

## A Week in the Horn of Africa

30<sup>th</sup> January 2015

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### News in Brief

#### African Union

The 24<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments of the African Union opened today, Friday (January 30) at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa. Under the theme: “**Year of women empowerment and development towards Africa's Agenda 2063**”, the two day Summit of the Heads of States and Governments will focus on discussing the theme of the year and reviewing the reports of the African Union for 2014. The Summit will also elect the new Chairperson of the African Union, and review and adopt Agenda 2063. (See article)

The 26<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Union's Executive Council (the Foreign Ministers of the AU), chaired by Ms Fatma Vall Mint Soueinae, Foreign Minister of Mauritania and Chairperson of the Executive Council, opened on Monday (January 26) at the African Union Headquarters. (See article)

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) chaired by President Macky Sall of Senegal, took place on Thursday (January 29). (See article)

The Heads of State of the 36 member countries of the African Peer Review Mechanism met on Thursday (January 29).

The AU Peace and Security Council met on Thursday (January 29) to discuss the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan. The Commission, chaired by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, ended investigations in August and submitted its final report to the Chairperson of the AU Commission in October 2014.

Climate change and radical extremism were the focus of a special meeting on Tuesday (January 27) between AU Chairperson, Dr Dlamini Zuma and the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Martine Lidegaard. **Dr Zuma emphasized Africa's concerted efforts for a successful Climate Change Summit in Paris**, pointing out “Africa is the least contributor, but the most affected.”

IGAD held the first IGAD Meeting of the Ministers of Water Resources on Wednesday (January 21) in Addis Ababa, to discuss sustainable management of water resources in support of socio-economic development, peace building, and regional integration. The meeting approved the IGAD Regional Water Resources Policy and called on IGAD to develop a Water Protocol for its implementation.

### **Ethiopia**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn met with the Special Envoy and Vice Foreign Minister of China, Zhang Ming, on Thursday (January 29) in Addis Ababa. The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of Chinese investment in the construction of industrial zones and parks in Ethiopia, and highlighted the potential for Chinese assistance in infrastructural and industrial development as well as poverty reduction. The Special Envoy invited the Prime Minister to visit China.

Foreign Minister Dr Tedros Adhanom and the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Retno Marsudi, agreed on Thursday (January 29) to establish a bilateral consultative forum to expand cooperation. They discussed cooperation in a range of areas including politics, security, economy, trade, investment, and other areas. Mrs Marsudi invited Dr Tedros to participate at the Asia-Africa Forum being held in Jakarta in April.

This week Dr Tedros met with US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Ms Linda Thomas-Greenfield; an EU delegation of Dr Nicholas Wescott, Managing Director of African Affairs of the European External Action Service, Alexander Rondos, Special Envoy of the European Union to the Horn of Africa, and Ambassador Chantal Hebberecht, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Ethiopia; and Zhang Ming, China's Special Envoy and Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs. (See article)

During the week Dr Tedros also met with the Assistant Secretary-General, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović; with India's Vice Foreign Minister, Navtej Sarna; Egyptian Foreign Minister, Sameh Shoukri; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Martin Lidegaard; Norway's Foreign Minister, Borge Brende; and the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Ivica Dacic. (See article)

Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros met with Jean Asselborn, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg on Tuesday (January 27); with Seychelles Foreign Affairs Minister, Jean-Paul Adam on Monday (January 26), and with New Zealand Foreign Minister, Mr Murray MacCully.

State Minister Ambassador Berhane Gebre-Christos met this week with Dr Casaba Blogh, Deputy State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry of Hungary on Thursday, (January 28); with Ambassador Angel villa Hernandez, Director of Sub-Saharan Africa, and Special envoy of Cuba; Mr David Dondua First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Georgia on Wednesday (January 28); and with Shin Don-iK, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs of Korea on Tuesday (January 27). Mr Shin Dong-iK extended an invitation to President Dr Mulatu Teshome to visit the Republic of Korea.

State minister for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dewano Kedir, met with Ambassador William Lacy Swing, Director General for the International Organization for Migration

(IOM) on Thursday January 29; and discussed bilateral relations with Elias Shoniyin, the Deputy Minister of International Economic Cooperation and Integration of Liberia on Wednesday (January 28).

Ethiopia's President Dr Mulatu appointed seven new Ethiopian Ambassadors at the National Palace on Saturday (January 24) before they left on assignment. Ambassadors Negash Kibret, Dina Mufti, Girum Abay, Kuma Demeksa, Samya Zekeriya, Wubshet Demssie and Wahde Belai, took their oath of office in the presence of President Dr Mulatu and Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros.

A Seminar on Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation, organized by the Ethiopian Embassy, in coordination with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JSTA) and the Universities of Osaka, Nagasaki and Tokohu, took place on Monday (January 26), in Tokyo.

### **Djibouti**

The visit of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to Djibouti was the occasion for signing eight cooperation agreements between the two countries on Saturday (January 24). (See article)

### **Eritrea**

The Eritrean government has reportedly released six Eritrean journalists after six years in prison without charge or trial. Seven others, also detained without charge or trial, were released without publicity last year. At least 16 still remain detained and some, including Swedish journalist, Dawit Issac, have been held for well over a decade.

### **Kenya**

Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for the Interior, Joseph Nkaissery, has announced measures aimed at improving security in the counties that border Somalia. They include increasing the number of police stations in Wajir, Mandera and Garissa counties and the deployment of the Kenya Defense Forces along the regions bordering Somalia.

### **Somalia**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan arrived in Somalia on the third leg of his Horn of Africa tour on Sunday (January 25), following visits to Ethiopia last week, and Djibouti at the weekend. It was his second visit to Somalia. (See article)

President Mohamud repeated the Government's call to members of Al-Shabaab to give themselves up (See article)

Prime Minister, Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke announced a new cabinet list of twenty ministers, and called for Parliament to approve the names. (See article)

Zakariya Ismail Ahmed Hersi, former head of intelligence for Al-Shabaab, who surrendered last month, has called on Al-Shabaab members to follow his example. He said "Al-Shabaab is now in total collapse", and called on members "to seek out a peaceful way of resolving all conflicts and towards reconciliation."

Commissioner Reine Alapini-Gansou, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa for the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), visited

Mogadishu this week, met President Mohamud, holding talks with government ministers and intergovernmental organizations.

The European Union's Maritime Capacity Building Mission in the Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean (EUCAP Nestor) is going to [set] up a base in Puntland. The move will strengthen existing legal and law enforcement frameworks related to anti-piracy and maritime security capacity.

### **South Sudan**

President Salva Kiir and Dr Riek Machar met in Addis Ababa on Thursday (January 29).

President Salva Kiir called for an extraordinary meeting of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) on Monday (January 26) to debate and ratify the Arusha agreement, signed by three factions of the SPLM last week.

### **Sudan**

President Omar Al-Bashir met with the African Union Chief Mediator for the Sudan, Thabo Mbeki, on Tuesday (January 27) in Khartoum. Mr Mbeki said the President had expressed his readiness to provide security guarantees for rebel groups to participate in dialogue over the conflict in Darfur and the Two Areas.

The National Elections Commission announced on Tuesday that 15 candidates would run for the presidency in the April election, including the incumbent Omer Hassan Al-Bashir. Six are running on their party ticket, the remainder are running as independents.

President Omer Al-Bashir inaugurated a new Presidential Palace on Monday (January 26). The ceremony was attended by representatives of diplomatic missions, legislators, officials and other dignitaries.

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### **The 24<sup>th</sup> Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union....**

The 24<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union has been taking place at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa this week under the theme: "Year of Women Empowerment and Development Towards Agenda 2063" The week started with the 29<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee on January 23 and 24, and was followed by the 26<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, the Foreign Ministers of the AU, on Monday and Tuesday (January 26 and 27).

The 24<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, the meeting of the Heads of State and Government, opens today, Friday January 30 and continues on Saturday. The two-day Summit of the Heads of States and Governments will focus on discussing the theme of the year and reviewing the reports of the African Union for 2014. The Summit will also elect the new Chairperson of the African Union, and review and adopt Agenda 2063. It will consider the responses to the Ebola crisis in Africa as well as consider such issues as South Sudan, Libya and the issue of Boko Haram.

In her opening remarks, Dr Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, stressed the need to forge a cooperative, collective and holistic approach to the new and

traditional threats facing the continent. She underlined the need to consolidate and deepen partnerships with the African private sector to champion a stable, united and developed Africa. The Chairperson reiterated the significance of championing a tolerant, accountable, democratic and inclusive culture as well as embodying inclusive social and economic development to address the challenges facing the continent. She noted that in spite of the many challenges appearing in the world, Africa has been determined to realize peace and stability as well as the restoration of the dignity of African people. She noted that Agenda 2063, now being presented for adoption, encompassed the voices, demands and aspirations of the people of Africa and the Diaspora as well. She emphasized that this is the way to prevent poverty, disease and hunger; manage diversity; and silence the guns, adding that Agenda 2063 is “a call to action” to all. It will allow us “to diversify our economies and industrialize; to have the skills and entrepreneurial revolution, unleashing the creativity and energy of our young people, and to effect an agricultural and agro-processing transformation.” The Chairperson of the Commission said the continent would witness numerous elections this year, and she stressed the significance of holding elections in a fair, credible, peaceful and democratic manner. She reiterated the significance of investing in the people of the continent, noting that resource mobilization was at the heart of the implementation of Agenda 2063.

Mr Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, commended the focus of the Summit’s theme in making women’s empowerment the center of the discussion. The Secretary General, who welcomed Agenda 2063, appealed to the leaders of African countries to better the lives of women. Ban Ki-Moon **commended the support extended by the African peoples and their governments to Ebola-affected countries** and noted that the world was witnessing progress. He said that joint efforts were delivering practical results in securing peace and stability and he underlined the need to scale these up to bring peace and stability in South Sudan. He also noted that African troops were now “a backbone of our peacekeeping capacity and we rely on the full cooperation of national governments that host UN peacekeeping missions.” He referred to the scourge of terrorism affecting African countries, but also emphasized that counter-terrorism efforts should take respect of human rights into account. He expressed his hope that this year’s elections in Africa would be conducted in a peaceful and democratic way.

Mr Mohammed Ould Abdelaziz, outgoing Chairperson of the African Union; Dr Nabil El Arabi, Secretary General of the League of Arab States; Mr Sam Kutesa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda and President of the 69<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly; Mr Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine and Chairperson of the Palestine Liberation Organization also made statements at the opening session of the Summit.

Earlier, the Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, Erastus Mwencha, said on Wednesday that “this Summit is crucial and a turning point in many ways.” It would be very strategic for the “Africa we want” not least because of the important activities taking place in the margins of the Summit, notably the launch of the African Union Agenda 2063, a roadmap that will help to transform Africa’s economies in the next 50 years. The Deputy Chairperson noted that the Agenda 2063 framework document would also provide input into the global post 2015 development agenda. The Deputy Chairperson underscored the need for Africa to be able to fund its own programs so as to contribute fully to the development agenda of the continent. “Once this is done effectively”, he said, “then Africa shall be able to achieve its objectives, one of which is silencing the guns by 2020.” He said 2014 has been a very busy and challenging year for Africa with the continent facing “crises like the Ebola outbreak, the drop in the price of oil, and the onset of radicalism and extremism.”

Mr Mwencha also highlighted the progress made by Africa in the domain of peace and security under the African peace and security architecture which has facilitated the rapid response to conflicts within the continent. On Tuesday, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, and current Chair of the East African Standby Force informed the African Union Commission that the EASF was ready for deployment. Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Louise Mushikiwado, said all Member States of the East African sub-region had contributed in various ways to activate the EASF and with a resource mobilization strategy in place, the sub-region would be ready for sustainable deployment in three months.

#### **.....the 26<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council....**

The 26th Ordinary Session of the African Union's Executive Council (the Foreign Ministers of the AU) opened on Monday (January 26) at the African Union Headquarters. The meeting, chaired by Ms Fatma Vall Mint Soueinae, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and Chairperson of the Executive Council, was attended by the foreign ministers of the AU member states, the Chair of the African Union Commission, Dr Dlamini Zuma, UN Under Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the UNECA, Carlos Lopez, Deputy Chairperson of the AU, Erastus Mwencha and representatives of the AU organs and leaders of the Regional Economic Commissions. The Ministers deliberated on issues on the agenda of the AU Summit in preparation for the 24th Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting later in the week.

Dr Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, introduced the Annual Report on the activities of the Commission in 2014 to the Council. The Report highlighted the work of the Commission on Agenda 2063 which is being presented to the Summit for adoption and the work in progress with regard to the first Agenda 2063 10-year plan which is intended for adoption at the June Summit this year. Dr Zuma said integration remained central to the continental vision, noting that initiatives to accelerate infrastructure development and agreements to implement free trade zones were encouraging. She said the Commission would present a comprehensive report on the State of Integration in the context of Agenda 2063 to the June summit. The upcoming meeting of the Ministers of Economy and Finance in March would look at funding for Agenda 2063 and later in the year Ethiopia would host the global conference on development financing.

Dr Zuma spoke of the need to silence the guns and neutralize the threats of terrorism, intolerance and extremism, as well as the risk of slow movement on integration, infrastructure and the diversification of economies and the largest risk: failure to finance development, adding "we must go the next step to plan what to do to mitigate these risks." She said Africa "must do more and better for African youth," including increasing investment in education in science and technology, skills development through vocational training, and better treatment of teachers, and lowering the cost of access to internet service. These would be the way to tackle the problem of African youth migration and trafficking, and falling prey to extremism.

The Chairperson said the AU efforts for peace, stability and the consolidation of democracy and good governance were paying off and the African Peace and Security Architecture meant situations could be addressed before they became entrenched. She called for immediate and collective action against Boko Haram, adding "we must work diligently towards silencing the guns by the year 2020, and nip in the bud this threat to African prosperity, peace and human

security.” She expressed “deep appreciation to our peacekeepers” and called for “a monument for our AU peacekeepers that have lost their lives in the duty of the peoples of the continent.” She said the collective fight against the Ebola Virus Disease was showing results in response to the call for African health workers to be deployed in the three Ebola-affected countries and paid tribute to the volunteers and others involved.

Dr Zuma underlined the importance of the theme- the Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Agenda 2063 – and said firmly “we must also do more this year to increase the representation of women in government, in the judiciary and other public and private institutions and their participation at the tables in peace negotiations.” She also stressed the importance of a common African position in the global negotiations on the post-2015 agenda, on climate change and sustainable development goals.

UN Under Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the UNECA, Carlos Lopez stressed the role that agriculture could and should play in pushing forward the industrialization of Africa, noting that while “the world is economy is slowing down; Africa, fortunately, is not.” He said that in the past year Africa had shown itself an epicenter of investment adding that markets needed to expand with a view to sustain growth. Mr Lopez also reminded the meeting that the continent had two years to go before 2017, the establishment of the continental free trade agreement, which, he said, would “represent a fundamental change for current and future generations.”

#### **....The NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee Summit**

The 32rd Session of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee Summit (HSGOC) was also held on the sidelines of the Summit this week. It was attended by a number of Heads of State including the Chairperson of the HSGOC, President Macky Sall of Senegal, Presidents Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Jacob Zuma of South Africa and Prime Minister Hailemariam of Ethiopia as well as Dr Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

Opening the session, President Macky Sall noted the challenge facing the financing of NEPAD’s transboundary infrastructure projects but he hailed the first ever Finance Summit held in Dakar in July last year. The Summit had aimed to devise innovative finance mechanisms to implement selected infrastructure projects in Africa and it also deliberated on ways to increase private sector involvement in financing infrastructure through de-risking measures. It agreed on the importance of promoting innovative domestic resource mobilization, including the issuing of infrastructure and Diaspora bonds. President Sall said the idea of selecting projects on the basis of their bankability was a major success of the Summit. He also noted that infrastructure was the key driver to realize the dream of making Africa a major investment destination.

Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Agency told the Summit that NEPAD was working on a series of key development issues including agriculture, food security, climate change and natural resources, regional integration and infrastructure, science and technology as well as other cross-cutting issues such as gender-based capacity building. He noted that NEAPD had launched the Agriculture Climate Change Framework Initiative. This has a target of at least 25 million small-scale farmers practicing climate-smart agriculture by 2025. It includes two sub-programs – the Gender Climate Change Agriculture Support Program and the NEPAD-NGO Alliance. The Gender Climate Change Agriculture

Support Program is “aimed at improving the capacity and capabilities of government departments and women small holder farmers to respond to the impacts of climate change.” It is being implemented in five countries, and provides support in the creation “and strengthening of national platforms to increase the voice of women in decision making in all aspects of the agriculture value chain; capacity building to increase productivity; improve the quality of commodities; and technical support to organize themselves in cooperatives.” The Alliance, with five NGO’s, also aims to build capacity, in this case of some 6 million farmers in climate-smart agricultural techniques. Mr Mayaki added that “the NEPAD Climate Change Fund has supported through financial grants and technical assistance, measures aimed at strengthening resilience and adaptation to climate change”, assisting projects in 10 countries. In discussion, members raised issues of falling oil prices and security and the effect on mobilizing finances and ensuring implementation of the projects.

President Jacob Zuma of South Africa presented a progress report of the NEPAD Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative (PICl). He said NEPAD provides a fine example of Africa solving its own problems, pointing out that “a good number of NEPAD Programs are owned by Africans with commendable backing of international organizations.” President Zuma lauded the outcome of the Dakar Financing Summit in introducing the innovative approach for making infrastructure projects bankable. He also praised the Service Delivery Mechanism for the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and its support for early-stage project preparation and development. He emphasized the importance of the Infrastructure Skills for Development (SDM) to train project personnel for the success of PIDA projects. President Zuma highlighted Africa need to work towards the implementation of projects to capture the positive momentum of growth which was currently evident in the falling poverty rates in the continent. Infant Mortality Rating was decreasing; there was a decline on in extreme hunger; and an increase of Foreign Direct Investment. He said the implementation of regional infrastructure plans would unlock the economic potential of the continent

President Zuma gave an account of the current status of key infrastructure projects. The North-South Corridor project encompasses 12 countries: Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, South Sudan, Djibouti, Mozambique, South Africa, Uganda, Malawi and Botswana. It covers a host of programs for railways, trans-boundary roads ,power interconnections and ports has secured funding for a feasibility study of the 270km Kapoeta-Raad road in South Sudan. Most of the more than a dozen feasibility projects and design studies have been completed under auspices of SADC, EAC and COMESA. The pre-feasibility study of navigational link from Lake Victoria to the Mediterranean via the Nile River is due to be completed by May 2015. Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda have abolished roaming charges for telephones as part of the One Africa Network Initiative. The Prime Minister of Algeria, Abdelmalek Sellal, also reported on the progress made in the Trans-Sahara–Algeria project, noting that the section from Algeria had almost reached the border with Niger, and the final section of 222km was launched in December 2014.

Following discussions, Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee adopted a number of recommendations. These included implementing the Dakar Agenda for Action Acceleration Strategy, the PIDA Service Delivery Mechanism and the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative (PICl); pursuing the goals set in the Post-Malabo Declaration on PIDA; and Capacity Building of Regional Economic Communities and for climate-smart agricultural programs. HSGOC re-elected President Macky Sall as Chairperson and its bureau members, who include Ethiopia, for another two years term.

A discussion was also held on Structural Transformation and Regional Integration in the context of the Africa's Infrastructural Development. A representative for Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank, noted that Africa's trade and infrastructural problems were largely concerned with trade facilitation issues which, she said, required policy intervention. The problems prevented intra-Africa FDI flows while also leading to the loss of many profitable opportunities in Africa. She also mentioned that logistical problems, high transport costs, and cumbersome goods clearance and trade facilitation regulations made trading in Sub Saharan Africa uncompetitive in terms of the ease of doing business. She raised the example of the cost of moving a container from Japan to Lagos which would cost US\$1,800 while moving it from Durban to Lagos would cost US\$8,000. Welcoming the efforts of some countries to ease cross-border trade, she urged countries and REC's to streamline and harmonize trade facilitation policies. The AfDB representative said low labor costs and quota and duty free access to EU and US markets provided strong incentives for Africa's industrialization prospects, and she noted Ethiopian initiatives in manufacturing leather gloves and Dangote Cement as having taken advantage of these incentives.

Carlos Lopez, UNECA Executive Secretary, also stressed that infrastructural development was a requirement for structural transformation of Africa's economy. Africa's transport, he said, remains uncompetitive posing bottlenecks for private sector development. Freight costs were higher for developing countries. He said there had been steady improvement in electricity provision but 60% of Africa still will not get power before 2020. Mr Lopez also said there was a challenge to fill the US\$42 billion gap for financing infrastructure in Africa, with private investment only amounting to US\$8 billion. He said the Dakar Agenda should come up with mechanisms to encourage private sector investment in infrastructure and address the fear of regulatory risks and contract enforcement by giving guarantees and creating arbitration institutions to settle disputes.

A Representative of the UN Secretary General presented a report on Africa's partnership engagement. He emphasized the importance of the principle of complementarity, coherence and strategy between the Regional Economic Communities (REC's) and the AU and the UN. He emphasized that the UN sees REC's as the building blocks of the continental body and said that the UN was reviewing and reorganizing its support system for greater engagement with the continental body and the REC's. He also stressed that donors should honor their commitments for ODA contributions and there should be greater involvement of the private sector. Africa, he said, needed to continue its engagement with the G-20 and the G-7 groups, and with and other emerging economies to ensure the success of the Dakar Agenda for Action.

### **....and other meetings on the side-lines of the Summit**

Other meetings and events during the week included the launch of the AU Commission's Implementation Strategy and Roadmap to Transform African Agriculture. On Tuesday (January 27), the AU Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture in collaboration with the NEPAD Agency, officially unveiled the Implementation Strategy and Roadmap to facilitate the operationalisation of the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Africa Agricultural Growth and Transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods, as adopted at the 23rd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Malabo, in June 2014. It was officially launched by Ms Soueinea, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mauritania, and Chairperson of the Executive Council. AUC Commissioner for Rural

Economy and Agriculture Rhoda Peace Tumusiime said, “We took advantage of the 10th Anniversary of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) to take stock of the experiences and use lessons learnt to chart the way forward. We have highlighted the importance of agriculture and mobilized citizens, stakeholders and partners to enhance cooperation, collaboration and partnerships to exploit the full potential that agriculture offers.” She said “We are committed to working towards making concrete changes in our people’s lives through the transformation of Africa’s agriculture and its accelerated growth in the AU Member States.” The Malabo Declaration adopted seven key commitments comprising the 2025 vision and goals of Africa Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation. These are: recommitment to the Principles and Values of the CAADP Process; commitment to Enhancing Investment Finance in Agriculture; commitment to Ending Hunger in Africa by the year 2025; commitment to agriculture contributing to poverty reduction at least by half by the year 2025, through Inclusive Agricultural Growth and Transformation; commitment to tripling Intra-African Trade in Agricultural commodities and services, by the year 2025; commitment to Enhancing Resilience of Livelihoods and Production Systems to Climate Variability and other related risks; and commitment to Mutual Accountability to Actions and Results.

The High Level African Trade Committee (HATC) also met on Thursday. HATC is mandated by the Summit to provide a facilitating role and deal problems that arise in the process of establishing a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by 2017 or in the Action Plan for Boosting Intra-Africa Trade (BIAT), as agreed by the AU Ordinary Session of January 2012. The meeting reviewed and discussed the recommendations of the Ministers of Trade on intra-African trade, the Continental Free Trade Area, World Trade Organization issues, and AGOA and give strategic guidance to the Commission on the way forward. It also reviewed progress towards the launch of the Continental Free Trade Area Negotiations at the next AU Summit.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Summit of the Committee of Heads of State and Government of the African Peer Review Mechanism took place on Thursday (January 29). The Republic of Cote d’Ivoire acceded to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) at the meeting, and Benin and Sierra Leone presented Progress Reports on the implementation of their National Programs of Action. Kenya was elected new Vice-Chair of the APRM, and two new Panel Members from South Africa and Nigeria were appointed. President Zuma announced the appointment of Professor Adebayo Olukoshi, previously Director of the UN African Institute for Economic Development and Planning as Chief Executive Officer of the APRM Secretariat. The African Peer Review Mechanism was established in March 2003 by the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) of NEPAD. It is an instrument for self-monitoring and good governance for Member States. Currently, the APRM has thirty-four member states that have voluntarily acceded. Of these countries, seventeen have completed their self-assessment exercise and have been peer-reviewed by the Forum of Heads of State and Government.

### **Turkish President Erdoğan in Djibouti and Somalia**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan arrived in Somalia on the third leg of his Horn of Africa tour on Sunday (January 25), following visits to Ethiopia last week and Djibouti over the weekend. It was his second visit to Somalia. On his first visit in August 2011, when he was still Prime Minister, he was the first non-African leader to visit Mogadishu in decades. He was welcomed enthusiastically by Somalis not least because, ignoring the general view

that Mogadishu as too dangerous, he flew in with his family and a large delegation. On this occasion, he was again accompanied by his wife, Emine, and daughter, Sumeyye Erdoğan , as well as Deputy Prime Minister, Numan Kurtulmus; Foreign Minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu; Economy Minister, Nihat Zeybekci; Science and Industry Minister, Fikri Isik; and Forestry and Water Minister, Veysel Eroglu as well as other officials and businessmen. The visit was aimed at re-energizing the strategic partnership between Somalia and Turkey and to reaffirm Turkey's long-term commitment to Somalia. Together with the visits to Ethiopia and Djibouti it also underlined Turkey's commitment to its relations with Africa.

President Mohamud, who said Somalia had become a different country since President Erdoğan's last visit, noted relations between the two countries had intensified steadily. He paid tribute to the significant contribution the Turkish government and people have made to aid and development initiatives in Somalia, pointing out that the friendship between Turkey and Somalia began in the 16th century with ties between the Ottoman Empire and the Adel Sultanate. He praised Turkey for investing in Somalia despite the insecurity caused by decades of turmoil, acknowledging the Turkish commitment even in the face of significant risks. Turkish interests in Somalia have been the target of Al-Shabaab on a number of occasions, most recently last week, on January 22, when the hotel where the Turkish delegation was making last preparations ahead of Erdoğan's visit was attacked and four people killed. President Erdoğan thanked those Turkish nationals who have continued to serve and work in Somalia despite the danger and the threats.

The bilateral discussions between the two Presidents concentrated on the increasing dialogue and cooperation between Somalia and Turkey over economic, social and security issues. New development agreements were signed focusing on elements of military and security cooperation, youth and sports initiatives, marine transportation, police support and cooperation between Turkish National Radio TRT and Somali National TV. At a joint press conference after their talks President Mohamud said "We thank Turkey for her ongoing development assistance in support of economic, military, social, infrastructure partnership and humanitarian aid initiatives. The Somalia people are grateful for Turkey's friendship throughout the years and we look forward to strengthened ties between our countries."

Turkey, in partnership with the Federal Government of Somalia, has launched a number of development and infrastructure projects in Somalia, ranging from health and sanitation projects, including the construction of numerous hospitals, to the construction of roads and buildings, and the rehabilitation of Aden Adde International Airport. Turkey is building a new Embassy in Mogadishu, planned to be "one of the biggest Turkish embassies in the world," and a Turkish company, the Albayrak Group, is carrying out the modernization of the Port of Mogadishu, described by President Erdoğan as "in a very strategic place and constitutes an important source of income for the Somali government." The President also spoke of Turkey's "humane, conscientious, Islamic duties" and said Turkey would build houses in Somalia for the country's low income groups: "we said let's start construction of residential buildings," adding that "first let's make a city plan and in the first step let's build 10,000 homes, thereby changing the city's appearance." He said he believed these would be ready within a year or two.

On this visit President Erdoğan attended the inauguration ceremony of a new terminal at the Airport, constructed by the private Turkish construction company, Kozuva: "I wish this building will bring good luck to Somalia, which has gone through hard times." He also opened the new 200-bed Somalia-Turkey Training and Research Hospital which has been

named the Erdoğan hospital. This will be operated jointly. The Turkish Health Ministry will provide specialized personnel and financial support for the next five years, after which the hospital will be run by Somalia. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), Turkey's international development body, undertook the project and Turkey will cover \$85.6 million of the estimated \$135.7 million operating budget during this period. Some 52 Turkish and 91 local staff will work as hospital administrators, head doctors, administrative directors or financial directors and 36 Somali assistants are expected take to part in the hospital's training program each year.

Earlier in Djibouti, on Saturday (January 24) President Erdoğan signed eight cooperation agreements with President Ismail Omar Guelleh. These covered the creation of a special economic zone of 500 hectares and the establishment of a partnership between the Radio Television of Djibouti and the Radio Television of Turkey, as well as the establishment of a framework for technical cooperation in the fields of youth and sports, maritime transport and police training. Djibouti and Turkey also agreed to initiate cooperation in the military sphere, pledging to work closely in security and in the fight against terrorism.

Speaking at a joint press conference after their talks, the two Presidents reaffirmed their commitment to raise the levels of trade and strengthen bilateral cooperation. President Erdoğan said the two countries shared "ties of friendship and age-old trade and we have an obligation to strengthen them further." He reaffirmed the commitment of the Turkish Government to work for the strengthening of exchanges between the two countries, and said the agreements would allow both parties to reinvigorate their cooperation.

President Guelleh emphasized the historic nature of the visit which, he said, would begin a new chapter in relations between the two countries. He highlighted the valuable assistance of Turkey especially in the field of renewable energy, welcomed the signing of the agreements. He said Djibouti intended to take full advantage of Turkish experience in the exploitation of geothermal energy. President Guelleh referred to the modernization of Djibouti's port infrastructure and noted these efforts had helped Djibouti to obtain economic growth in recent years of more than 5% per year. This sustained growth, he said, encouraged the development of trade and he welcomed the increasing number of businessmen in Djibouti.

A Turkey-Djibouti Business Forum was held during the visit and President Erdoğan addressed Djibouti's National Assembly during his visit. The two Presidents also attended a launching ceremony for the renovation of the Bourhan Bey road in the center of Djibouti.

### **Somalia's Prime Minister announces a new cabinet.....**

A statement from the Office of Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke on Wednesday (January 28) said that over the past few days, the day-to-day tasks of the government had come to a standstill. "We couldn't remain in such challenging atmosphere", and as a result "after consulting with the President, the Speaker of Parliament, legislators, civil society and the entire Somali community, tonight I have named cabinet ministers." The statement said the Prime Minister was "confident in the composition of the council and in their individual and collective capabilities to deliver on the aspirations of the Somali people." It added that "the new cabinet ministers have no connection with the current political conflict." On January 12, Prime Minister Sharmarke had announced a 59 strong government of 25 ministers, 26 deputy ministers and 9 state ministers. As a result of strong opposition in Parliament to the inclusion of some former ministers, he felt it necessary to dissolve the

cabinet before it could be considered by Parliament.

Wednesday's statement called on the Members of Parliament to express and extend confidence in the cabinet as it took on the arduous task of implementing key legislative and policy priorities in line with Vision 2016. The prime Minister said: "While I do not have the slightest reservation in the capabilities of the new cabinet, I'd like to remind other stakeholders in this process that the task ahead of us is no easy one and the clock is ticking." He reiterated his administration's vision to remain in touch with the sentiments of the public, build a consensus and make resolute decisions. He said: "The appointments made tonight are a clear manifestation in our relentless effort to defend public interest, offer a better alternative for the Somali people and firmly etch Somalia on the path of stability and progress." The Prime Minister said the list of deputy and state ministers would also be announced shortly .

The new list has three women as Ministers of Education, Health and Women and Human Rights Development. It includes the former head of Central Bank who resigned in 2013, Abdisalan Hadliye Omar, who is named to the Foreign Affairs portfolio. Among the cabinet are two journalists. Most of the appointments have not held any previous cabinet posts. Earlier, after the rejection of his previous choices by Parliament, MPs warned the Prime Minister against reinstating certain ministers from his predecessor's cabinet. Two parliamentary committees warned the Prime Minister against reinstating certain ministers who served in his predecessor's government, accusing them of creating recurring political wrangling between the President and the former Prime Minister. In a statement issued after their meeting, 90-members affirmed their willingness to support the appointment of "political novices" who, they said, would be acceptable for designated positions.

### **....and the Somali President says the door is always open to those who reject Al-Shabaab**

As the number of defections from Al-Shabaab continues to grow, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has repeated the government's commitment to ensure the safety of any defector who rejects Al-Shabaab's doctrine of destruction and violence and embraces the peace process. This follows the defection of Al-Shabaab's former intelligence chief, Zakariya Ismail Hersi (Zaki) last month, the most recent defection of Commander Hussein Dhubi in Luuq on January 15 as well as the steady flow of foot soldiers abandoning Al-Shabaab. Another former senior Al-Shabaab commander, Sheikh Mohamed Said Mohamed "Atom" was recently taken off the UN sanctions list.

The President said: "senior leaders of al-Shabaab have already defected, and the Federal Government of Somalia has assisted them in removing the sanctions against them. I want to reassure the people of Somalia that this was not done lightly. Those leaders genuinely regret their previous actions. They sought and continue to seek reconciliation, particularly with those who were affected by their actions. They willingly speak out against al-Shabaab and its un-Somali, un-Islamic doctrine, and they paint a terrifying portrait of life within that unholy organization: cruelty, infighting, deception, corruption and worse. For these reasons the Federal Government is willing to engage with them, those who were once our enemies, and to assist in their assimilation back into the Somali community." He added: "the Federal Government will continue to speak to discontented al-Shabaab leaders to encourage them to choose peace."

The President said the Government "was not only speaking to the leaders of al-Shabaab:

many, many of the foot soldiers of al-Shabaab have also defected, and more are looking for a way out of the dark place in which they are trapped. We say to them: the door is always open to you, but you must reject al-Shabaab's perverse creed. You will not be abused or killed. The Federal Government guarantees your safety. Somalia has a place for every one of you. We will help you to get an education or learn a trade or find a job." He said the Government offered a willing ear and a helping hand. It was aware that they only joined Al-Shabaab because they needed money for their family or a friend they trusted persuaded them. Some possibly didn't know what they were joining. The President said: "many of those who have defected tell us of their shock when they realized what they had become involved and complicit in". And he added: "But what you did then does not have to dictate the rest of your life."

The President also said that in this context he had a message for the people of Somalia. He said he knew some were uneasy regarding reconciliation with former members of Al-Shabaab. He could, however, reassure them. He said: "The Federal Government has a process in place, to recognize genuine defection. Defection comes with conditions: recognition of previous crimes; rejection of violence and rejecting Al-Shabaab; embracing a peaceful resolution to conflict; a commitment to play an active part in re-joining a community and contributing to its welfare." He said those who defect go through a process of supervised rehabilitation and once they re-join the community "they are constantly monitored by the Somali security forces to confirm their continuing commitment to rejecting al-Shabaab." He emphasized that members of Al-Shabaab who were not willing to make those commitments and who continued "to revel in brutality, deception, extortion and depravity will be subject to the due process of the law." He said new Counter Terrorism legislation specifically designed for the task responsible could join the peace process after they have served their sentences. At the same time, he asked the Somalia people to accept the need to exercise forgiveness for those who choose the path of peace, adding " I ask so that we can together close this dark chapter in Somalia's history."