'Mogadishu Declaration' of 16 December 2015. The communiqué further underlined that there must not be any impediments to the timely implementation of the electoral process, including ensuring freedom of expression, and making sure that the constitutionally-mandated term limits of the legislature and executive are observed. Accordingly, it called for parties to work for an inclusive 2016 Electoral Process Implementation Plan and the development of the 2020 Roadmap. On the prospects of ensuring universal suffrage, the forum also stressed the importance of setting a clear political vision and path and urged all stakeholders to come to terms with a view to consolidate twin-track planning in support of a one-person-one-vote electoral model, one that is overseen by a workable National Independent Electoral Commission by 2020.

### **The Africa 2016 Business Forum in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt**

The Africa 2016 Business Forum was held in the Egyptian Sinai resort city of Sharm el Sheikh at the end of last week (February 20-21). Under the auspices of the African Union commission, the business summit was organized by the Egyptian ministries of investment, trade and industry, international cooperation and foreign affairs. The summit was attended by African leaders and more than 1,200 prominent businessmen. Present at the summit were Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, President Buhari of Nigeria and Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan, among others at the Africa 2016: Business for Africa, Egypt and the World conference.

Opening the two-day forum, Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi told attendees that "achieving development is one of the main challenges facing Africans, which requires developing the mechanisms of joint action." The Africa 2016 Business Forum, el-Sisi said aims to push forward trade and investment on the continent to strengthen Africa's place in the world economy. He said, "It not only aims to present investment opportunities that Africa offers to the international business community... but aims to pave the way for active decisions, communication and cooperation."

The President mentioned key points which he believed would represent a platform for action for the African continent in the coming period. Accordingly, el-Sisi stressed the importance of developing human capacity, along with giving adequate attention to African youth, education and its development in a way that would provide youths with the necessary skills to engage effectively in the labor market. He also raised the importance of enhancing productivity, growth and the need to focus on the transition to knowledge societies through development in the fields of research and innovation. Achieving development, which was considered the major challenge that all African countries face, the President said requires that countries work on the

development of mutual mechanisms through regional integration models, especially with the close link between the requirements for economic development in Africa and the need to execute large regional projects in several fields, including infrastructure. He said, "We hope such efforts contribute towards doubling intra-African trade, which only represents 12 percent of the size of African trade with the world, a number that does not correspond with the potential of economic integration between our African countries."

Egypt, el-Sisi said, was looking forward to the future establishment of African Free Trade that aims to create free trade zones for goods in the short-term and the hope of introducing services and intra-continent investor opportunities at a later stage. In June 2015, Egypt hosted Africa's three major Regional Economic Committees (RECs) during a tripartite summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, where a free trade agreement across all three RECs was launched. The Continental Free Trade Area brings together the 26 African countries that are members of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern Africa Development Cooperation (SADC). Touching upon the prospect of pushing the African trade movement with international markets, el-Sisi said, "I call on my African brother leaders and our partners in development to put together the first building blocks to launch several projects and developmental initiatives in a frame that ensures a needed balance between the legitimate aspirations of the sons of the continent for a better tomorrow and the aspiration of our partners in development to incentives and rewards that open new horizons for more investments and capital flows," el-Sisi said.

The role of the private sector in the process of promoting trade and investment in Africa was also one of the issues of the Forum. In this regard, Akinwumi Adesina, the President of the African Development Bank (AfDB), highlighted the key reasons for maximizing private sector participation. He noted that insufficient energy was among the daunting challenges of the continent; where 645 million people do not have access to electricity, the only way to address the gap is to widen private sector participation in the energy sector. He said, "we plan to invest 12 billion dollars in the energy sector over the next five years... so that people in Africa can have universal access to electricity."

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn told the Forum that the event reaffirmed Egypt's involvement in Africa's Renaissance and its commitment to strengthening partnership and cross-border private sector engagement. The Prime Minister said the forum would serve to showcase the economic prospects of our continent and help both public and private sectors to better understand the potential and make the best out of it." Taking note of the summit's bold initiative at strengthening inter-Africa trade relationships and promoting peace and security, the Prime Minister said, "Development, no doubt, needs clear policies and strategies that can fit into our own specific conditions, concerted efforts and genuine partnerships among nations and institutions and a favorable political, economic and social environment in order to attract international capital." "Over the last few years" the Prime Minister added, "we have laid a strong foundation for our economic and social development. We have put in place many of the necessary and critical factors so vital for development, including growing power generation; major construction of roads and railways; a large, trained and enthusiastic workforce; complimentary legal frameworks and a sustainable peaceful environment. All this is helping to open up significant opportunities for the participation of foreign investment."

Emphasizing the importance of forging regional integration, Prime Minister Hailemariam mentioned how Ethiopia's efforts are not confined to itself alone. Ethiopia, as the second most populous country in Africa, the Prime Minister said, was fully aware of its responsibility, wherein it had already started laying the necessary infrastructural basis. Reminding his listeners about the country's ongoing endeavor in creating power interconnections, road and rail links and expanding these with Djibouti, Sudan, Kenya and South Sudan, Prime Minister Hailemariam said, "Ethiopia had gone a long way to lay the basis for consolidating economic ties within the Horn of Africa". The Prime Minister said, "[this] underlines our resolve to play our part in regional integration."

On the margins of the Africa 2016 Business Forum, Prime Minister Hailemariam met with el-Sisi and Sudanese President Omar al Bashir. The trilateral meeting was aimed at addressing their common vision of promoting inter-regional partnerships and enhancing economic cooperation among the three countries. The three countries have also agreed to form a Joint Investment Fund to bankroll the implementation of various developments. As a key player of the intra-African trade, investment, peace and security in its region and beyond, Ethiopia had shown its usual commitment, not only for being part of the business summit, but also securing a business deal out of the summit; a five-year contract to export environmentally friendly alternative solid fuel to an Ethiopian company. Speaking about how important the deal was, Hisham El-Khazindar, co-founder of Qalaa Holdings noted, "Within the context of our continent and within the context of using waste and developing solid waste solutions, this is really very important milestone with ECARU (The Egyptian Company for Solid Waste Recycling - part of Qalaa Holdings) getting out of Egypt and going into Ethiopia." The company had also signed a five-year memorandum of understanding with Ethiopia's East African Mining to establish a new joint venture. Egypt's cable maker firm, Elsewedy Electric Group announced that it would establish an Egyptian industrial zone in Ethiopia within the upcoming two years in a bid to attract Egyptian investors to establish their projects in the country.

### **IGAD's new report on Smuggling and Human Trafficking in the Horn of Africa**

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in collaboration with the Nairobi-based SAHAN Foundation released a new report "Human Smuggling and Trafficking on the Horn of Africa-Central Mediterranean Route" at the end of last week (February 19, 2016). The report, which was summarized and presented to the Addis Ababa-based diplomats, aimed to provide a baseline assessment of the criminal syndicates along the smuggling/trafficking corridor, and how they operate across source, transit, and destination countries. The report was prepared upon the request of the governments of Ethiopia and Sudan and described the illegal activities that are taking place from the Horn of Africa via Libya to Europe as a "dangerous and organized illicit trade".

The report is divided into five sections. The first two sections provide an overview on the general trends and patterns of migration from the Horn of Africa; the third section synthesized evidence unearthed by various law enforcement operations and identified some of the criminal ringleaders involved in human smuggling and trafficking from the Horn of Africa through the Central Mediterranean. The fourth section examines the responses of the various national authorities and international organizations to human smuggling and trafficking and the final section covers some major recommendations for consideration.

The report has identified the route through Sudan and Libya, the corridor towards southern Africa and the route to the gulf countries as the primary routes out of the Horn of Africa. The report [stated] that more than a quarter of the 128,619 people recorded by FRONTEX who arrived in Italy via the Central Mediterranean Route between January and September 2015 were identified as being from Eritrea. The sharp increase in the arrivals of Eritreans on Italian shores was identified as the large and growing volume of Eritreans fleeing their country into northern Ethiopia, as well as into eastern Sudan. The report has revealed that Eritrean diplomats including prominent Eritrean nationals, are massively involved in human trafficking and smuggling activities in the Horn of Africa region. The report, in its interviews with dozens of those who were confirmed as Eritreans, suggest nothing to contradict the recent findings of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea, which concluded in June 2015 that "widespread and gross human rights violations have been and are being committed by the Government of Eritrea". Of those interviewed, dozens provided convincing testimony of abuses that they were subjected to, including severe beatings and torture in detention. Most of those detained claimed to have been placed in prison for refusing to obey orders as national service conscripts, for attempting to escape national service, for their religious beliefs, or for vocalizing criticism of the government. While there were also numerous cases of Eritreans leaving the country principally to escape living under an authoritarian regime with limited freedoms and opportunities, there is little evidence from the study to support recent arguments for the re-classification of Eritrean asylum seekers in Europe as simply "economic migrants".

The third section of the report sketched the sophisticated and integrated international networks that derive massive profits from the mass movement of thousands of migrants and refugees, often in aggravated circumstances. It stated the principal smugglers and trafficking kingpins who dominate the Central Mediterranean Route are predominantly Eritrean in nationality, but that they collaborate with ethnic Somalis, Sudanese and Ethiopians, in order to be able to operate easily across borders and amongst the diverse communities of the Horn of Africa. Due to the complex transitional nature of these networks, the report recommended that combating them would effectively require an equally sophisticated multilateral approach as opposed to what most governments continue to do; viewing human smuggling and trafficking as merely a domestic problem.

The Fourth section reflected on the efforts made by IGAD member states towards combating human smuggling and trafficking through a patchwork of strategies, policies, institutions, and capacities of individual member states, within the context of the IGAD Peace and Security Strategy and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Accordingly, two member countries; Ethiopia and Sudan were selected and an assessment of the measures taken by these countries to combat human trafficking and smuggling was made.

Ethiopia established the National Council against Human Trafficking and Smuggling in June 2012, wherein the National Council, supported by a law enforcement task force, is sub-divided into four working groups; Protection Working Group, Victims Assistance Working Group, Legislation and Prosecution and Research monitoring and evaluation. The country also promulgated a new law; Proclamation 909/2015, "The Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants". In addition to its criminal provisions with regards to aggravated trafficking, this draft law has provisions dealing with issues related to protection, rehabilitation, and compensation of victims.

Sudan also has a National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking, which was mandated under the Combating of Trafficking Act of 2014. This Committee is tasked with reporting every

two months to the Council of Ministers with updates on various threats and challenges. This report is then addressed to the Head of State, who subsequently tasks various organs of government as necessary. The Committee also oversees the work of special investigations units that have been formed on an ad hoc basis to deal with the smuggling and trafficking networks in the eastern state of Kassala and in Khartoum.

The report states the African Union also played a tremendous role in combating smuggling and trafficking. The Khartoum Declaration of 16 October 2014 launched the AU-Horn of Africa Initiative on Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants, laid out member state commitments to ratify international conventions on human smuggling and trafficking and directed the obligation on member states to address the socio-economic causes of migration, strengthen law enforcement efforts, protect victims, and foster cooperation with international organizations willing to assist in developing capacities. This process provided a political forum for facilitating the more practical measures that should be accomplished in the international, national, and regional levels. The European Union, in addition to pursuing an independent course of action to prevent further loss of life at sea, had also pledged financial assistance for regional efforts to combat human smuggling and trafficking within the context of the Khartoum Process.

The report, in its final section, called for enhancing and expanding cooperation between law enforcement agencies, authorizing UN sanctions against individuals and entities responsible for human smuggling and trafficking in Libya, ensuring enhanced European Union engagement in regional law enforcement and border protection initiatives, enhancing the role for IGAD's Transnational Organized Crime Pillar and Sponsored public awareness campaigns to help mitigate the challenges of human trafficking and smuggling.

### **The Ethio-Qatar Joint Technical Committee meeting**

The Second Ethio-Qatar Joint Technical Committee Meeting was held this week (February 23-24) in Addis Ababa. Opening the two-day meeting, Ambassador Siraj Rashid, Director General of Middle Eastern Affairs at the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, welcomed the Qatari delegation led by Director of International Cooperation, Tarik Bin Ali Al-Ansari, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, and emphasized the investment boom in Ethiopia in many different sectors and its significance towards creating meaningful economic ties with Qatari investors. The Director General also stressed the need for further strengthening bilateral cooperation. Ambassador Tarik Bin Ali Al-Ansari revealed the importance of South-South cooperation and the need for integrated actions among developing countries through developmental exchange programs mainly focusing on investment and cooperation in education, technology transfer and trade facilitation.

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The two sides discussed strengthening bilateral relations and exploring ways of enhancing them in political, economic and investment sectors. They stressed the importance of the completion of ratification and activation of agreements that had been signed during the high-level visits made previously, notably the ratification of the agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income between the two countries and the implementation of the labor agreement. Ethiopia and Qatar agreed to consider negotiating on a visa waiver agreement for holders of Diplomatic and Service (special) passports of the two countries. The importance of implementing the agreement on the

establishment of a Joint Ministerial Commission between the two countries was also top of the agenda, wherein the Qatari side expressed its interest in hosting the First Joint Ministerial Commission meeting.

The Joint Technical Committee Meeting also offered a platform for the two countries to emphasize cooperation in the field of trade and investment. They reviewed the trade relation between the two countries and agreed to pursue innovative options culminating in finding a solution. The Ethiopian delegation delivered briefings on the most important investment sectors available in the country and the major amendments made to the investment legislation which encouraged foreign investors to invest in priority sectors, such as agriculture, mining and power generation. Other potential investment sectors included integrated agro-processing investment in animal feed, animal fattening, dairy farming and slaughter houses and processing of fruits and vegetables. The Qatari side took note of the proposals and agreed to channel them to the responsible authorities for consideration and requested the business plans, which the Ethiopian side agreed to provide. The Qatari Investment Authority also expressed its interest in exploring, through its subsidiary companies, working towards making use of the investment opportunities in Ethiopia. Ethiopia and Qatar also signed a cooperation agreement in the field of recruiting Ethiopian overseas workers.

On developmental cooperation, the Qatari side, through the Qatar Development Fund, provided briefings about development loans that have social and economic impacts, under which they expressed interest in working with Ethiopia on water, electricity and railway projects, and of course with the possibility of funding them. Ethiopia and Qatar also agreed to extend their level of cooperation and forge institutional linkages through higher institutions of learning, staff and student exchange, and scholarship networks. The countries also agreed to undertake promotional activities such as participation in trade fairs, workshops, trade missions and exchange of trade and investment information through their respective Chambers of Commerce.

### **Agro-Industrial Parks: the focus to transform Ethiopia's economy**

Among the sectors to which the second Growth and Transformation Plan gives emphasis is manufacturing and industrialization to provide the basis for economic structural change; and a central element in this strategy for transforming the industry sector, is development and expansion of industrial parks and villages around the country. The concept of developing industrial parks actually started several years ago but was significantly encouraged after the amended proclamation two years ago for the development of industrial zones – the Amended Investment Proclamation No 849/2014. The proclamation defines the development of industrial parks as areas with distinct boundaries "designated by the appropriate organ to develop identical, similar or interrelated industries together or to develop multifaceted industries, based on a planned fulfilment of infrastructure and various services such as roads, electric power and water, and having special incentive schemes, with a broad view to achieving, planned and systematic development of industries, mitigation of the environmental pollution and development of urban centers, and includes special economic zones, industrial parks, technology parks, export processing zones, free trade zones, and the like, designated by the Investment Board."

Under the previous Growth and Transformation Plan (2010/11-2014/15) industry and the service sectors, along with agriculture, took the largest share in the economic development and GDP growth of the country. Agriculture, with 43%, had the major share of GDP. Those

developments are now intended to provide the basis for accelerated structural change in the years ahead and transform the economy from self-subsistence and small-scale production to large-scale industrial and market oriented productivity and competitiveness. This will be, achieved by creating a wider range of enabling conditions for domestic and foreign investors, and, with the aim of sustaining the fast growth registered over the past decade in the current GTP II, the special focus is being given to the industry sector. It is intended that the base for manufacturing, the industry sector, will be widened and expanded through increasing a range of diversified micro and small enterprises as well as medium and larger industries at the federal level and across all the regions of the country. In fact, the second Growth and Transformation Plan envisages an annual growth of 29% in export revenue and making agro-processing products and light manufacturing the main export revenue generating sectors. It aims to achieve annual growth of 24% in the manufacturing sector, and to increase the contribution of the manufacturing sector to 25% of export earnings, up from the current 10%. It also involves a policy of supporting regional states and cities to develop international standard industry parks.

Last week, the Government announced that four Integrated Agro-Industrial Parks, at a cost of about \$30 billion birr, were going to be launched next September, in Western Tigray, South-west Amhara, central Oromia, and in eastern SNNP. Seven million square meters of land will be made available for investors engaged in manufacturing and related sectors. These parks will be linked with millions of smallholders to supply inputs, as well as regional administrations and cities and towns. They will also get the necessary support to develop standardized industrial clusters and parks for those investors and so generate employment opportunities. The Government has already begun to invest heavily in the necessary supporting elements for these **Integrated Agro-Industrial Parks**, to develop the necessary infrastructure, research center development and agriculture extension services, as well as consider the required market development and micro-financing needs. For these zones, it has also identified some 17 agro-processing locations. Bahker in Tigray, Bure in Amhara, Ziway in Oromiya and Sidama in SNNP, are among those slated to be in the first round of development as their feasibility studies have been completed.

Given availability of technology and skills, the potential to lift production to the next level of manufacturing in, say, garment manufacturing, is substantial. There is still obvious potential for domestic firms to increase their share in the domestic and global clothing markets. They have significant labor cost advantages, access to a state-of-the-art and well-located container port in Djibouti, and duty-free access to the U.S. and EU markets. This offers a real opportunity to expand the garment industry, and foreign direct investment will accelerate the process of increasing both production and exports. The Textile and Garment sub-sector already offers one of the best demonstrations of the process of industrialization. During the first Growth and Transformation Plan the sector began to make fundamental structural changes. It is now set to make Ethiopia an important hub for manufacturing. It is showing export revenues of nearly US\$100 million as a result of the continuous improvement in the production capabilities of domestic textile, garment, knitting and weaving firms. More than 45% of the national production is exported to Germany. Even more important, has been the performance of foreign firms which have recently entered the industry. The government's efforts to attract foreign direct investment into the sector have been highly successful, in effect placing the country as an emerging textile powerhouse on the global industry map, underlining its comparative advantages in terms of production factors and the attractive government policies.

Another subsector which will certainly benefit from the development of agro-industrial parks is the leather industry that is even more labor intensive than garments. Italian shoe importers

already express their highest regard for Ethiopian leather. It only requires some relatively small developments for Ethiopia to produce vast amounts of some of the best leather in the world. The current constraint is limited access to high-quality processed leather, but the sector has already been registering high growth in export revenues year after year. Ethiopia possesses the largest livestock herd in Africa, and the 10<sup>th</sup> largest in the world. It annually produces 2.7 million hides, 8.1 million sheepskins and 7.5 million goatskins, but until now it has largely produced low value-added hides and skins. The Government is now actively promoting the shift of export items from low value-added hides and skins to high value-added finished leather. It has made the leather and leather products value chain one of the top four priority industries, not least because of the industry's links to the rural economy and its strong potential to help alleviate poverty as well as increase exports and the flow of foreign currency. The export of leather footwear only started in 2005, but its value has been steadily increasing. Its importance has been underlined by the mention in the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty where it is mentioned as an important sector for trade and industry development. In fact, Ethiopian leather products are now being exported in large volumes to markets in Europe, especially Italy and the UK, America, Canada, China, Japan and other Far Eastern countries, the Middle East and other African countries. Ethiopia is already making a name for itself in the world of mass-produced footwear. At the same time, foreign investors are now showing increased interest in the potential. The country has recently become an increasingly important destination for international buyers looking for high-end shoes, because of its fine leather and a strong commitment to quality. Indeed, the footwear industry is thriving, with an increasing number of new and innovative enterprises and improving quality of products as well as new ideas for product design, production methods, labor management, procurement, and marketing.

Industrial parks play a significant role for countries that are transitioning from an agricultural-led economy into an industrial-led transformation as a central element in an economic revival. The best experiences of other countries suggest that among the benefits of the establishment of industrial parks should be included the delivery of integrated power transmission, supply of water, waste disposal and recycling mechanisms and raw material supply arrangements. Also needed is adequate infrastructure, import–export transport and logistics facilitation, shared market utilization and effective security as well as competent and effective management. The Integrated Industrial Parks process will take advantage of these benefits and, with the costs pooled among the many enterprises involved, they will have a greater chance of creating a self-sustaining operation from the outset and rapidly contribute to the development of the industrialization of the overall economic and social sector.

The Industrial Parks Development Corporation's Chief Executive with the rank of State Minister, Sisay Gemechu, has said that Ethiopia is aiming to become the hub of light manufacturing industry in Africa, coupled with an ambitious plan to develop world class soft and hard infrastructure facilities. The ongoing expansion of industrial parks will, of course, also play a significant part in helping the country move towards becoming a middle-income country by the year 2025. The mandate for developing and administering the industrial parks has been given to the Industrial Parks Development Corporation, by the Council of Ministers Regulation Number 326/2014. The corporation is also responsible for preparing and implementing the national industrial parks' master plan and creating the industrial park land bank, set up in accordance with an agreement concluded with the regional states. The parks that have been set up so far have created jobs for an estimated 10,000 women and men. Almost 95% of production is being competitively supplied to foreign markets. The manufacturing firms involved are effectively utilizing local raw materials and creating value chains within the

agriculture sector. Among the parks that are already operating are the Addis Ababa Bole Lemi I and II, Kilinto, Hawassa, Dire Dawa, Kombolcha, Makelle, Adama, Bahir Dahr and Jimma.

The planned Agro-Industrial parks should go a long way to tackling the lack of value chains and [add] significantly to the value of agricultural products destined for export. The feasibility studies indicate there are abundant raw materials in the identified areas and they will be attractive to investors given their proximity to towns, infrastructure and ports, for exports. The industrial parks will initially be linked to eight rural transformation centers for pre-processing sites, which are already established in coffee, sugar, sesame seed and fruit and vegetable production areas. They will incorporate companies engaged in exporting value-added agricultural products. Not surprisingly, Foreign Direct Investment is being increasingly attracted to the industrial park developments and to the other government policies offering excise breaks, tax holidays and cheap land rental as well as political stability and the added advantage of a competitive and youthful workforce. All of this provides for development of value-added export commodities, boosting the country's global competitiveness, helping ensure market access and creating hundreds of thousands of jobs, and contributing significantly to the war on poverty and to the development of an industrial-led manufacturing sector.

### **The Third Ethio-Kenya Joint Technical Boundary Committee Meeting**

The Third Ethio-Kenya Joint Technical Boundary Committee (JTBC) meeting was held last week (February 15-19) in Naivasha, Kenya in a bid to deliberate on the Joint Boundary Inspection and Maintenance work on the Ethiopia-Kenya boundary, as per the Boundary Treaty signed between the two countries on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1970.

The Ethiopian Delegation, which was headed by Ato (Mr) Wuhib Muluneh, advisor at the Boundary and Transboundary Directorate General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs included high level experts from the Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Police, National Intelligence Security Service, Construction and Design S.C. and the Ethiopian Mapping Agency. The Kenyan Delegation, which was led by Mr Cesare, Director General for Survey of Kenya, Ministry of Land was drawn up of high-level experts from the Ministry of Land, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Survey of Kenya.

The meeting reviewed the boundary Inspection and Maintenance scope of work carried out in Sub-Sector 2a of the Ethiopia-Kenya International Boundary. The Meeting also deliberated on the challenges faced and experiences and lessons learnt during the previous Inspection and Maintenance Works. Afterwards, the meeting continued in two working groups on Budget and Mapping, wherein the Budget Working Group worked out the budget and timeline for the upcoming inspection and maintenance work for Sector 2b and 2c of the Ethiopia-Kenya International Boundary, while the Mapping Working Group deliberated on issues pertaining to updating the Ethiopia-Kenya International Boundary through the instrumentality of Satellite Imagery and Aerial Photography.

The meeting was concluded by approving the budget for the Joint Boundary Survey for Ethiopia-Kenya Sector 2b and 2c as per the 1970 Ethiopia-Kenya Boundary Treaty signed by Emperor Haileselassie of Ethiopia and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya. It was also agreed that the upcoming Joint Inspection and Maintenance work shall commence on the April 1, 2016. The meeting was conducted cordially, reflecting the strong ties between the two countries which was typically marked with the usual exercise of border administration and management practices.