



Ethiopian News

Spring 2021

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Editorial

Neither politicisation nor sabotage should guide policies over the Nile

Following the official launch of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in April 2011, Ethiopia proposed setting up a tripartite committee and a range of fora, which eventually led to the adoption of the Declaration of Principles on GERD (DoP) in March 2015, signed by Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan to facilitate the trilateral dialogue. Principally, the DoP underlined the critical need for equitable and reasonable use of the Nile waters.

Ethiopia has held innumerable discussions with both Egypt and Sudan throughout the entire period of construction of the GERD and has made it clear from the very beginning that construction of the GERD is based on its sovereign and legitimate rights to use the Nile waters and its commitment to **not cause significant harm to downstream countries**. Ethiopia has consistently promoted the concept of **collective security and multilateralism** at international, regional, and sub-regional levels.

As a hydroelectric dam, the GERD will not cause significant harm to downstream countries. The fact remains that GERD increases Ethiopia's electricity generation capacity to meet its domestic and industrial demands.

More than 65 million Ethiopians do not have access to electricity. The power generated from the GERD is meant to pull them out of darkness.

In fact, the survival, development, and prosperity of Ethiopia, and the region as a whole, are inextricably linked with Ethiopia's ability to develop its water resources.

The GERD has a range of benefits to Nile Basin countries, including the promotion of access to reliable economic power supply, opportunity for better flood and erosion control as well as the prospect of a new era of regional cooperation for mutual development.

While Egypt and Sudan are fully aware of the benefits of the GERD, they have been intentionally politicising and internationalising the matter to exert unnecessary pressure on Ethiopia and to maintain their self-claimed water quota, in line with colonial-era treaties. Ethiopia cannot and will not agree to such unfair terms that intend to elicit its endorsement for a colonial-era treaty that maintains the hydro hegemony of Egypt and Sudan.

The downstream Nile riparian countries will therefore need to abdicate the self-claimed full control over Nile waters and demonstrate the necessary political will and commitment to negotiate in good faith with upper riparian countries, to achieve a comprehensive settlement that will ensure benefits for all riparian countries.

As the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Demeke Mekonnen reiterated "Neither politicisation nor sabotage should guide policies over the Nile—not anymore. Instead, promoting cooperation, understanding, and integration should be our guiding spirit."



Ambassador Teferi presents his Letters of Credence to Her Majesty The Queen

Ambassador Teferi to enhance bilateral relations, and the rich social and cultural ties between Ethiopia and the UK during his tenure

On 25th May, His Excellency Ambassador Teferi Melesse Desta was invited to Buckingham Palace by Her Majesty The Queen where he formally presented his credentials confirming his appointment as Ethiopian Ambassador to the Court of St. James's.

Credentials, also known as "Letters of Credence", refer to the formal documentation accrediting an Ambassador as head of a diplomatic mission.

On the day of the ceremony, steeped in tradition and royal pageantry which has remained almost unchanged since the Victorian era, Ambassador Teferi was escorted to Buckingham Palace by Her Majesty's Vice-Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, Victoria Busby, in a State Landau - a ceremonial horse-drawn carriage.

On arrival at Buckingham Palace, the Ambassador was escorted to the Equerries Room for the presentation of his credentials and an Audience – a one-to-one meeting – with Her Majesty The Queen. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Her Majesty The Queen joined by video link from the Oak Room at Windsor Castle, where she has been conducting diplomatic audiences virtually since December 2020.

During his audience with The Queen, Ambassador Teferi reiterated his commitment to strengthening the century-old bilateral ties between Ethiopia and the United Kingdom. In particular, the Ambassador vowed to ensure the continuation of the impactful development partnership between the two governments that has resulted, over the years, in a significant improvement to the lives of many

Ethiopians. The Ambassador also touched upon working closely with the UK government to ensure the upcoming COP26 Climate Change conference is a success.

Her Majesty The Queen on her part spoke of the enduring relationship between Ethiopia and the United Kingdom and assured the Ambassador of her government's support going forward. She also fondly recalled her visit to Ethiopia in the 1960s with her late husband, His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, where she was warmly welcomed by Emperor Haile Selassie. She especially noted the spectacular landscape views of the Rift Valley.

Following the credentials ceremony, the Ambassador was escorted back to the Embassy by the Marshall of the Diplomatic Corps, Alistair Harrison CMS CVO, where he was welcomed by diplomats and staff for a *vin d'honneur*.



Ambassador Teferi and the Vice-Marshall of the Diplomatic Corps, Alistair Harrison CMS CVO

On the occasion, the Ambassador said:

It is a great moment for me to officially start my duty here in the United Kingdom. I look forward to building on the good work of my predecessors enhancing our bilateral relations with the UK and enriching the social and cultural ties between our two peoples. And with your cooperation, with your help, and with the help of the UK government I hope our relations will flourish in the coming months and years.

Echoing the Ambassador's sentiments, H.E. Alistair Harrison CMS CVO said:

The Queen greatly values the relationship between the United Kingdom and Ethiopia. Our relations are very longstanding. [Ethiopia] was the first country in Africa to open an Embassy here in London and we have been friends not just for decades but for many years before that. And our friendship will endure because of the very strong links between our peoples. We know your time in London will be a great success as you will be building on a very long tradition of friendship. Thank you to everybody who has contributed to such an excellent lunch to mark this very auspicious occasion in the history of the United Kingdom and Ethiopia.

...first African diplomatic mission in London

The ceremony coincided with Africa Day, the annual commemoration of the foundation of the Organisation of African Unity on 25th May 1963 in Addis Ababa by 32 African states, with the main aim of bringing African nations together and resolve issues within the continent. Headquartered in Addis Ababa – the diplomatic capital of Africa – the African Union now has 55 member states.

As the first African country to establish an embassy in London, Ethiopia and the United Kingdom have enjoyed rich diplomatic relations covering a range of areas, including, but not limited to, trade and investment, culture, education, and development cooperation. Great Britain was also among the first few countries to open an embassy in Addis Ababa well over a century ago.

Ethiopia's relationship with the UK today continues to be among the most dependable, mature, and mutually beneficial of any that it has with other countries.

A video of the Ambassador's credentials day is available on our YouTube page at: www.youtube.com/EthioEmbassyUK.

Ambassador presents credentials to the IMO

On 7th April, Ambassador Teferi held a virtual courtesy call with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General, Mr. Kitack Lim, where he formally presented his credentials as Ethiopia's Permanent Representative to the Organization.



In discussions, Ambassador Teferi highlighted Ethiopia's maritime industry and the various strategies that have been implemented by the Government aimed at improving the sector's capacity, while also supporting sustainable economic growth.

Mr. Lim on his part vowed to work with the Embassy going forward as part of IMO's mission to enhance links and partnerships among member states. Mr. Lim also noted that IMO wants to collaborate and help African countries develop their maritime sectors.

Though landlocked, Ethiopia has been actively engaging in the maritime industry since becoming an IMO Member State in 1975.

Deputy Head of Mission assumes role in London



Mr. Beyene Gebremeskel assumed his post in January 2021 as successor to the previous Deputy Head of Mission, Mr. Ababi Demissie.

Overseeing the Business Diplomacy Department, Mr. Gebremeskel's priorities will focus on enhancing Ethio-UK relations especially in trade and investment, institutional partnerships, technical and skills transfer, and cultural heritage.

Before his role in London, Mr. Gebremeskel was Director-General of the Public Enterprises Holding and Administration Agency, where he oversaw the management of 21 state-owned enterprises.

With nearly 35 years of government service under his belt, Mr. Beyene has served at various agencies including the former Ethiopian Science and Technology Commission; the former Engineering Design and Tool Centre/Enterprise; and as Director-General at the Public Enterprises Supervising Authority. Mr. Beyene was also State Minister at the Ministry of Public Enterprises, which is now the Public Enterprises Holding and Administration Agency.

He has also led various investment promotion tours to Asia, Middle East, Europe, and Africa.

President Sahle-Work sends letter of condolences to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth

Following the announcement of His Royal Highness Prince Phillip, The Duke of Edinburgh's passing, President Sahle-Work Zewde sent a letter of condolences to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

In her letter, President Sahle-Work highlighted the "great example of service to one's nation displayed by the late Prince Philip" and expressed condolences on her own behalf, as well as that of the people and government of Ethiopia.

Embassy diplomats and staff, led by Ambassador Teferi also joined Her Majesty The Queen, The Royal Family, the UK government, and the people of the United Kingdom in mourning his loss.

It is to be recalled that Her Majesty the Queen and her late husband Prince Philip visited Ethiopia at the invitation of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1965.



In a tribute, the British Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union, Alastair McPhail, said:

“Queen Elizabeth and The Duke of Edinburgh’s eight-day trip to Ethiopia was the first formal call on the East African nation by any British monarch. During the 1965 State Visit to Ethiopia, Her Majesty the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh were hosted by Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, where they drove through large crowds in open-topped cars. Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh were also escorted on visits outside of the capital. There they witnessed the breath-taking scenery of Ethiopia’s countryside and the rich culture and history of the Ethiopian people.”

The City of Bath festival celebrates Emperor Haile Selassie’s legacy

A new festival was launched in April celebrating the legacy and impact of Emperor Haile Selassie I on the city of Bath.



The Freedom in the City festival runs from April until the end of October with a series of online and in-person events exploring Ethiopian and Rastafari culture which are open to the public.

The project is the brainchild of the University of the West of England, Bristol Associate Professor Dr. Shawn Sobers, and is being funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Dr. Sobers said: “Bath is predominately known for its Roman and Georgian roots and as the home of novelist Jane Austen. Yet Bath was also home to Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I, who is considered God incarnate by members of the Rastafari faith. By launching this festival, we hope to connect local communities with this sometimes-forgotten period of history and celebrate cultural inclusivity in the city.”

The festival officially started on 20th April with an online screening of the film *Footsteps of the Emperor* about the time Emperor Haile Selassie lived in Bath, followed by a question and answer session with the film’s director, Dr. Sobers. Other festival highlights include an online lecture on the history and theology of Rastafari on 11th June, a live performance of King Solomon and Queen of Sheba Opera at the Bath Guildhall on 17th July, and an Ethiopian Orthodox Church Service at Bath Abbey on 18th September. More information about the festival along with a full list of events and activities is available at freedominthecity.org.

...Emperor Haile Selassie's life in Bath

Emperor Haile Selassie, I moved to Bath in 1936 to campaign for international support of his homeland, Ethiopia, which had been invaded by Mussolini's fascist regime. The Emperor and his family lived in Fairfield House, Bath, until 1940 when he returned to Ethiopia to reign for another three decades.



Fairfield House

During his time living in Bath, Emperor Selassie received a warm welcome from local residents and this generosity was reciprocated when he gave Fairfield House to the city as a gift to be used for elders.



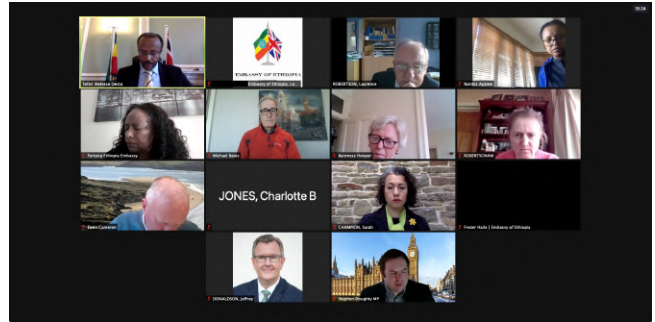
Emperor Haile Selassie with the Mayor of Bath in October 1954

In 1954 while on a state visit to Bath, Emperor Haile Selassie was awarded the title Freedom of the City; the highest official honour a city can bestow on an individual. The award represents the symbolic freedom for the individual to be able to parade proudly through the streets and seals the connection between the state and the people.

Today he is still worshipped as God incarnate by the Rastafari movement with Fairfield House a site of pilgrimage for many from the Ethiopian, Rastafari, and African Caribbean communities.

Ambassador Teferi briefs All-Party Parliamentary Group on various issues

On 12th March, Ambassador Teferi Melesse Desta attended the virtual AGM of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Ethiopia and Djibouti. Chaired by Laurence Robertson MP, the Group aims to promote knowledge of, and interest in, Ethiopia and Djibouti; and to maintain good relations with those countries.



On the occasion, Ambassador Teferi briefed members on the current situation in Ethiopia, including the situation in Tigray, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD, the Ethio-Sudan border issue, and the upcoming elections. A Q&A session followed where the Ambassador responded to questions raised by the Group.

On Tigray, the Ambassador highlighted the current status of humanitarian support to the Region and assured members that the Government of Ethiopia is doing all it can to support its Citizens. He called upon international partners to stand with Ethiopia and augment support to the Region as currently, the Ethiopian Government contributes the lion's share of humanitarian support to the region (70%), while international partners and NGOs contribute only 30%.

He also assured members that the government is taking concrete actions to investigate and bring to justice perpetrators of alleged human rights violations.

On GERD, Ambassador Teferi said the construction is going as planned and the project is expected to be completed by 2023. He reaffirmed Ethiopia's assertion for a win-win solution to all and its long-standing commitment to reaching a fair agreement with downstream countries.

On the Ethio-Sudan border conflict, Ambassador Teferi reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to solving the issue peacefully through existing mechanisms.

On the upcoming Elections, the Ambassador noted Ethiopia's commitment to holding inclusive, free, and fair elections.

Concluding the meeting, members of the APPG appreciated Ambassador Teferi's briefing and assured him of their support going forward. They also committed to working closely with the Embassy in its endeavours to strengthen Ethio-UK links.

Royal Africa Society hosts webinar on Ethiopia's reforms

On 15th March, the Royal African Society hosted a discussion on judicial reforms and the Rule of Law in Ethiopia with Meaza Ashenafi, President of the Supreme Court of Ethiopia, Daniel Bekele, Commissioner at the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, and Comfort Ero Vice President of the International Crisis Group.



Speaking on the occasion, H.E. Meaza Ashenafi, highlighted the judicial reforms underway since the 2018 transition which ushered in Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali's Government, mentioning the various institutional reforms that have been put in place to ensure the independence of the judiciary.

Daniel Bekele, on his part, reflected on the human rights landscape in Ethiopia, the context in which human rights issues are handled, and the encouraging space that exists for political parties, civil society, and the media to operate freely in the country. He also reflected on the Commission's ongoing work conducting independent

investigations into human rights violations across the country.

And finally, Comfort Ero, noted the positive trajectory of the reform process while noting the critical challenges it has faced since it was initiated almost 3 years ago. She also emphasised the importance of a comprehensive political dialogue as a sustainable way out of the current situation.

Ambassador Teferi Melesse Desta's delivered closing remarks on the occasion reiterating the government's commitment to ensure the rule of law and advance the cause of human rights in the country.

"Notwithstanding the current challenges we face, I remain confident that the Ethiopia that lies on the horizon, is one of hope," the Ambassador said, adding that "As we head into the forthcoming elections, it will now be up to Ethiopians, up and down the country to capture this moment. To grasp this opportunity. And to chart out a better present to hand over to future generations."

The Ambassador's remarks is available on our website at <https://bit.ly/RASxRemarksxMar2021>.

IOHR hosts webinar on press freedom in Ethiopia

Ahead of World Press Freedom Day, the Embassy in collaboration with the International Observatory of Human Rights (IOHR), Ethiopian Digest, and EILCO, hosted a webinar on press freedom in Ethiopia, under the theme, "**A booster shot for media freedom in Ethiopia**".



In 2019, Ethiopia was the host of the 2019 World Press Freedom Day conference in recognition of the work to create a free media environment by Dr.

Abiy Ahmed's government when it came to power in 2018. Ethiopia went from one of the world's worst jailers of journalists to freeing them all and enacting reform to establish transparent institutions to encourage an independent media and free press. Two years later Ethiopia has seen a pandemic of fake news, disinformation, election fever, and insurrection.

Participants at the webinar considered the challenges during the dual pandemics of Covid and disinformation and what needs to happen next to get media freedom's immunity boosted to build a momentum of positive change; while keeping its practitioners safe.

The webinar brought together a distinguished panel from governments, media practitioners, and civil society to discuss media freedom at a global and at a local level including Kanbar Hossein-Bor, UK Coordinator of the Media Freedom Campaign and deputy director for Democratic Governance at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office; Yonatan Tesfaye, Deputy Director-General of the Ethiopian Media Authority; Fasika Tadesse, Ex Editor in Chief of Addis Fortune newspaper; Jeremy Dear, Deputy General Secretary of the International Federation of Journalists; and Mihret Aschalew, Project manager for BBC Media Action PRIMED in Ethiopia

The panellists discussed and stressed the threat of disinformation, both in the context of coronavirus and the ongoing conflict in Tigray – ultimately agreeing that initiatives like PRIMED were crucial in building up awareness and teaching journalists the importance of fact-checking.

Speakers also noted that the international media had at times been involved in the distribution of disinformation, prompting questions on the role and salience of international media outlets.

IOHR Director, Valerie Peay moderated the event highlighting the theme of UNESCO World Press Freedom Day, while Ambassador Teferi delivered concluding remarks highlighting the democratic transition towards press freedom in Ethiopia while cautioning against the new challenges that such a transition might present:



“As rightly noted by the panellists, 2018 was a remarkable year for press freedom in Ethiopia as demonstrated by the Prime Minister in his inaugural speech to parliament. In his speech, he underlined the critical need to respect all human and democratic rights, especially freedom of expression....However, it is also important to highlight that freedoms come with responsibilities. We need to ensure that the opening up of the media does not lead to facilitating disinformation and harmful news”

To read the Ambassador's remarks, please visit our website at <http://bit.ly/IOHRxPressFreedomETH>.

University of Surrey develops new app to support palliative care in Ethiopia



The Ayzot app is a collaboration between Surrey, the University of Strathclyde, Hospice Ethiopia, the Federal Ministry of Health, and Hello Doctor Ethiopia, an Ethiopian-based software company run by Dr. Yohans Wodaje. The app is named after a common Ethiopian expression roughly translated to mean: to encourage or soothe a sick person. The app's focus is on supporting patients with life-

limiting illnesses such as cancer and HIV/AIDS by helping them manage pain and other symptoms.

Ethiopia has a population of more than 110 million, the majority of whom live in rural settings, making palliative care coverage challenging. The current COVID-19 pandemic has made palliative care access even more difficult.

The app features a self-assessment management system that leads the patient or carer through a common set of symptoms such as pain, nausea, drowsiness, breathlessness, tiredness, appetite, and well-being. Both patients and carers are encouraged to use the Ayzot app to assess the severity of each symptom using a combination of measures, including the pain assessment scale. The app contains both pharmacological and non-pharmacological medication information and, where appropriate, directs the user to get help and further information on wound care, spiritual care, and diet.

During a short period of beta user-testing, carers reported positive changes in how they treated their loved one's wounds because of the advice found on the app. Furthermore, health care professionals commented on the app's potential to support them in delivering targeted care with the limited palliative care resources. Patients reported that using the Ayzot app helped them feel more reassured and supported with their pain management and symptom control.

The team behind the Ayzot app is currently looking to secure further funding to perform a feasibility study and test the app in several rural areas across Ethiopia and other African countries. The work was led by Dr. Nicola Carey, Nicola Ayers, Roma Maguire, Ephram Abathun, Yohans Wodajie, and Catherine Royce.

Dr. Nicola Carey from the School of Health Sciences at the University of Surrey said:

“We hope that Ayzot will be embedded into the national palliative care clinical provision to support healthcare professionals and provide enhanced palliative coverage in Ethiopia.”

Celebrities join forces with Tree Aid to save Metema forest from extinction

Chris Packham, Joanna Lumley, and Zoë Wanamaker are some of the celebrities backing an appeal that was launched on 12th April by UK-based tree-growing charity, Tree Aid, to save Metema Forest in Ethiopia.



Metema forest is made up of *Boswellia* trees, which produce frankincense – a precious tree resin that is used in essential oils around the world.

Without urgent action, the Metema forest could be extinct in 20 years, gripped by the devastating effects of the climate crisis. Tree Aid is calling for support from the public to bring the forest back from the brink of extinction, stopping it from being engulfed by the creeping desert.

The Future Forest Appeal aims to raise £352,875 to save one of the last green belt areas before the desert, tackling the climate crisis with a solution based on nature. The funds will enable Tree Aid to provide communities in Metema with tools and training to restore nearly 10,000 hectares of degraded forest, protect the frankincense trees and create a more sustainable income from them - increasing incomes by 25%.

Donations from the public will be matched by the UK government until 11th July, doubling the fundraising total.

The Appeal is also part of the Great Green Wall movement which aims to restore and re-green 8,000kms across the entire width of Africa – stopping the advancing Sahara Desert, which has spread 100km south since 1950 - and securing a sustainable future for the millions of people living in poverty in the region.

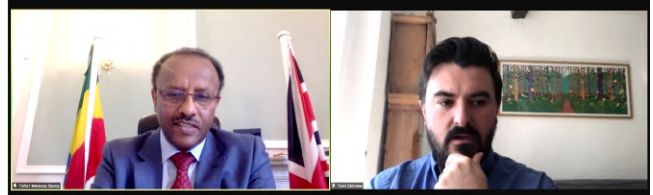
Joanna Lumley, Tree Aid's patron, said: "I have been supporting Tree Aid for almost 30 years because it provides such an effective, practical solution to tackling poverty and the climate crisis. I urge people to please give what they can to the Future Forest appeal, knowing their gift will be doubled by the government."

"Together, we can fight the effects of the climate crisis to secure a greener, more sustainable future for millions of people."

The Future Forest appeal comes at an important time, when the UK is set to host the world's biggest climate change conference, COP26, in Glasgow this November. 2021 also marks the launch of the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, calling for urgent, global action to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide.

Derese Alebe, one of the people that will be part of the Future Forest project, said: "The forest area has reduced by half in our region. The impacts of climate change can be seen in increased wind and rains. I sometimes think that this area will be turned into a desert and it might not be able to support human life soon. Giving us these new skills will change our lives and the environment."

In April, Ambassador Teferi met with the CEO of Tree Aid, Mr. Tom Skirrow. Discussions between the two focused on Climate Change, Ethiopia's Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy, and the Green Legacy Initiative, all of which align with Tree Aid's mission of fighting poverty and the effects of the climate crisis.



Ambassador Teferi highlighted Ethiopia's bold leadership in climate action: As part of the flagship Green Legacy Initiative, for example, Ethiopia will plant 20 billion trees in 4 years (6 billion in 2021) to curb the effects of climate change and deforestation.

Appreciating Tree Aid's efforts so far, the Ambassador called upon them to scale up its support to the region and vowed to work with them going forward to enhance their projects in Ethiopia.

For more information about Tree Aid's Future Forest Appeal, visit <http://treeaid.org/futureforest>.

**SAVE
METEMA
FOREST**

**FUTURE FOREST
appeal**

[www.treeaid.org/futureforest](http://treeaid.org/futureforest)

TREE AID Matching your donations with **UKaid**



Circus Abyssinia to showcase the life of Olympic Legend Derartu Tulu thanks to UK Government's Culture Recovery Fund



Circus Abyssinia was among the recipients of funding from the UK Government's Culture Recovery Fund that aims to help cultural organisations recover from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This much-needed funding will allow Circus Abyssinia to continue promoting Ethiopian culture, music, costumes, and stand-out circus skills across the UK. The funding will also be used towards the launch of their new show, 'Tulu', in the UK this summer, and create safe and accessible environments for their artists and audiences.

Circus Abyssinia: Tulu celebrates Ethiopian icon and Olympic legend, Derartu Tulu, who is Africa's first female Olympic gold medallist. Circus Abyssinia hopes to bring her story to life through all elements of the show, from the choreography to the costumes, which invoke myths and figures from Ethiopian history, interweaving Tulu's Olympic triumph with tales from Ethiopia's long record of strong female leaders and warriors.

For this production, Circus Abyssinia will work with some incredibly talented Ethiopian artists (based in both Ethiopia and the UK), and because of the Culture Recovery Fund, they will also be able to accompany some of their performances with community outreach activities, where they will engage with young people across the UK by holding workshops and masterclasses in Ethiopian circus and music. After certain performances, they will also invite audiences to share in some Ethiopian traditions, such as coffee ceremonies.

Speaking exclusively to the Embassy, Bichu Shimellis, director of the show and co-founder of Circus Abyssinia, said: "We are beyond thrilled and so grateful to have been awarded this grant from the Culture Recovery Fund. It's a lifeline to us at this difficult time and will enable us to share the thrilling story of 'Tulu' and the richness of Ethiopian culture with UK audiences this summer."

Circus Abyssinia: Tulu will debut at the Brighton Fringe, England's largest arts festival, with performances from 21st June until 4 July. For further information, visit www.brightonfringe.org.



The Ambassador's Diary

A brief summary of some of the Ambassador's engagements with UK stakeholders

As part of his ongoing engagements with key British media, on **4th May**, Ambassador Teferi met with the Financial Times' Africa Editor, David Pilling.



The two exchanged views on issues of mutual interest including the current situation in Ethiopia, the ongoing political and economic reforms, the upcoming Elections, the situation in Tigray, and the status of the GERD trilateral negotiations.

On **16th April**, the Ambassador chaired a webinar to discuss the current status of the tripartite talks and the remaining challenges in reaching a win-win solution on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Demeke Mekonnen Hassen, delivered a keynote address reaffirming Ethiopia's position for a win-win outcome within the framework of the ongoing African Union-led process.

We also heard from two members of the GERD's Negotiating team, Professor Yilma Seleshi, and Ms.

Lemlem Fesseha, who highlighted the latest developments in the tripartite talks between Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan.

Organised by the Embassy in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ethiopian missions in Europe, more than 200 participants, including Ethiopian Ambassadors and diplomats in Europe, members of the media, academia, Ethiopians, and friends of Ethiopia attended the webinar.

The full recording is available on our Facebook page at <https://fb.watch/5PWUQQQMG/>.

In March and April, the Ambassador met with various Ambassadors and High Commissioners as part of his introductory courtesy calls.

He met with India's High Commissioner to the UK, H.E. Gaitri Issar Kumar, the Russian Ambassador to the UK, H.E. Andrei Kelin, and the High Commissioner of St Kitts and Nevis, H.E. Dr. Kevin Isaac.



Ambassador Teferi with Indian High Commissioner H.E. Gaitri Issar Kumar

Discussions with the Ambassadors and High Commissioners focused on strengthening the long-standing bilateral relations between Ethiopia and the aforementioned countries and continuous engagements on diplomatic issues here in the UK.

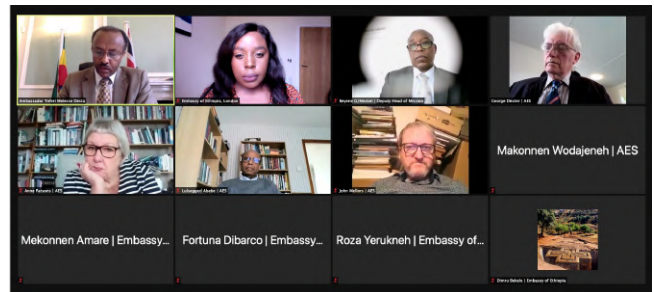
On **25th March**, Ambassador Teferi had an introductory courtesy call with Lord Paul Boateng, where they discussed various issues of mutual interest concerning Ethiopia and Africa in general.

Ambassador Teferi gave Lord Boateng a detailed briefing where he outlined the current situation in Tigray and the humanitarian assistance underway, the upcoming elections, the GERD, and the Ethio-Sudan border issue.



Declaring his long and unconditional friendship with Ethiopia, Lord Boateng on his part vowed to work with the Ambassador and the Embassy to engage members of the UK Parliament on important issues that affect Ethiopia and Africa, such as climate change and the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement.

On **18th March**, the Ambassador held an introductory meeting with the Trustees of The Anglo-Ethiopian Society.



Founded in 1948, the Society aims to foster public education and knowledge about Ethiopia, including its history, culture, art and architecture, natural history, and economy. They do this by organising free regular lectures by specialists and experts, publishing a regular newsletter, among others.

On the occasion, Ambassador Teferi briefed the Trustees on the current political, social and economic situation in Ethiopia, including the

situation in Tigray, the GERD, and the upcoming elections.

Both parties exchanged views on ways the Embassy and the Society can collaborate sustainably going forward and vowed to work closely together to further enhance Ethio-UK relations.

On **6th March**, Ambassador Teferi held a courtesy call with the Chair of The Elders, Mary Robinson, to discuss various issues concerning Ethiopia including the current situation in Tigray, refugees, the upcoming elections, Ethio-Sudan border issue, and the GERD.



Following a constructive dialogue on the aforementioned issues where the Ambassador provided a detailed briefing on recent developments and addressed some of the concerns that Ms. Robinson raised, the two agreed to work collaboratively going forward.

On 3rd March, the Ambassador held a virtual meeting with Fighting Blindness in Ethiopia (FBIE), is a non-profit charity established to promote the cure of eye diseases in Ethiopia, such as Trachoma, especially among the rural population.



Every year, the charity's team of volunteer medics travel to Ethiopia to provide eye surgeries and have so far restored sight to thousands in various parts of the country.

Appreciating their efforts, Ambassador Teferi assured the Charity of the Embassy's support and commitment to their future initiatives.

On **24th February**, the Ambassador held discussions with the UK's Minister for Africa at the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office, James Duddridge MP.



The two exchanged views on issues of mutual interest including the current situation in Ethiopia, the ongoing political and economic reform agenda, and the current status of the trilateral negotiations on the GERD.

With regards to the situation in Tigray, Ambassador Teferi briefed Mr. Duddridge on the government's efforts to grant humanitarian and international media access to the region, the need to combat disinformation campaigns, the importance of focusing on diligence to end the impunity in Tigray, and the way forward.

On the occasion, Ambassador Teferi assured Mr Duddridge that human rights violations will be thoroughly investigated and that perpetrators will be brought to justice.

For regular updates from the Ambassador, follow him on social media – Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram – using the handle @EthioAmbUK.

LOCAL NEWS

Ethiopia Decides: The countdown to Ethiopia's 6th National Elections begins

...new date announced

The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) announced that the upcoming sixth national elections will be held on 21st June 2021. This follows a decision to postpone the elections, which were scheduled to take place on 6th June 2021, by two to three weeks, due to logistical reasons.

The board also passed the decision to hold the poll in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa City Administrations on the same day with the national election schedule.

...36 million Ethiopians register to vote

The news comes in as NEBE announced that more than 36 million Ethiopians have registered for the highly-anticipated elections, accounting for 78.3% of the expected number of voters.

The voter registration process, which was extended in some regions due to security concerns and other issues, concluded on 14th May.

...free and fair elections

The government of Ethiopia remains committed to holding free and fair elections than in previous years, setting the foundation for future elections. The upcoming elections will arguably be Ethiopia's first free and fair elections.

Since 2018, the current administration has embarked on a path of democratisation with a commitment to widening the political space and enabling a conducive environment for democratic and informed discourse.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has been convening Regional Presidents and the leadership of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) over the past few weeks to review progress and provide direction on addressing bottlenecks such as voter registration, polling station setup, and transportation of polling materials to each constituency.

In ensuring that the elections are peaceful, the Government organised the deployment of security forces at each polling station to complement regional electoral police in their work to ensure peace and security.

The Government of Ethiopia continues to be committed to holding democratic and peaceful elections and has shown goodwill in creating an enabling environment, within its capacity, for international election observers. In addition to domestic observers, international observer groups from the African Union, United States, European Union, and Russian Federation, as well as diplomatic staff from embassies located in Ethiopia, are set to observe the upcoming polls.

Ultimately, the Ethiopian people are the primary observers in ensuring legitimacy and whose commitment to peace and democracy is sought.

“In this election, vote for whoever you desire but put peace at the forefront. In this election, vote for whoever you desire but ensure that you have created a level playing field. There should not be any force that is unwanted or pushed away. We have a heartfelt desire for all those who believe they can serve Ethiopia to have a fair chance. It is only when this happens that Ethiopia will be a winner.”

– Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed

TPLF and Shene designated as terrorist organisations

The Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) and Shene (Oromo Liberation Army) have been categorised as terrorist organisations.

In a statement released on 1st May by the Office of the Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers said the two organisations are responsible for attacks carried out in various parts of the country.

“In the last three years, there have been a number of attacks on civilians in various parts of the country to reverse the reforms that have taken place through the demands and struggles of the Ethiopian people for democracy and human rights. As a result, many lives have been lost and maimed, citizens have been displaced and properties were destroyed. These attacks have left society in constant anticipation of danger and tear, undermine trust in the government and among the people. Various evidence point to the existential threat faced by the state as a result of these organized actions.

“These attacks have been perpetrated against innocent civilians and through the destruction of public infrastructure for political purposes and to achieve political goals or objectives. These attacks, which have been taking place in different parts of the country, have had different perpetrators. But behind the attacks are groups that have played a leading role in orchestrating, funding, providing ideas, training culprits, providing media coverage and assistance. It is also clear that these groups are being exploited by foreign forces seeking to weaken, disrupt and dismantle Ethiopia.”

“The crimes that these entities have committed and perpetrated are acts of terrorism. It is easy to see that these activities fully comply with the definition of terrorism under Article 3 of Proclamation No. 1176/2020 on the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism Crimes. Instead of individually holding accountable members and supporters of these organizations for their terrorist activities, designating the organizations as terrorist organizations according to the law is deemed more practical to better control and prevent acts of terrorism.”

On 5th May, the House of Peoples Representatives, in its 13th regular session, unanimously approved the resolution passed by the Council of Ministers to designate Shene and TPLF as terrorist organizations.

Ethiopia readies for 2021 Green Legacy tree-planting season



On 18th May, Prime Minister Abiy launched the 2021 edition of the Green Legacy Initiative, a tree-planting campaign aimed at curbing the effects of climate change and deforestation. During the upcoming rainy season, Ethiopia plans on planting 6 billion seedlings.

Launching the campaign in a meeting hall filled with freshly-watered seedlings, Prime Minister Abiy said this year's tree-planting drive will take place under the theme, "Let's Adorn Ethiopia".

"Preventing flooding, food insecurity, environment-related conflicts, and other adverse effects is in our hands," the Prime Minister said.

"When I call upon all Ethiopians to "Adorn Ethiopia" the call is to cover our nation Green; to see beyond lines of division - regional, ethnic, religious, sex - and in unity dress Ethiopia with the prosperity and dignity the people of this great nation deserve."

Discussions held during the launching ceremony focused on restoring the country's green cover, eliminating erosion and pollution, reducing conflicts arising due to environmental degradation and reduction of natural resources, and measures to support Ethiopia's agricultural sector and economy.

As part of the launching week, the Prime Minister's office also briefed members of the diplomatic community and investors on the Initiative, highlighting achievements registered during the previous planting sessions and future activities.

Ethiopia has taken bold leadership in climate action. As part of the Green Legacy Initiative, which was launched in 2019, 20 billion trees will be planted across the country over four years. So far, 4 billion seedlings were planted in 2019, including the infamous record-breaking 353 million seedlings in one day, while in 2020, 5 billion seedlings were planted. In 2021, 6 billion trees will be planted.

This year, the campaign is also going regional - an additional 1 billion seedlings will be sent to neighbouring countries to start a regional effort towards a green Africa.

Blockchain technology implemented in Ethiopia's education system



A new partnership between the Government of Ethiopia and the global blockchain research and development company, Cardano (IOHK), will see the implementation of a national, blockchain-based student and teacher ID and attainment recording system to digitally verify grades, remotely monitor school performance, and boost education and employment nationwide.

This new partnership will enable authorities in Ethiopia to create tamper-proof records of educational performance across 3,500 schools and 750,000 teachers to pinpoint the locations and causes of educational under-achievement and allocate educational resources effectively.

Rolling out to 5 million students, this partnership is the world's largest blockchain deployment, according to Cardano, and will provide all students with blockchain-verified digital qualifications to reduce fraudulent university and job applications, and increase social mobility by allowing employers to verify all applicants' grades without third-party agencies.

The blockchain-based national identity system is at the heart of Digital Ethiopia 2025 – Ethiopia's Digital Transformation strategy, which seeks to drive the country's transformation through the digitalization of sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism.

The Ethiopian government will provide five million teachers and students with tablets and a dedicated internet network, giving all students instant access to their academic records. This will open up higher education and employment opportunities for 80% of Ethiopia's population living in rural regions. Student IDs will be paired with data from Learning Management Systems and harnessed by machine learning algorithms to drive personalized tuition, a dynamic curriculum, and data-driven policies and funding.

Welcoming the announcement, Education Minister Getahun Mekuriya, said the project would make Ethiopia's education provision more dynamic.

"Ethiopia's Sheba Valley is already recognised as the leading AI hub in Africa, 70 percent of our university graduates are in STEM subjects and we are now leading the way in using blockchain to digitalise education," he said.

"This forms a key plank of our National Digital Transformation Strategy and will underpin a uniquely transparent, data-driven education system based on a dynamic curriculum.

"We believe blockchain offers a key opportunity to end digital exclusion and widen access to higher education and employment."

National Health Extension Program Optimization Roadmap launched

A national Health Extension Program (HEP) Optimization Roadmap was launched in March to accelerate the realisation of Universal Health Coverage through access to essential health services, including prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care.

The \$12.6 billion 15-year roadmap aims to ensure equitable access to essential health services, improve the quality of health services and strengthen community engagement and empowerment.

Launching the roadmap, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen said the previous health extension program had registered encouraging results over the past years, adding that the new roadmap will play a vital role in transforming the health sector, and ascertain the aspired inclusive nationwide social transformation and prosperity.

Health Minister Dr. Lia Tadesse said HEP has proven to be an effective intervention by serving as the largest component of Ethiopia's health care delivery system over the last 15 years, adding that changes in demography, epidemiology, socio-economic factors, community demand, and global and national priorities necessitated transforming the Program.

Data shows that there are currently 17,550 health posts and 39,878 health extension workers across the country, whereby 1 health extension worker is responsible for 500 households on average.

IGAD inaugurates regional Cancer Centre of Excellence

On 19th April, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) officially inaugurated its Regional Cancer Centre of Excellence at a ceremony presided over by the IGAD Executive Secretary, Ambassadors of the IGAD member states, senior Government officials, and development partners.



This state-of-the-art centre is estimated to cost \$500 million and is expected to be a key contributor to the global fight against cancer.

Upon completion, the centre will provide accessible world-class quality cancer care services including diagnosis, treatment, and research. The primary objective of the Centre is aimed at dealing with the growing cancer-induced healthcare challenge being experienced in the region and train skilful and competent professionals in the prevention and treatment of cancer.

The 200,000-metre square land where the Centre will be housed was donated by the Government of Ethiopia.

8 million people to benefit from fifth Safety-Net Program

Ethiopia has launched its 5th Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), which is aimed at reducing poverty and improving livelihoods of poor and vulnerable households. The program targets 8 million people.

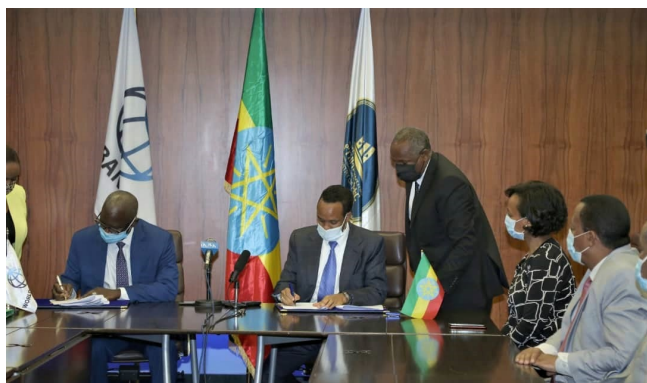
In his opening remarks during the launching of the Program, Finance Minister Ahmed Shide affirmed Ethiopia's commitment to continue working to ensure the recent gains in poverty reductions are supported with expanded jobs creation.

This, he said, will be achieved as Ethiopia makes use of its investments in sectors such as infrastructure and education and transitions into a private sector-led growth.

During the project launching ceremony which was attended by a number of senior government officials, donors of the project and leading technical experts in the field, the minister also expressed his appreciation for seeing more enhanced service delivery design in the project to improve the well-being of poor and vulnerable households, particularly in drought-prone communities.

Ethiopia, World Bank sign \$907 million financing agreement

The Ministry of Finance and World Bank signed a \$907 million financing agreement geared towards improving access to financing to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the fight against COVID-19, and increasing access to electricity.



Finance Minister, Ahmed Shide (right) and World Bank's Country Director, Ousmane Dione, sign the agreement

Of the total, \$200 million will go towards small and medium businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to ease their financing challenges, enable business continuity and job protection.

\$207 million will support the government's efforts to curb the virus and will be used for the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines.

The remaining \$500 million will be invested in efforts to increase access to electricity.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister of Finance, Ahmed Shide said, "Access to distributed electricity and lighting with \$500 million loan financing aims to increase access to new and improved electricity services for households and smallholder farmers, etc. through on-grid, off-grid, and mini-grid solutions by leveraging public and private delivery modalities."

World Bank's Country Director for Ethiopia, Ousmane Dione said on his part that the project represents the World Bank's continued support to Ethiopia's national electrification program and is aligned with the World Bank's commitment to supporting Ethiopia's resilient recovery from COVID-19.

Ethiopian Muslims unite to host largest iftar gathering

On 11th May, thousands of Ethiopian Muslims gathered at Meskel Square in Addis Ababa to host an evening iftar meal.



The gathering, which was the first of its kind in Addis Ababa, was the largest ever in Ethiopia and might even have broken the world record. According to organisers and local reports, 30,000 metres of plastic sheet was laid on a 5-km stretch, from Mexico Square to Bambi supermarket area, to host 100,000 people to break the fast.

Islamic Affairs Supreme Council President Mufti Haji Umer Idris, City Deputy Mayor Jantrar Abay along with church leaders also graced the event.



The gathering was also organised to show unity and solidarity to the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Attendees waved Ethiopian flags with banners with the slogan "It's My Dam".

TIGRAY SITUATION UPDATE

HIGHLIGHTS

- In the second round of humanitarian assistance, food and non-food items have been delivered for 2.7 million beneficiaries.
- Emergency shelters and NFI kits are estimated at more than 437.86 million birr supplied for an estimated 245,586 IDPs. With partners covering roughly 33% of the total requirement, a significant gap exists in non-food items supplies.
- More than 192 staff members of UN-Agencies, international NGO's including international media have been provided access.
- UNHCR continues to provide protection and critical services in Mai-Aini and Adi-Harush camps. As of 25 April, nearly 8,100 refugees from the now-closed Hitsats and Shimelba camps had relocated to the two camps and received food and vital non-food aid items. 63,100 Ethiopian refugees have been recorded crossing into East Sudan as of 30 April.
- A delegation of 40 resident Ambassadors visited the Tigray region in March where they were briefed by members of the Region's Interim Administration.
- The Ministry of Health has been working to operationalize health facilities in the region with the provision of emergency supplies. Up to 60 mobile health teams have been established thus far. COVID-19 screening started in health facilities in Mekelle

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Read the latest statements on our website at www.ethioembassy.org.uk

Dr. Abrham Belay appointed CEO of Tigray Interim Administration

Dr. Abrham Belay has been appointed as Chief Executive of the Interim Administration of Tigray Regional State.

Dr. Abrham is the current President of the Tigray Prosperity Party as well as the Minister of Innovation and Technology. Dr. Mulu Nega who previously held the post since November 2020, has been appointed State Minister of Science and Higher Education.



Their appointments take effect as of 6th May.

MFA and Embassy statements on various issues covering Tigray

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy have been issuing statements to major British news outlets covering various issues. Excerpts of the statements follow:

...on the alleged use of “chemical weapons” in Tigray

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted the report published on 23rd May in the Telegraph by Will Brown, about the alleged use of “chemical weapons” in the Tigray region.

He said, “...civilians in northern Ethiopia have suffered horrific burns consistent with the use of white phosphorus, a potential war crime.”

In this connection, the Ministry would like to categorically reject this allegation. Ethiopia has not employed and will never use such banned munitions because it takes its international obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention extremely seriously. As a victim of chemical weapons attack itself, Ethiopia also condemns in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons by anyone anywhere.

The Ministry had already forewarned the international community about the publication of the malicious and irresponsible report, which does not serve any purpose other than fuelling further tension. It cannot be seen any different from the ongoing effort to ratchet up pressure against the Ethiopian government.

...On allegations of “starvation as a weapon of war” and the humanitarian situation

The Embassy rejects the unsubstantiated allegations that the Government of Ethiopia is “starving the people of Tigray” and is using “starvation as a weapon of war”. The facts on the ground are entirely detached from the situation painted in the media, which deliberately ignores the fact that TPLF callously started the brutal attack on the Northern Command of the Ethiopian Defense Forces, just before the harvest season.

It should be made clear that 1.8 million people in Tigray were already living on safety net programmes over the last two decades. Furthermore, recent events such as the locust infestation, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the TPLF’s warmongering have exacerbated the food security situation in the Region.

The Government of Ethiopia acknowledges that though there have been significant challenges brought on by the TPLF’s armed insurrection in November, it remains fully committed to rehabilitating the region by prioritising the provision of humanitarian relief. In doing so, the Government has so far made concerted efforts to comprehensively respond to the humanitarian needs on the ground by delivering life-saving food supplies to over 4.2 million citizens in Tigray, in coordination with local and international partners.

While several organisations are now scaling up their response to the humanitarian situation, the Government of Ethiopia is still covering 70% of the costs of the ongoing relief operations from its limited resources, while the remaining 30% is being covered by development partners and NGOs.

The Embassy therefore calls upon the international community and development partners to support Ethiopia, at this critical time, by helping augment the Government’s lifesaving efforts.

...On allegations of rape and sexual violence

The Embassy remains deeply concerned by serious allegations of the use of “rape as an instrument of war” in Tigray and condemns, in the strongest terms, any acts of sexual violence.

The Government maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards rape and sexual violence, which constitute grave violations of human rights, and is treating these allegations with the utmost seriousness.

We would like to reassure Ethiopians, the international community, and development partners, that the Government of Ethiopia is committed to enabling a stable and peaceful country in which the rights of women and girls are protected, and the rule of law is ensured.

Any serious violations committed against citizens will be thoroughly investigated, and the Government will spare no effort in bringing the perpetrators of crimes against humanity and crimes against the State to justice.

The outcome of the investigations into these crimes will also enable them to provide redress to the victims, and comprehensively address alleged human rights violations and crimes that have occurred in Tigray.

...on allegations of “genocide” and “ethnic cleansing”

The Embassy rejects, in the strongest terms, dangerous allegations of an ongoing “campaign of genocide” and “ethnic cleansing” in the Tigray Region. Such unsubstantiated allegations neither secure justice for the victims of these alleged crimes nor do they ensure accountability from perpetrators.

The Embassy would like to reassure Ethiopians at home and abroad, its partners, and the wider international community that the Government of Ethiopia remains committed to investigating these very serious allegations and has made its position unequivocally clear concerning human rights violations. No person, including serving soldiers, is above the law.

In line with its responsibility to uphold the rule of law and bring perpetrators to justice, special taskforces comprised of representatives from the Office of the Attorney General and the Federal Police Commission have been deployed to Tigray to carry out investigations aimed at establishing the facts. Furthermore, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, an independent body, has also been investigating massacres in the Region, including the well-documented Mai Kadra massacre.

The outcome of these investigations will enable the Government to bring the perpetrators to justice and comprehensively address alleged human rights violations and crimes that have occurred in Tigray.

EHRC and UN to jointly investigate alleged human rights violations

The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) have agreed to conduct joint investigations into alleged serious human rights violations and abuses, committed by all parties in the context of the Tigray conflict, as part of the much-needed accountability process for the victims.

The EHRC and OHCHR have been monitoring closely the human rights situation since the start of the conflict on 4th November 2020. Both organisations remain concerned about the reports of serious human rights violations and abuses and the devastating impact of the conflict on the civilian population. With multiple actors involved in the conflict and the gravity of the reported violations, an objective, independent investigation is urgently required.

The agreement to collaborate in a joint investigation is the result of an ongoing partnership and engagement between the two organisations, founded on shared objectives to advance and strengthen respect and protection of human rights as well as accountability for violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law committed by all parties in the context of the Tigray conflict. Such investigations are within the existing mandate of both organizations. The deployment will start as soon as possible for an initial period of three months.

PM Abiy calls upon all sections of society to contribute to #RebuildTigray

In February, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the regional presidents and city administrators launched a solidarity initiative for the Tigray regional state interim administration and the people of the region.



The solidarity initiative aims at mobilising the contribution of regions and federal institutions as well as other stakeholders in supporting humanitarian efforts underway in the region.

In addition to food and non-food items to be directed to the people of Tigray by way of the interim administration, the regional presidents also pledged direct support to strengthen the interim administration carry out its public service delivery duties.

Vehicles, various equipment, input seeds for farmers, ambulances, medicine, and monetary support have been pledged by each region and were handed over to the interim administration.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed further called upon all sections of society to make whatever contributions they could towards the #RebuildTigray solidarity initiative.

Kicking things off, the Prime Minister donated his one-month salary, 200,000 birr from the sale of the *Medemer* book, and three water tanker trucks through the Office of the Prime Minister.

PM Abiy meets with WFP Director

On 4th March, Prime Minister Abiy met with the World Food Programme Director, David Beasley, where he appreciated Mr. Beasley and WFP's for the constructive engagement and tangible support in addressing humanitarian needs in Ethiopia.



“The work of WFP in the country is commendable and needs to be augmented,” the Prime Minister said.

In a Twitter post, Mr. Beasley said: “Great meeting. Thank you, PM Abiy Ahmed! WFP is a long-time friend of the Ethiopian people. We are rapidly scaling up our support in Tigray to make sure every woman, man, girl and boy has the food they need, but we need \$107M to do it. Now. Time is of the essence.”

...WFP appeals for \$107 million to tackle food security and nutrition in Tigray

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is appealing urgently for \$107 million for its emergency response in Ethiopia's Tigray Region to buy and deliver food for 1 million people and provide specialized nutrition support for 875,000 children and pregnant or nursing mothers after months of insecurity.

WFP's response was requested by the Government of Ethiopia and includes logistical support to both the Government and humanitarian partners to deliver humanitarian assistance in Tigray, especially in rural areas.

WFP is coordinating its relief food response closely with the government's National Disaster Risk

Management Commission and the Non-Governmental Organizations in Tigray that are also providing relief food assistance.

If sufficient funding is secured, WFP will also augment the transportation capacity of both the government and partners to deliver additional humanitarian assistance to those in need in Tigray, especially in rural areas.

UN releases \$40 million for humanitarian response

On 6th May, the United Nations announced that it has released \$65 million for the humanitarian response in Ethiopia.

Of the total, \$40 million will be dedicated to the aid operation in Tigray, where it will fund emergency shelter, clean water, health care, work to prevent and respond to cases of sexual and gender-based violence, and emergency telecommunications to support the humanitarian response.

The remaining \$25 million will fund humanitarian operations in the rest of Ethiopia, including in response to drought in the Somali and Oromia regions.

Education Cannot Wait announces \$1 million grant for children and youth

Education Cannot Wait (ECW) announced a \$1 million emergency education grant financing that will benefit 20,000 children and youth impacted by the crisis in Tigray.

The 12-month grant will be implemented by UNICEF in collaboration with Ethiopia's Ministry of Education, Save the Children, and local civil society, and responds to the risks posed by displacement, violence, COVID-19, and other factors that are pushing families from their homes and children out of school.

The new investment targets 2,000 pre-primary, 12,000 primary, and 6,000 secondary school learners, as well as 250 teaching personnel. Overall, 52 percent of beneficiaries are girls and 10 percent are children with disabilities.



“The Education Cannot Wait investment in the future of our children in Tigray is welcomed as we work to bring children back to school,” said H.E. Getahun Mekuria, Ethiopia’s Minister of Education.

“The Ethiopian Government has already invested more than \$3 million for the rehabilitation of school infrastructures that have been damaged since 4th November 2020. Education must be protected in all its forms to enable children to learn in a safe and protective environment since it is an important means of promoting tolerance and conflict resolution. The additional financing by ECW is a great addition for the restoration of schools in the region.”

The investment will improve equitable access to learning opportunities in a safe, protective, and gender-sensitive environment, increase school and community engagement, build and rehabilitate temporary learning spaces, train teachers to address the unique psychosocial needs of girls and boys displaced by violence, and strengthen education services and coordination across the multiple agencies and partners responding to this crisis. Teachers and students will also benefit from improved access to water and sanitation facilities to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Deputy PM Demeke Mekonnen addresses Human Rights Council

On 24th February, H.E. Mr. Demeke Mekonnen Hassen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia addressed the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council.



DPM Demeke assured the Council that the Government of Ethiopia is committed to facilitating unhindered access to humanitarian assistance to Tigray, and is working closely with all relevant agencies to address the humanitarian needs of the people of Tigray, including refugees.

Allegations of human rights violations, including sexual violence, will also be investigated ensuring full accountability of all perpetrators, the Deputy PM said.

“Despite the complicated challenges and setbacks, hopes remain high of our reform agenda and we are determined to pursue it with all the necessary vigour and commitment. We will continue to work tirelessly to fulfil the promise of a democratic and pluralistic political order based on the rule of law, respect for human rights for all. [Thank you] for all your support so far and [I call] for your continued support and understanding as we strive to build a peaceful, democratic, inclusive, pluralist, and prosperous Ethiopia.”

To read the full statement, visit our website at <https://bit.ly/DPMDemeke-UNHRC-Feb2021>.

Eritrea to withdraw forces from Tigray

During a visit to Asmara in March, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in his discussions with President Isaias Afwerki said that the Government of Eritrea has agreed to withdraw its forces out of the Ethiopian border.



It is to be recalled that, on 4th November 2020 the TPLF criminal clique treasonously attacked the Northern Command of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) in a foiled plan to seize power by destabilising the nation.

Attacking the Northern Command where the nation's largest weapons depot was stationed and mercilessly killing and kidnapping members of the ENDF drew the federal government into a military engagement it has been provoked into.

Following the attack on the Northern Command, the TPLF fired rockets into Bahir Dar and Gondar cities. Similarly, they fired rockets into Asmara, Eritrea, thereby provoking the Eritrean government to cross Ethiopian borders and prevent further attacks and maintain its national security.

Announcing the withdrawal of Eritrean Forces, the Prime Minister further added that the Ethiopian National Defense Force will take over guarding the border areas effective immediately.

"Ethiopia and Eritrea will continue strengthening their bilateral relations and economic cooperation ambitions," the Prime Minister said in a statement.

"We will continue building on the spirit of trust and good neighbourliness between our two countries as embarked upon in 2018. In particular, restoring trust-based people-to-people relations among our citizens in the Tigray region and fellow Eritreans across the border is essential."

British Embassy Team Visits Tigray

A joint humanitarian and political team from the British Embassy in Addis Ababa visited Tigray in March.

The team, led by Christian Rogg, Head UKAid in Ethiopia, met with the former Chief Executive of the interim administration of the Tigray Regional State Dr. Mulu Nega. They also met the mayor of Mekelle city, humanitarian agencies, and people affected in connection with the law enforcement operation.



In a Twitter post, Mr Rogg said, "UKAid has provided £11.4m in humanitarian support for Tigray. In Mekelle today, I saw how our partner UNICEF Ethiopia supports displaced people with water and hygiene. Very touching to hear how the transitional government and the people of Mekelle help those who fled there."

...Resident Ambassadors and Diplomats visit Mekelle

On 10th March, 40 resident Ambassadors and diplomats in Addis Ababa visited Mekelle city. Former Chief Executive of the Interim Administration of Tigray, Dr. Mulu Nega, and colleagues briefed the Ambassadors on the current situation in Tigray, particularly on the rehabilitation and rebuilding efforts as well as security issues in the region.

In this regard, challenges and results achieved in rebuilding damaged infrastructures, reopening public service institutions, rehabilitating IDPs, and delivering humanitarian supports were discussed in detail.

Aid agencies and the international community are requested to provide all the necessary humanitarian support using the unfettered access granted to them by the federal government.

ETHIOPIA COVID-19 SITUATION UPDATE

...cases pass 270,000

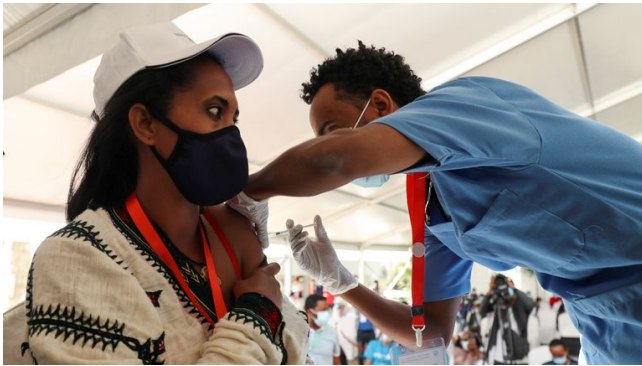
As of 1st June, Ethiopia has registered 271,790 COVID-19 cases with 239,475 recoveries and 4,171 fatalities. So far, 2,728,559 lab tests have been conducted.

The number of people with COVID-19-related health complications admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and the number of COVID-19-related deaths has significantly increased since February; community transmission is also very high.

As per the trend since the beginning of the pandemic, the majority of reported cases (80 percent) are in Addis Ababa and Oromia Region.

Ethiopia is the fifth-highest case country in Africa after South Africa, Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt.

...Ethiopia receives COVID-19 Vaccines; begins rollout



On 7th March, Ethiopia received its first shipment of 2.2 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccines produced by the Serum Institute of India (SII) via the COVAX facility.

On the occasion, Health Minister, Dr. Lia Tadesse, expressed the Ethiopian Government's appreciation of the COVAX Facility, vaccine manufacturers, and global development partners. "What seemed unattainable a few months ago is now in our hands and, with it, the assurance of protecting our people, and hope that we can beat the pandemic through cascaded and equitable vaccination of the population alongside other public

health measures," she said. "Ethiopia is proud to have contributed to this global effort representing the African Region."

Subsequent shipments of 5.4 million doses as part of the current global deployment plan by COVAX are expected to arrive soon.

Ethiopia also received the first batch of 300,000 vaccines donated by China on 30th March. The vaccine doses, from China's state-backed China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm), were the first shots Ethiopia has secured outside the global COVAX vaccine-sharing initiative.

In related news, Johnson & Johnson said it will supply up to 400 million doses of its COVID-19 vaccine to the African Union (AU) from the third quarter of 2021.

...more than 1.8 million vaccinated

On 13th March, Ethiopia launched a nationwide COVID-19 vaccination campaign at the Eka Kotebe hospital in the presence of senior government officials and representatives of the UN and other regional and international organizations.

Frontline health workers, support staff, and other targeted groups with high risks and underlying health conditions were among the first beneficiaries of the vaccine.

Dr. Tenaye Desalegn, who was the first person to receive the vaccine at the national launch said, "I have been working at Eka Kotebe Hospital for 10 months now caring for COVID-19 patients, always anxious, always worrying that I might myself one day contract the disease." She added, "I am grateful for the opportunity to get vaccinated. I can now treat my patients with better assurance of my own safety as I continue to employ all prevention measures."

The vaccination campaign was also launched in all regions in simultaneous high-level events. Minister of Health, Dr. Lia Tadesse, launched the vaccination drive in Mekelle City, Tigray Regional State, where vaccination is also currently taking place.

As of 1st June, 1,822,343 million people have received the vaccine with the government aiming to vaccinate 20% of the population by the end of 2021.

...second COVID-19 vaccine to be rolled out soon

According to the Ministry of Health, preparations are currently underway for Ethiopia to launch the second round of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccination campaign in the coming months.

As COVID-19 in Ethiopia is steadily on the rise triggering calls for more robust measures to curb the spread of the virus.

Following the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Ethiopia in March 2020, the Government has implemented several public health measures and protocols to prevent increased levels of infection.

Health State Minister, Saharala Abdullahi said, "It is expected that 5.5 million doses of vaccine will be received from donor countries."

Ethiopia expects to import 20 million vaccines up by November 2021.

...Refugees included in the national vaccination campaign

Since 5th April, refugees across all camps in Ethiopia have been receiving the COVID-19 jab.

According to the Ethiopia Agency for Refugees and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), the vaccination started in refugee camps in Gambella Region.

In a press statement, ARRA said, "As part of its longstanding tradition of kindness to those who are in dire need, Ethiopia has begun vaccinating Refugees and front-line health professionals in the refugee program."

The COVID-19 vaccine rollout to refugees is being done in collaboration with various stakeholders including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Ethiopia Public Health Institute (EPHI).

Ethiopia is working to provide refugees with equitable access to Covid-19 vaccination with the

limited resource it is receiving from the international community, according to the agency.

ARRA called upon the international community to continue support to Ethiopia in addressing refugees in need with COVID-19 vaccines.

Ethiopia is home to 801,349 registered refugees and asylum seekers as of March 2021.

...Ethiopian Airlines vaccinates employees

As part of efforts to protect its customers, staff, and partners, Ethiopian Airlines has also started vaccinating its employees against COVID-19 as of 14th May in its temporarily-opened vaccination centre at the Ethiopian Aviation Academy.



The Ethiopian Medical Centre, which is equipped with the latest facilities to provide the service, will see front-line employees with direct contact with customers and partners get priority for the vaccine. All employees are set to get the second dose of the vaccine four weeks after they take their first dose.

Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO, Mr. Tewelde GebreMariam, said, "Safety is always our top priority, and vaccination of our employees will enhance the safety of our colleagues and customers on board and on the ground. Vaccination of employees will increase passengers' confidence to fly with us. We will continue to implement all mandated safety measures and the vaccination will supplement those preventive measures. This is a big milestone in our fight against the pandemic and we hope to welcome our passengers with fully vaccinated employees in flight and on the ground."

...Ethiopian Airlines partners with UNICEF for global COVID-19 vaccine distribution

Ethiopian Airlines has partnered with UNICEF for the global distribution of vaccines and other life-saving supplies. As per the agreement, Ethiopian will support the prioritisation of the delivery of COVID-19 vaccines, essential medicines, medical devices, and other critical supplies to respond to the pandemic.

The UNICEF *Humanitarian Airfreight Initiative* was launched on 16th February 2021 with over 10 leading global airlines covering routes to over 100 countries, in support of the COVAX Facility – a global solution to the COVID-19 pandemic, that ensures participating countries have fair access to vaccines regardless of their income level. Under COVAX, UNICEF is leading the procurement and delivery of quality-assured COVID-19 vaccines for low-income and lower-middle-income countries.

Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services, the cargo unit of Ethiopian Airlines Group, has been instrumental in facilitating the flow of medical supplies, including PPE, across the globe in support of the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. Its state-of-the-art cargo terminal in Addis Ababa is the largest in Africa with an annual capacity of around one million tons and compartmentalised temperature-controlled cold storage facilities.

Ethiopian Airlines has so far transported more than 27 million vaccines to over 24 countries.

...high-end COVID-19 testing lab launched at Bole Airport

Ethiopian Airlines has joined hands with BGI Health Ethiopia, a subsidiary of China's biotech giant, the BGI Genomics Co., Ltd, to launch a high-end COVID-19 testing laboratory at its main hub and the continent's busiest airport, Addis Ababa Bole International Airport. The testing centre will create a seamless travel experience that includes COVID-19 testing for passengers that are departing or transiting via Addis Ababa.

The state-of-the-art COVID-19 testing lab is equipped with cutting-edge technologies to provide quick and accurate testing for passengers. Currently, the lab can carry out 1,000 COVID-19

tests a day with the potential to grow further after expansion.

Regular test results can be obtained within three hours, leading to a convenient travel arrangement by reducing waiting time for testing and result collection.



Ethiopian Airports CEO Mr. Eskinder Alemu said *"We introduced the testing lab inside our hub at Addis Ababa with a view to address our customers' challenges in travel and revive the passenger service. Originating or transit passengers will no longer have to look for testing centres in the city and wait in lines for COVID-19 testing. The lab at the airport eliminates the hassle of testing and brings convenience and helps restore passengers' confidence in travel. The facility is the outcome of the excellent partnership between Ethiopia's flag carrier and BGI Health Ethiopia towards ensuring the safety of passengers in line with all international requirements. We will continue to adapt our operations to the new normal to ensure customers' safe travel with Ethiopian."*

Furthermore, to significantly reduce the time and energy spent for testing, the launch of the testing centre at the airport will elevate Ethiopian customer service and consolidate the airlines' safety measures at the airport and onboard. Timeliness of COVID-19 test results has been an issue of concern for passengers who wish to transit or extend their stay in Ethiopia and the provision of testing at the airport simplifies customers' journey with Ethiopian. The laboratory performs RT-PCR and IgM antibody tests for COVID-19 to departing, arriving, and transit passengers with a high level of efficiency in delivering the results. As a result, Ethiopian hopes to see a revival of passenger traffic following the move.



Consortium including UK's Vodafone and CDC Group awarded telecom licence

Historic move will see over \$8 billion invested – the largest FDI into Ethiopia

Ethiopia awarded a telecoms operating licence to the Global Partnership for Ethiopia - a private consortium comprising of UK's Vodafone Group and CDC Group, Kenya's Safaricom, South Africa's Vodacom Group, USA's Development Finance Cooperation, and Japan's Sumitomo Corporation.

This historic announcement forms part of the government's plans to liberalise the economy and allow foreign and private investors into key state-owned companies, as part of the Homegrown Economic Reform Agenda.

"Today marks a decisive day for our economic reform path in Ethiopia," Finance Minister, Ahmed Shide said. "With the liberalisation of the telecom market through a fair and transparent process, the government is enabling every Ethiopian access to quality services at an affordable price."

The consortium plans to invest over \$8 billion over the next ten years, creating up to 1.5 million jobs.

Reacting to the news, Prime Minister Abiy said, in a Twitter post, "With over \$8 billion total investment, this will be the single largest FDI into Ethiopia to date...Our desire to take Ethiopia fully digital is on track. I would like to thank all that have taken part in this and for pulling off a very transparent and effective process!"

The Director-General of the Ethiopian Communications Authority, Eng. Balcha Reba said, "This decision ushers in a new era of telecom service development in our country which will benefit millions of Ethiopia to have access to quality and reliable communications services."

According to Brook Taye, a senior adviser at the Ministry of Finance added that the consortium will provide 4G and 5G internet services, and by 2023 a low-orbit satellite will be put in place to provide nationwide 4G coverage.

Ethiopia's telecoms industry is considered a big prize given the country's population of 110 million people and potential for data services.

The selection of the consortium completes a transparent process that began in October 2020 to open Ethiopia's telecom market to operators beyond Ethio telecom. At the end of April 2021, the Ethiopian Communication Authority announced that it had received two bids from South Africa's MTN Group and the consortium.

...Ethio Telecom launches mobile money service

On 11th May, Ethio Telecom launched Ethiopia's first mobile money service, *Telebirr*, which will meet the growing demand for digital financial services and ensure financial inclusion in the country.



Senior government officials, including Prime Minister Abiy, attended the launching event at Friendship Square in Addis Ababa.

Speaking at the launch Prime Minister Abiy commended all relevant stakeholders that enabled the completion of the project in a short period – five months.

With the launching of the "Tele-Birr", Ethio-Telecom customers can send, store and receive money by just using their telephone number, the Prime Minister said, further adding that "Tele-Birr aims to extend mobile money services solutions to financially excluded sections of Ethiopian society."



According to the CEO of Ethio Telecom, the network plans to recruit 21 million users for the service in the first year of operations, rising to 33 million in five years. Around 40-50% of Ethiopia's annual economic output will be transacted on the platform by the end of the five years, she said.

In a statement on the launch of the new service, Ethio Telecom said it had 1,600 agents with plans to increase to 15,000 within a year.

It added that a number of bodies including existing microfinance institutions and remittance companies were involved in its development.

Ethio Telecom added that the new service was created with "a major focus and greater efforts to provide financial services to low-income citizens and rural people, who do not have access to banking services".

Telebirr will allow users to send and receive money, deposit or take out cash at appointed agents, pay bills and receive cash sent from abroad.

Ethiopia hosts first Transport Investment Summit

The first-ever Ethiopian Transport Investment Summit was held in Ethiopia from 24th – 25th March to promote the sector’s untapped investment opportunities and create a networking platform for potential foreign and local investors.



Organised by the Ministry of Transport, the Summit brought together key players and experts in the sector, senior government officials, diplomats, and investors from around the world to discuss the promising future of the Ethiopian transport sector.

Opening the Summit, H.E. President Sahle-Work Zewde reaffirmed the government’s commitment to welcoming investors that are keen to invest in the transport industry. She further added that modernising the transport sector will be significant in materialising Ethiopia’s ambition to become a middle-income economy.

H.E. Dagmawit Moges, Ethiopia’s Minister of Transport, said the government has been undertaking broad activities to expand road infrastructure and modernize the logistics sector, and expressed the government’s readiness to collaborate with the private sector to achieve the transport and logistics sector’s ten-year perspective plan (2020 – 2030).

She said that “as the country seeks to increase infrastructure assets, and renovate the services, the amalgamation of state of art technological inputs, and enjoying a latecomer advantage of accessing all contemporary transport-related inventions and mechanisms could only happen, through opening up of the sector to the private investors both foreign and domestic.”

During the Summit, more than 40 new projects that are open for investment under the public-private partnership program were presented to attendees, including logistics, road development, ports, railway, aviation, among others.



Various panel discussions were also held on the sidelines of the summit.

...British Embassy hosts webinar on opportunities in transport and logistics

On 11th May, the Business Diplomacy Department led by Deputy Head of Mission, Beyene Gebremeskel, attended a webinar focusing on Ethiopia's up-and-coming transport and logistics sector.

Organised by the UK’s Department of International Trade in Ethiopia in collaboration with Ethiopia’s Ministry of Transport and Grant Thornton Ethiopia, attendees got first-hand insight and a comprehensive overview into the various opportunities that are open for private sector investment as part of the 10-year perspective plan. 29 projects that are open for private sector investment were also outlined at the webinar including the development of ports, railways, aviation, and logistics cities.

Panellists discussed the roadmap for future infrastructure development and called for investors to participate in this endeavour.

Speakers at the Forum included: Yehualashet Jemere, State Minister, Ministry of Transport; Dr. Frehiwot Araya, Senior Logistics Sector Advisor,

Ministry of Transport; Emma Wade-Smith OBE, Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner for Africa, Department for International Trade; Mark Dittmer-Odell, Country Director for Ethiopia, Department for International Trade; and Ermias Eshetu, Advisory Partner, Grant Thornton Advisory PLC (Ethiopia).

With strong government backing and the potential to become a regional logistics hub, British companies are invited to invest in Ethiopia.

A copy of the ten-year perspective plan and other supporting documents on investing in the Transport sector are available on request. Please email press@ethioembassy.org.uk. Videos of the Summit are also available on the Ministry of Transport's YouTube page at <http://bit.ly/YT-MOT-Ethiopia>.

...DP World to invest \$1 billion for the development of Berbera Corridor



In related news, the Ministry of Transport and DP World, a leading global provider of end to end logistics solutions, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop the Ethiopian side of the road linking Ethiopia to Berbera into one of the major trade and logistics corridors of Ethiopia's international trade routes.

The MoU, which was signed in Addis Ababa on 6th May by H.E. Dagmawit Moges, Ethiopia's Minister of Transport, and Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World, follows a decision by the two parties to explore the potentials for developing logistics infrastructure and the provision of end to end logistics services along the corridor to unlock major economic benefits for Ethiopia.

DP World and its partners envisage investing up to \$1 billion over the next ten years in developing the supply chain infrastructure along the corridor. This will include dry ports, silos, warehouses, container yards, cool and cold chain depots, freight forwarding, and clearing activities.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, H.E. Dagmawit Moges said: "As we kick off the journey towards prosperity, aiming at unlocking Ethiopia's development potentials designed to propel the country into becoming an African beacon of prosperity, the transformation of the logistics industry is expected to play the leading catalytic role. Ethiopia aims to diversify its port access facilities and services to improve its trade corridor access routes; utilizing the Berbera corridor will surely have the potential to make Ethiopia a front runner in logistics operations, boosting the competitive advantage of delivering our products to the world market. The development of this Corridor will not only meet with the growing demand of Ethiopian's international trade, but it would also enhance our Nation's capacity in utilizing our existing major corridor both in terms of volume of trade and efficiency."

Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World, on his part said: "As a leading global provider of trade and logistics solutions, we strongly believe that developing the Berbera Corridor into one of the major trade and logistics corridors will unlock huge economic benefits for Ethiopia, and support its ambitious development plans. It will create new jobs, attract new businesses and investment along the corridor, as well as diversify and strengthen the country's access to international trade by having a direct, seamless, and efficient link between Ethiopia and Berbera Port."

The road infrastructure that will connect Berbera Port to Wajaale at the border with Ethiopia, funded by the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development and the UK's Department for International Development, is expected to be completed by the end of 2021. The road will link to the existing modern highway on the Ethiopian side and will further position Berbera as one of the key trade gateways in the region and will be one of the fastest and most efficient routes for Ethiopian transit cargo.

AU endorses Arkebe Oqubay as sole candidate for UNIDO chief position

The African Union (AU) has endorsed Ethiopia's Arkebe Oqubay of Ethiopia, as the sole African candidate for the post of Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).



In a press statement, the AU said the decision to endorse Oqubay as the sole candidate for the UNIDO DG position was reached during the 38th ordinary session of the Executive Council of the AU held from 3rd – 4th February 2021.

"The 38th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union unanimously endorsed the candidature of Arkebe Oqubay of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, as the sole African candidate for the post of Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)," said the AU statement.

"Oqubay has spent more than thirty years at the forefront of implementing inclusive and sustainable industrial development policies and as a champion of transformational economic development in Africa," the statement further said.

African leaders had, during the February 2021 AU meeting, emphasized the importance of UNIDO being led by a competent DG, and voiced their confidence in the high calibre as well as formidable leadership of Oqubay's candidature, to ensure equitable and sustainable global industrialization.

The current outgoing Director-General of UNIDO is Li Yong of China.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations that assists countries in economic and industrial development.

Industrial parks export over \$610m worth products, create 89,000 jobs

Ethiopian industrial parks have so far generated more than \$610 million from the export of various products.

According to the Ethiopian Industrial Parks Development Corporation, the 13 industrial parks exported apparel and other products to the European, the United States, and other global markets.

In addition to generating foreign currency, the industrial parks have created more than 89, 000 employment opportunities. Furthermore, efforts are underway to address the high cost of living, housing, and transport problems of workers as well as meet the industrial parks' demand for electric power and other facilities.

\$2.1 billion earned from export in 6 months

The Ministry of Trade and Industry said that it has collected revenue worth \$2.1 billion from export commodities during the first 6 months of the current Ethiopian fiscal year, achieving 82% of its target.

The revenue has increased by 16% compared to the same period the previous fiscal year.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM



Ethiopian Airlines celebrates 75th Anniversary

Ethiopian Airlines, the fastest growing Airline in Africa, celebrated its 75th anniversary on 8th April – the day it made its maiden international flight to Cairo.

Since its launch, the Airline has overcome the ups and downs of the aviation industry, including the challenges unique to Africa, to become Africa's largest, most profitable, and award-winning Airline.

Ethiopian Airlines kicks off a year-long celebration under the theme **"Celebrating 75 Years of Excellence"**.

On the occasion, Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mr. Tewolde GebreMariam said:

"As we celebrate 75 years of excellence, we take stock of our accomplishments over three-quarters of a century. Among the many firsts introduced by Ethiopian are the first Jet aircraft in Africa, the first East Africa to West Africa scheduled flight, the first airline from the Western Hemisphere to fly to China, the first scheduled service between the capitals of the most populous nations in the world (from New Delhi to Beijing), the first airline in Africa to introduce the

B767, B777-200LR, B787(the Dreamliner) and later on the A350 to Africa. Today, our industry faces a serious challenge posed by COVID-19. The route we chose to overcome this challenge is to tighten our belts, change the way we do business and be agile. We remain the only commercial airline that has not sought government bailout and did not lay off a single employee. I would like to take this opportunity to cement our commitment to sustainable aviation and continue to work with all stakeholders to enhance Africa's air connectivity. While congratulating all Ethiopian families, I would like to thank our esteemed customers for their strong vote of confidence, their loyalty, and support."

Ethiopian attributes its success to the four pillars of its growth strategy – human resource development, modern fleet, infrastructure development, and technology. It will continue to focus on these pillars with a renewed emphasis on sustainability and will also continue partnering with other African airlines and governments to create a robust, competitive airline industry in Africa by sharing its technical and management expertise.

...Ethiopian Airlines becomes ATTA's new Airline Partner

Ethiopian Airlines has become the new Airline Partner for the African Travel & Tourism Association (ATTA).

This partnership will not only promote travel to Africa after a tough year during a global pandemic but also will help with opening Ethiopia as one of Africa's hidden treasures alongside the numerous African destinations on the Ethiopian network.

Ethiopian has continued to grow its hub in Addis Ababa and added not only a new terminal in 2020 but also new lounges so passengers can now enjoy a more relaxed and modern transit through Addis Ababa – Bole International Airport.

"Kagnew Fisseha, VP – ET Holidays & IMC said, "Ethiopian Airlines and ET Holidays are delighted to be working more closely with ATTA and the African Travel Industry and see this as a perfect partnership for promoting tourism during the forthcoming year, which is our 75th Anniversary year. Ethiopian Holidays is the tour operator wing of Ethiopian Airlines, which highlights and promotes the very best of Ethiopian Airlines' destinations in Ethiopia and across the globe."

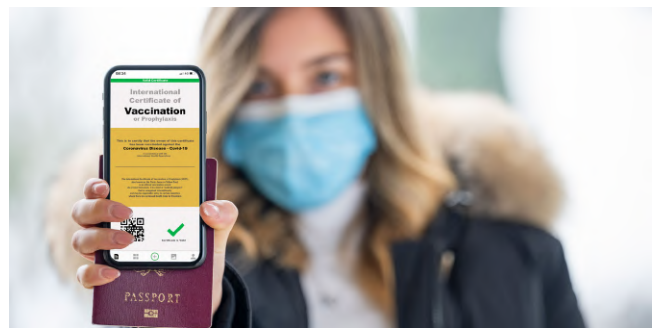
Chris Mears, CEO of ATTA said, "We are delighted that Ethiopian Airlines will be our Lead Airline Partner for the coming two years as we work towards the recovery and growth of tourism to Africa. Partnering with Ethiopian Airlines will allow us to host and attend events across the African continent to benefit our members and to reignite the connectivity in African Tourism."

ATTA is a member-driven trade association that promotes tourism to Africa from all corners of the world. Recognised as the Voice of African Tourism, ATTA serves and supports businesses in Africa representing buyers and suppliers of tourism products across 21 African countries. With over 630 members, ATTA acts as Pan-Africa's largest network of tourism products covering not only accommodation, transport, and travel specialists in Africa, but a formidable selection of tour operators, representation, and PR companies worldwide promoting tourism to Africa.

Ethiopian Airlines joins Africa CDC in launching COVID test, vaccine passport

Ethiopian Airlines has partnered with the African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) for the implementation of the African Union Trusted Travel Pass to make continental travel easier and safer amidst the COVID -19 pandemic.

The Trusted Travel pass program will ensure country regulations regarding COVID-19 travel requirements are met with minimal room for error and hassle to the travelling public.



File photo

Ethiopian Airlines' customers will now enjoy a hassle-free travel experience with their travel pass helping them verify whether their medical information meets various COVID-19 regulations of their destination.

Ethiopian Airlines has been the pioneer in introducing new technologies to make travel contactless and convenient to curb the spread of the pandemic and restore passengers' confidence in air travel. This latest partnership considerably deepens this longstanding tradition by boosting the safety of passengers and nations alike and reaffirms Ethiopian's strong commitment to being a major part of the African pandemic recovery effort.

The trusted travel pass solution will help to validate test and vaccination certificates and verify that they are sufficient for their route and share testing or vaccination certificates with airlines and authorities to facilitate travel. The solution will also avoid fraudulent documentation and make air travel more convenient.

For further information, visit the Africa CDC website at www.africacdc.org/trusted-travel.

Travel Advisory: Ethiopia on UK's 'Red List'

In March, the UK government announced that Ethiopia has been added to the "Red List" to protect the UK against new variants of coronavirus.

The new rules mean that travellers who have departed from or transited through Ethiopia in the previous 10 days will be refused entry into England. Only British and Irish citizens, or those with direct residence rights (including long-term visa holders), will be allowed to enter and must stay in a government-approved quarantine facility for 10 days.

In line with the announcement, Ethiopian Airlines has made necessary adjustments to its UK operations - there are no direct passenger flights from Addis Ababa to London Heathrow or Manchester, until further notice.

Ethiopian Airlines continues to operate in-bound cargo and freight flights from Addis Ababa to London-Heathrow and Manchester, and essential travel passenger flights outbound from the UK to Addis Ababa and across our global network. These passenger flights are available to purchase on-line at www.ethiopianairlines.com or by contacting UK travel agents in line with current UK government guidelines.

For further information, please contact lonres@ethiopianairlines.com for London departures and manres@ethiopianairlines.com for Manchester departures.

Ethiopian Week launched to promote tourism and investment opportunities in the sector

Ethiopian Week - a showcase of cultural diversity, history, and national assets - was observed from 18th – 24th May at Friendship Square in Addis Ababa with various events. The week was aimed at promoting Ethiopia's tourism resources and facilitate a conducive environment that would help create investment opportunities in the tourism sector.

Prime Minister Abiy, senior government officials, leaders of regional governments, members of the diplomatic community, and guests attended the launching event on 18th May.



Welcoming the participants, Prime Minister Abiy reiterated the government's commitment to

promoting cultural and historical values of the country in line with fostering the tourism industry and encouraged all to visit and learn about Ethiopia's national wealth.

Initiated by the Prime Minister, the arrangements for the festival were led by the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Dr. Hirut Kassaw, the Women Children and Youth Affairs Minister, Filsen Abdullah, and the Urban Development and Construction Minister, Engineer Aysha Mohammed.



The income from the festival will finance efforts underway to rehabilitate internally displaced people in the country.

Ethiopia qualifies for Africa Cup of Nations after eight-year absence



On 30th March, Ethiopia's national football team, *The Walias*, qualified for the 2022 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), following an eight-year absence.

A goalless draw between Niger and Madagascar helped Ethiopia to qualify in its group match finishing in second place. Cote d'Ivoire topped the group with Madagascar and Niger finishing third and fourth.

Team Ethiopia's Coach, Wobetu Abate, is now looking forward to going to Cameroon, where AFCON will be hosted, with the best squad to hold the name for Ethiopia. "Our people absolutely love football, and we have achieved our Africa Cup of Nations dream to make them happy. Ethiopians deserve this. Now our focus is to build on our team. We will prepare well for the upcoming AFCON as well as the World Cup qualifiers in June."

Ethiopia has a rich footballing tradition in Africa and holds prestige as one of the founding participants of the inaugural Africa Cup of Nations tournament in 1957, together with Sudan and Egypt. *The Walias* have been representing Ethiopia in regional, continental, and international competitions since its founding in 1943 and won the African Cup of Nations in 1962 on home soil.

A total of 24 teams will take part in the 33rd edition of the Africa Cup of Nations, which will be hosted by Cameroon in January 2022. This will be Ethiopia's 11th appearance at Africa's most prestigious football tournament.

Road to Tokyo: Shura Kitata and Tigist Girma secure Olympics spot with marathon trials wins

The Ethiopian Olympic marathon trials were held on 1st May in Ethiopia.

According to the Ethiopian Athletics Federation, the Ethiopian Olympic marathon team will consist of the top three finishers from each race.

Therefore, according to the results, the men's team will comprise of:

1. Shura Kitata (24 years) - Winner of 2020 London Marathon last October, runner-up in NYC and London in 2018, winner of Frankfurt and Rome in 2017.
2. Lelisa Desisa (31 years) - Winner of Dubai Marathon (2013), Boston (2013, 2015), NYC (2018), and Worlds (2019).
3. Sisay Lemma (30 years) - Never won a major. 3rd is his best major finish (Tokyo and London 2020, Berlin 2019, Dubai 2017). Past winner of Frankfurt, Vienna, Warsaw, and Ljubljana.

The women's team will comprise of:

1. Tigist Girma (27 years) - Never won a major. Best finish is 5th and that's the only major she ever ran — Tokyo 2020. Has won 2 of her career 13 marathons.
2. Birhane Dibaba (27 years) - Runner-up in Tokyo 2020 and 9th in Valencia. Also ran 2:18:46 for 3rd in Valencia in 2019. 2015 and 2018 Tokyo champ.
3. Roza Dereje Bekele (23 years) - Won Valencia and was 3rd in London in 2019. Won Dubai and was 2nd in Chicago in 2018.

Kenenisa Bekele did not take part due to injury.





Gudaf Tsegay's world record ratified

Ethiopia's Gudaf Tsegay has had her 1,500m world record ratified.

Gudaf achieved her 1500m feat at the Meeting Hauts-de-France Pas-de-Calais on 9th February, clocking 3:53.09 to take more than two seconds off the previous world indoor record of 3:55.17 set by her Ethiopian compatriot Genzebe Dibaba in Karlsruhe on 1st February 2014.

"I have been training really hard and I set myself a target to break the world indoor record," said Gudaf. "I had this record in my mind for a long time – maybe six or seven years."

DIASPORA CORNER

'Dine for Ethiopia' Initiative raises 4.2bn Birr

Ethiopians at home and abroad have raised 4.2 billion Birr as part of 'Dine for Ethiopia', an initiative launched in August 2020 by Prime Minister Abiy to mobilize funds for the Koysa, Wonchi, and Gorgora projects. The plan was to raise 3 billion birr but the initiative surpassed its target.

At a dinner programme hosted on 20th February, the Prime Minister said he appreciated all Ethiopians at home and abroad for their contribution to making the 'Dine for Ethiopia' initiative a success.

Later in a Tweet, the Prime Minister thanked all those who contributed to the project. "To all Ethiopians in the country and abroad that have enabled a successful Dine for Ethiopia through their contribution, I thank you deeply," he said. "In unity, we shall reach our aspired destination."

The three projects are currently being executed in Oromia, Amhara and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) regional states; and will create jobs for the local communities, drive tourism, and create service economies.

SAVE THE DATE: Rockstone Ethiopia to host Diaspora Investment Forum

**Thursday, 24th June 2021 from 3:00 pm
Ethiopian Embassy, London**

Rockstone Ethiopia and Cerberus Frontier plan on hosting a "Diaspora Inward Investment Forum" at the Embassy in London, which will serve as a platform for information transfer and dialogue across investment sectors open for the Diaspora, with a particular focus on the real estate market.

The event, scheduled to take place on 24th June 2021 (subject to UK government guidelines), will consist of targeted roundtable discussions and 1-2-1 meetings on investment opportunities between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm and will culminate with an evening reception from 6:00 pm hosted by Ambassador Teferi.

All attendees are required to register their interest before attending. For further information, visit <https://eventreg.com/embassy-london>. The event will also be streamed live and will include special hosted events in Addis Ababa and Washington DC.

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