

Ethio-UK partnership based on democratic values, mutual trust and respect

March 21, 2012 - LONDON

Over 200 guests enjoyed the warm hospitality of the Ethiopian Embassy at a reception hosted by the Rt. Hon. Laurence Robertson MP, Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Ethiopia at the **House of Commons** on Tuesday, 20th March 2012.



Rt. Hon. Laurence Robertson MP

The annual event celebrates the partnership between Ethiopia and the United Kingdom which is based on democratic values, mutual trust and respect. Last night offered a golden opportunity to share with British friends of Ethiopia some of Ethiopia's success stories.



Ambassador Abdirashid Dulane, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, welcomed guests, saying that bilateral relations between Ethiopia and the

United Kingdom are at an all time high, with Ethiopia securing the UK's largest programme in the world in terms of development cooperation - £1.3 billion, over three years. The flow of Foreign Direct Investment is also picking up with one of the FTSE 100 companies, namely Diageo, securing a foothold in one of Ethiopia's breweries. Pittards' investment in leather and NYOTA's in gold exploration helps better introduce Ethiopia's investor-friendly policies to the British business community. Ethiopia is also working with the United Kingdom on conflict resolution and on the fight against international terrorism where the countries have a productive partnership.



The Ambassador hailed the UK's historical year and expressed the best wishes of the Government and people of Ethiopia to Her Majesty the Queen in her Diamond Jubilee Year, and to the Government and people of the United Kingdom for a very successful Olympics Games. "Our hope is that Ethiopia's world renowned athletes will not only be collecting an unprecedented number of gold medals at the London Olympics, but their participation will usher in a new era of a vibrant people-to-people diplomacy between Ethiopia and the United Kingdom," he said.

Ethiopia's Five-Year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) is accelerating the pace of Ethiopia's transition from agricultural-led development to one where industrialization takes precedence over agriculture. Ethiopia's economy has continued to grow at 11%. And the country will attain most of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and will join the league of middle-income countries by 2025.

Ethiopia continues to invest heavily in infrastructure – the past year saw the start of the construction of a 2,000km railway line, as well as the completion of yet another hydro-electric dam, Tana Beles.

Regarding the region and the African continent at large, the Ambassador announced that Ethiopia, for the first time in its history, has started to export electricity to neighbouring Djibouti and has signed a "Power Purchase Agreement" with Kenya for up to 400MW annually. In keeping with one of the cardinal principles of Ethiopia's Foreign Policy, that of engaging with our neighbours in peaceful and economically productive ventures, "this month Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan launched a \$23 billion project to build a port and oil refinery at Lamu and create an oil pipeline, railway and motorway to link Lamu Port to South Sudan and Ethiopia," the Ambassador announced.

He commented, however, that it was sad that the development and integration efforts of the countries of the region are still consistently undermined by Eritrea's destabilising activities. He said Ethiopia believes that problems are best solved through negotiation and dialogue.

The Ambassador concluded by thanking sponsors **Afriflora** for bouquets of freshly-cut Ethiopian flowers and **Booling Coffee** for packs of fine quality Ethiopian coffee, which were both given to guests as they left, and **Ethiopian Airlines, Ghion Restaurant and Mesebewoq Injera**.

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