



# Ethiopian News

Spring 2019

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# Ethiopians celebrate historic return of Emperor Tewodros’ Hair

*Culture Minister urges Museums to return all Maqdala artefacts to Ethiopia*

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# Editorial



## **Building a Bridge for Peace and Unity with the Ethiopian community in the UK**

In his first significant public engagement since arriving in the United Kingdom to take up his new post, Ambassador Fesseha Shawel addressed over a thousand members of the Ethiopian community in London on 16<sup>th</sup> March at an open diaspora forum at the Embassy. Held under the theme, “Building a Bridge for Peace and Unity”, the Forum honoured the Prime Minister’s call for Ethiopians across the world to come together and reject division, in favour of unity. To assist this process, the PM urged Ethiopia’s most senior diplomats to reorient the focus of their activities towards a more people-centred diplomacy.

The Ambassador, in the spirit of peace, unity and forgiveness, began his remarks by offering his apologies on behalf of the Government of Ethiopia, and diplomats and staff, for any unjust treatment

members of the diaspora had experienced in the past, caused knowingly or unknowingly, by individual or institutional practices within the Embassy.

He applauded the community in London for being some of the most enthusiastic supporters of the reform process to date, hoped they would continue to play as significant a role going forward and assured them that he and his team would be at their disposal going forward.

With a view to realising the Prime Minister’s vision of a democratic, just and prosperous society, where human rights are fully respected and the rule of law is upheld, the Ambassador noted a number of reform successes including: a commitment to holding free and fair elections in 2020; the

unconditional release of political prisoners and journalists; the open invitation to previously exiled political parties, organisations and their supporters to return home to play an active role in the country's development; the end of the Ethio-Eritrea stalemate, reestablishment of friendly diplomatic relations and the resultant peace dividend throughout the region; the selection of a gender-equal cabinet and the appointment of women to the Presidency, as Chief of the Judiciary and as Chair of the Electoral Board; and the advancement of the political philosophy of "Medemer", in English "coming together", which has seen the public unite behind the reforms.

The Ambassador acknowledged current challenges in ensuring the rule of law, unresolved administrative boundary issues, displacement, anti-change agents working against the reforms and corruption and lack of good governance. But he expressed his belief that with the active engagement and collaboration of Ethiopians at home and abroad, these challenges would be overcome.

Ambassador Fesseha announced a number of key reforms that would improve service delivery within the Embassy before highlighting the Embassy's strategic plans and priorities for the upcoming year. H.E. concluded by opening the floor for questions and comments, and a wide-ranging discussion ensued on what role the Diaspora could play in support of the changes underway in Ethiopia.

Since the Forum, Ethiopians in the UK have responded to the Ambassador's call, enriching the Embassy with their ideas and experience by engaging the Embassy in a number of initiatives. To mention a few: the holding of a special exhibition, "Remembering Adwa"; a series of meetings to establish a Diaspora Peace and Unity Coordinating Community; the recognition of Ethiopian restaurateurs as Cultural Ambassadors by H.E Dr Hirut Kassaw, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Sport; fundraising initiatives for the Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund, the Tossa and Reppi communities; and Ethiopians4Ethiopians, a platform to discuss the mental health challenges in the Ethiopian community.

## DIASPORA CORNER

### Diaspora Agency Launched

The Ethiopian Diaspora Agency was officially launched on 1<sup>st</sup> March, with the aim of creating an enabling environment for the Diaspora to maximize knowledge and skills transfer and promoting trade and investment.



Her Excellency Mrs. Hirut Zemene, State Minister for Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other high officials, artists, members of the diaspora, and partner organisations attended the launch event in Addis Ababa.



Special attention will be given to efficient data management in order to identify the exact number of Ethiopian Diaspora in the world and the countries where they live.

The Agency will ensure the protection of the rights and dignity of Ethiopians in the Diaspora and provide the right tools, so the Diaspora actively engages in the country's development endeavours.

The agency will be accountable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and manage its own budget and financial activities.

For further information, please visit the website at: [www.ethiopiandiasporaagency.org](http://www.ethiopiandiasporaagency.org) and follow them on Facebook and Twitter (@DiasporaAgency).

### **Enat Bank and Bank of Abyssinia partner with WorldRemit for digital money transfers to Ethiopia**

Enat Bank and Bank of Abyssinia have joined forces with leading digital money transfer service, WorldRemit for digital money transfers to Ethiopia.

Using the WorldRemit app or website, the Ethiopian diaspora living in over 50 countries, including the UK, Canada and the USA, can now send money home to any Enat Bank or Bank of Abyssinia accounts, and to hundreds of new cash pickup locations in Addis Ababa and throughout the country.



WorldRemit has rapidly expanded in Ethiopia, adding twelve financial institutions to its partner network last year. The company is now connected to 31.5 million bank accounts and over 4,100 cash pickup locations throughout the country. Transactions to Ethiopia via WorldRemit from the USA alone grew by over 230% in 2018.

Remittances play an important role in Ethiopia's economy. The National Bank of Ethiopia said the country received over \$5 billion in remittances for

the fiscal year 2017/2018. But evidence suggests that a significant portion of remittances to the country still go through informal channels, which are often costly and put customers at risk of fraud and transaction delays.

Andrew Stewart, Managing Director for Middle East and Africa at WorldRemit, said "As Ethiopia, Africa's fastest-growing economy, becomes increasingly digital, WorldRemit is delighted to partner with leading financial institutions to make it faster, simpler and cheaper to receive money from around the world....We are delighted to partner with Enat Bank, which shares our commitment to making financial services accessible to underserved groups, including women and rural communities in Ethiopia."

"These partnerships enable the Ethiopian diaspora to send money home directly from their phones."

### **Diplomats and staff take on EDTF Challenge**

Diplomats and staff, led by the Deputy Head of Mission, Ababi Demissie, in February took on Prime Minister Abiy's challenge and contributed their share towards the Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund (EDTF).



The Fund was launched last year and works in coordination with the government to directly involve the Diaspora in fundraising for vital socio-economic projects in Ethiopia.

For further information, head over to <https://www.ethiopiustrustfund.org>.



## Culture Minister visits British Museums on debut visit to the UK

Her Excellency Dr Hirut Kassaw, Ethiopia's Minister of Culture, Tourism and Sport, made her debut visit to the United Kingdom in March, visiting cultural institutions and museums.

Heading a delegation which included H.E. Ambassador Fesseha Shawel, the Director of Ethiopia's National Museum, Efreem Amare and advisers from the Ministry of Culture, the packed 4-day schedule included visits to the British Library, the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Army Museum. The Minister also held meetings with the Canon of Windsor and representatives from Visit Britain.

### *...National Army Museum hands over locks of hair belonging to Emperor Tewodros II*

An historic ceremonial hand-over of locks of hair belonging to one of Ethiopia's most popular Emperors – Tewodros II – took place on 20<sup>th</sup> March at the National Army Museum in London.

Ethiopians, friends of Ethiopia and the media gathered to witness the long-awaited return of hair, taken from the Emperor after he heroically committed suicide rather than be taken prisoner by the invading British army in April 1868 during the battle of Maqdala.

On behalf of the People and Government of Ethiopia, H.E. Dr Hirut Kassaw, received the human remains in a box draped with the Ethiopian flag from the Museum's Director, Brigadier Justin Maciejewski DSO MBE, with the crowd ululating in jubilation.

The Minister applauded the Museum for the "brave and principled decision to return the Emperor's hair," and called on all museums and others who retain Maqdala heritage in their collections to return artefacts to their rightful home, saying:

**“For Ethiopians, these are not simply artefacts or treasures but constitute a fundamental part of the existential fabric of Ethiopia and its people...[I urge] all concerned to consider the intrinsic value of the items in their collections which are of far greater significance to Ethiopians than to those who removed them.”**



H.E. Dr Hirut Kassaw receives Emperor Tewodros' hair from the Director of the National Army Museum

“Whatever the future holds, I have no doubt that the relationship between our two countries will continue to go from strength to strength. A fact underlined by the substance and spirit of today’s ceremony,” she concluded.

Brigadier Justin Maciejewski DSO MBE, Director of the Museum said: “The Abyssinian Expedition of 1868 was a sad chapter in our shared history. A chapter characterised by miscalculation and misjudgment on both sides. But seventy-two years after Emperor Tewodros II committed suicide, British and Ethiopian forces fought alongside each other as allies in the liberation of Ethiopia from Italian occupation.”

**“We hope that in some small way this act will serve to reinforce the deep and strong friendship that exists between our two countries.”**

- Brigadier Justin Maciejewski DSO MBE, Director of the National Army Museum.

A welcome ceremony for the locks of hair was held at the Ethiopian National Museum on 23<sup>rd</sup> March following the Minister’s return to the country.



### **...Prince Alemayehu Remembered**



A day after the historic return of the hair, the Minister visited St George’s Chapel at Windsor Castle – the resting place of Prince Alemayehu, son of Emperor Tewodros II.

The Minister laid a wreath of remembrance on the young Prince’s grave before observing a minute’s silence and prayers.



Welcoming the Minister and her delegation, the Reverend Dr Mark Powell, Canon of Windsor, led the delegation through a tour of the chapel where they were shown a brass remembrance plaque dedicated to Prince Alemayehu, as well as the Coat of Arms of Emperor Haile Selassie I, observing his membership of the British Order of the Garter.

In discussions that followed with the Canon, the Minister requested that the remains of Prince Alemayehu be repatriated to his homeland so that he could be reunited with his father's remains and with the people of Ethiopia.

***...Minister requests return of tabots at the British Museum***

On a visit to the British Museum the delegation was met by the Museum's Director, Dr Hartwig Fischer and specialist Africa staff.



The Minister welcomed the Museum's offer to renew the previous relationship it shared with the National Museum of Ethiopia and extended an official invitation to Ethiopia to the Director and his team, to explore further opportunities for cooperation.

During discussions, the Minister formally requested the return of 11 *Tabots*, Ark of the Covenant replicas, taken at Maqdala, that are currently in private storage at the British Museum as they can never be displayed. "The Arks act as spiritual anchors for the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and are more than just artefacts," the Minister stressed, urging the Museum's Trustees to act on the request so the Arks could return to serve Orthodox believers in Ethiopia as soon as possible.

***...Victoria & Albert Museum commits to further consultations on return of Maqdala artefacts***

The Minister met with the Director of the Victoria and Museum (V&A), Dr Tristram Hunt and his team, to continue discussions on the return of Maqdala artefacts currently on display at the Museum.



H.E. Dr Hirut Kassaw with Dr Tristram Hunt © Victoria and Albert Museum, London 2019

Dr Hunt expressed the sincere desire of the Museum to see these artefacts on display in Ethiopia soon, but noted, with regret, that the biggest obstacle to this was the present status of the law in the UK which prohibits restitution. Dr Hunt, however, committed to continuing consultations with the Minister, her team and the Embassy going forward on the return of these artefacts to Ethiopia.

The delegation viewed the "Maqdala 1868" special exhibition, which opened in April last year, and continues until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

***...MoU with British Library signed***

The Ministerial delegation was welcomed to the British Library by the Chief Executive, Mr Roly Keating and staff where they signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ethiopian National Archives & Library Agency and the British Library, to foster greater collaboration, research, capacity building and knowledge exchange.



The Minister welcomed the British Library's decision to officially visit Ethiopia in May. While thanking the management for its decision to donate digitised images of Ethiopian manuscripts in their collection and microfilm readers to the National Library, she requested the return of these manuscripts, which were mostly taken at Maqdala. She stressed that the manuscripts could not simply be viewed as historic artefacts as they are sacred.

Dr Kristian Jensen, Head of Collections and Curations, said: "We are delighted to have formalised our ongoing and future engagement. We are very aware of the importance of the Ethiopian manuscripts in our care to people in Ethiopia, and to researchers across the globe, and we are therefore committed to making them more widely accessible, both through exhibitions such as our recent display, African Scribes: Manuscript Culture of Ethiopia, and by digitising the manuscripts and making them available to all online."

### ***...UK Cultural Ambassadors***

On the eve of her departure, Minister Hirut presented over 30 Ethiopian restaurateurs, from the Diaspora community in and near London with certificates of appreciation for their indispensable role in the promotion of Ethiopian culture.

"I hereby declare you Cultural Ambassadors of Ethiopia in the United Kingdom," the Minister said, adding that "People in the UK get their first tastes of Ethiopia in your restaurants. My challenge to you is to turn that into a journey to the Land of Origins."



The Minister also recognised Alebachew Desalegn, a private collector of Ethiopian artefacts, as a Cultural Ambassador, applauding him for his commitment, perseverance and love for Ethiopia.

For further information and press releases on the Minister's visit, please visit our website at [www.ethioembassy.org.uk/news](http://www.ethioembassy.org.uk/news).

## **Ambassador Fesseha assumes duties in the United Kingdom**

Ambassador Fesseha Shawel Gebre officially assumed his duties as the newly-appointed Ethiopian Ambassador to the United Kingdom on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2018.



A career diplomat, Ambassador Fesseha brings with him almost 30 years of experience having served at Diplomatic Missions in Juba, Nairobi, Mogadishu and Cairo, as well as at various posts within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Ambassador Fesseha arrives at a time when Ethio-UK relations are at an all-time high and has made it his mission to strengthen these relations further during his tenure.

In his first month, the Ambassador has made courtesy visits to British Museums to explore avenues for cooperation. He has also held consultations with members of the Ethiopian Diaspora, the Diplomatic Corps, investors and, sadly, had to deal with the aftermath of the tragic Ethiopian Airlines crash.

The Ambassador's full biography is available on request. Please email [press@ethioembassy.org.uk](mailto:press@ethioembassy.org.uk)

### **Chief Justice Meaza Ashenafi delivers keynote address at LSE Africa Summit**

Meaza Ashenafi, Ethiopia's first female Supreme Court President, delivered a keynote address at the annual 2019 London School of Economics (LSE) Africa Summit, which was held under the theme 'Africa's Future Frontiers' on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> March.



Ms Ashenafi noted the recent increase in the participation of women in politics in Africa, highlighting Ethiopia's case, where for the first time in history, the country has seen a female President and half of all ministerial posts assigned to women.

"I am standing in front of you today as one of the many symbols of that change – as the first female President of the Federal Supreme Court of Ethiopia and as the first ever to come from a background in human and women's rights advocacy," she said.

She noted the ongoing reforms in Ethiopia - such as the release of political prisoners and journalists, revision of laws, and change in leadership. "There is a commitment to the recognition of the rule of law

and to build a democratic society. Human rights are at the core and an independent judiciary is crucial in their realization."

She concluded by saying that strengthening access to justice, civil societies, the media, and inclusive access to finance should be the central focus of African leadership. "This is the route to the protection and promotion of human rights as well as towards inclusive and sustainable economic growth across the continent."

### **Former PM Hailemariam at ShARE conference**

On 1<sup>st</sup> March, former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn, participated at the 2019 ShARE conference in London, which was held under the theme 'Do Well Do Good'.



The Former Prime Minister was announced as a ShARE global mentor and called on the young people in attendance to establish "Do Well Do Good companies - businesses that create jobs, train our youth, preserve the environment, add value to our natural resources, pay their taxes, transfer expertise and technology and integrate Africa to the global economic system."

The ShARE initiative inspires students by working with a network of the best universities worldwide to develop a new generation of global corporate leaders who Do Well and Do Good. The Former PM spoke to participating students on the side-lines.

### **UK Labour Party hosts meeting for African Heads of Mission**

Deputy Head of Mission, Mr Ababi Demissie, attended a round-table meeting for Ambassadors and Heads of Mission from Africa hosted by leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn MP.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues of mutual concern such as trade and investment, migration, education and healthcare.



In discussions that followed, Mr Demissie highlighted the recent political and economic reforms under Prime Minister Abiy, and Ethiopia's efforts to support refugees and the role it plays in regional peace and integration.

### **Tutu's Ethiopian Table opens**

On 3<sup>rd</sup> March, Deputy Head of Mission, Ababi Demissie and the Mayor of Reading, Councillor Debs Edwards, were among hundreds of guests who turned out to celebrate the opening of Tutu Melaku's new café in Palmer Park, Reading, which serves authentic Ethiopian cuisine and snacks.



The Mayor of Reading, Councillor Debs Edwards cuts the ribbon to officially open the café and is joined by Ambassador Ababi Demissie (left) and café owner, Tutu Melaku

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Demissie congratulated Tutu for bringing a taste of Ethiopia's cuisine and culture to the people of Reading and hoped her success will encourage other Ethiopians

to follow suit. He also recognised her contribution towards preserving Ethiopia's cultural heritage by endorsing her as a Cultural Ambassador.

Tutu's first venture, RISC's Global Café, which has served a selection of meat and vegetarian stews since 2006, is popular across Reading and has won a string of awards. Tutu was a guest on BBC Radio 4 where she extolled the virtues of Ethiopian cuisine.

Four years ago, she launched a range of sauces for home cooks to enjoy. The range includes vegan and gluten free and can be used for cooking, spreading or as a dip.

### **Scottish photographer's Ethiopia photos shortlisted for top Photography Award**

Award-winning photographer, Kieran Dodds' extensive work on the church forests of Ethiopia has been shortlisted for the prestigious Sony World Photography Award in the Professional - Landscape category.



His series, 'Hierotopia', explores the forests surrounding churches in Ethiopia, where farming has led to huge deforestation, and how priests, scientists and the local community are trying to save them.



Entos Eyesus church forest on an island in Lake Tana near Bahir Dar

In an interview with *The Scotsman*, Kieran said: “My personal work considers the role of the environment in human culture and at how indigenous ideas have preserved the environment and seeing how this can be scaled up.”



The Debre Mihret Arbiatu Ensesa church, which looks from above like a bright pinwheel, is surrounded by trees.

**“In Ethiopia I stumbled across something remarkable where Orthodox Christians preserve the environment, seeing it as the ‘clothes of the church’ – a physical part of the church building and a miniature Garden of Eden.”**

Kieran’s work will be displayed at the Sony World Photography Awards Exhibition at Somerset House in London from 18<sup>th</sup> April until 6<sup>th</sup> May, before embarking on an international tour. Award winners will be revealed on 17<sup>th</sup> April.

## EVENTS

### Images of the Gospels Through Ethiopian and European Eyes



Explore the links between Ethiopian and European illustrations of the Gospels. In this illustrated lecture, historian Dorothea McEwan, compares two 17<sup>th</sup>-century illuminated Gospel manuscripts, one held in the British Library, the other in Ethiopia, with their European source, the *Evangelium arabicum*, printed in Rome in 1591.

Venue: The British Library  
96 Euston Road  
London NW1 2DB  
Date: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019, 7.15pm  
Price: £10

For further information, contact the British Library directly at 01937 546546; [boxoffice@bl.uk](mailto:boxoffice@bl.uk) or visit: <http://bit.ly/BL-Events>.

## LOCAL NEWS



# The world unites in mourning victims of Ethiopian Airlines Flight ET302

On 10<sup>th</sup> March, at 08:44am local time, (05:44 GMT) an Ethiopian Airlines aircraft Boeing 737-800MAX, flight ET 302 to Nairobi, tragically crashed in the outskirts of Addis Ababa.

In the hours that followed, Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO, Tewolde Gebremariam, confirmed that none of the flight's 149 passengers and 8 crew members had survived the accident. Of the passengers representing 35 nationalities on-board, 32 Kenyan, 18 Canadian, 9 Ethiopian and 7 British citizens were among the deceased.

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 was declared a national day of mourning and saw flags at Ethiopian government institutions, including the Embassy in London, flying at half-mast as an expression of public sorrow.

A book of condolence was also opened at the Embassy for members of the public and diplomatic community to submit their messages. UK Area Manager of Ethiopian Airlines, Mr Michael Yohannes, and representatives from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office were among the first to sign the book.

UK's Prime Minister, Theresa May MP, said: "I was deeply saddened to hear of the devastating loss of life following the plane crash in Ethiopia. At this very difficult time my thoughts are with the families and friends of the British citizens on board and all those affected by this tragic incident."



Ambassador Fesseha signs a book of condolence at the Kenya High Commission in London, in memory of the victims, among them 32 Kenyans

In Ethiopia, local residents of Gimbichu Woreda (district), where the crash happened, held a traditional memorial service on 21<sup>st</sup> March to honour those who lost their lives in the accident.

### *...Pilots followed all procedures*

The preliminary report released by the investigative team has shown that the Ethiopian Airlines pilots who were commanding Flight ET302 followed Boeing's recommended, and the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) approved emergency procedures to handle the most difficult emergency situation created on the airplane. Despite the pilots' hard work and full compliance with the emergency procedures, they could not recover the plane from a persistent nose dive.

Commenting on the report, Group CEO Tewelde Gebremariam said, "All of us at Ethiopian Airlines are still going through deep mourning for the loss of our loved ones and we would like to express our deep sympathy and condolences for the families, relatives and friends of the victims. Meanwhile, we are very proud of our pilots' compliances with emergency procedures and their high level of professional performance in such an extremely difficult situation. We are also very proud of our Global standard Pilot Training Centre and the Ethiopian Aviation Academy, which is one of the largest and most modern in the world equipped with state of the art and latest training technologies."

**"I would like to thank our valued customers, the travelling public, the media and global aviation professionals for the vote of confidence and strong support that you have given us starting from the day of this tragic accident. We will redouble our efforts to win your confidence...Your safety will remain our topmost priority and we will continue to work together with our partners around the world to make air travel safer and more comfortable."**

"My highest appreciation also goes to my 16,000 colleagues at Ethiopian Airlines for their resilience, high standards of professionalism and their commitment to operational excellence and their award-winning customer service, which enabled us to continue our business without any operational disruption, flight delays nor flight cancellations."

The Embassy will continue to share further information on the incident as and when it is made available via our website and social media pages. For the latest updates, please contact Ethiopian Airlines directly or follow them on social media (@flyethiopian).

## **Political parties sign pact ahead of 2020 polls**

In the run-up to Ethiopian Elections slated for 2020, more than 100 competing political parties have signed a code of conduct agreement as part of efforts to open up the political space and the government's commitment to ensuring free, fair and inclusive elections.



PM Abiy signs the pact as the chair of the National Election Board, Birtukan Mideksa, looks on

PM Abiy Ahmed signed the document on behalf of the ruling coalition, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front. This is "a democratic milestone" he said, and called on all parties to respect the document.

The new chairperson of Ethiopia's National Election Board, Birtukan Mideksa, and officials were present. Appointed in 2018, Birtukan and her team will organise the 2020 polls.

## **Dr Workneh Gebeyehu appointed DG of United Nations Office, Nairobi**

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres appointed Dr Workneh Gebeyehu, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, as Director-General of the UN Office in Nairobi (UNON). He succeeds Hanna S. Tetteh of Ghana who becomes African Union (AU) Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Office to the AU (UNOAU).

Ms Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) will continue to serve as Acting Director-General until Dr Workneh assumes his post.



Secretary-General António Guterres with Workneh Gebeyehu (File Photo)

Dr Workneh has served as Ethiopia's Foreign Minister since 2016.

## **Ethiopians commemorate the Battle of Adwa**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March, Ethiopians from all walks of life celebrated the 123<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Adwa – a day that commemorates the bravery of Ethiopian troops in the battle for freedom against invading Italian forces in 1896.

Ethiopians, under the command of Emperor Menelik II, defeated over 20,000 well-armed Italian colonial forces. The pivotal victory of the Battle of Adwa made Ethiopia the only country in Africa never to be colonised.



Statue of Emperor Menelik II in Addis Ababa

On the eve of the celebrations, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed called on the existing generation to repeat the victory of Adwa by overcoming current challenges and barriers.

The victory of Adwa laid the foundation for the current and the next generations to walk with their heads held high and to stand in front of the world, the Premier said, stressing that “The Adwa victory teaches us that unity is strength.” The victory was a “momentous triumph” for Africa in particular and black people of the world in general.

“The heroic deeds of our foremothers and fathers against the colonising Italian force not only realised Ethiopia’s political independence, but also freed the current generation from the brunt of colonialism,” a “hopeful and emblematic moment” in Africa’s quest for independence and the abolition of slavery across the globe.

Thousands remembered the fallen patriots in Menelik II Square but the day was also marked with a range of programmes, including a walk from Menelik II Square to Adwa.

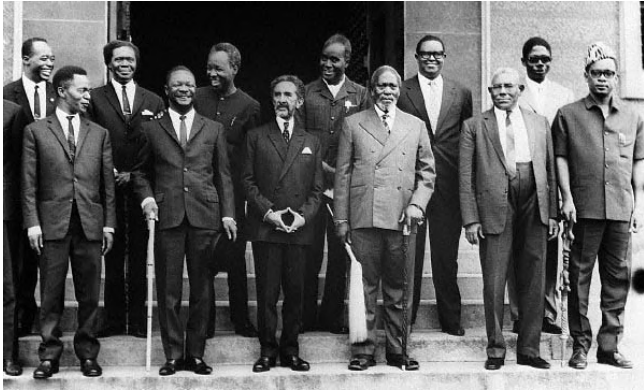
Here in London, a unique exhibition of historical artefacts title “*Remembering Adwa*”, was held at the Embassy for two weeks. The exhibition was held in collaboration with Mr Alebachew Desalegn, a well-respected private collector of Ethiopian artefacts.

## **Emperor Haileselassie’s statue unveiled at AU Headquarters**



The statue of Ethiopia’s last Emperor, Haileselassie, was unveiled at the headquarters of the African Union on 10<sup>th</sup> February in the presence of several African leaders and relatives of the Emperor.

The statue is the second to be erected inside the AU compound, after Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah, who championed pan-Africanism.



The Founding Fathers of the Organisation of African Unity

Emperor Haileselassie was among key African leaders who founded the Organization of African Unity, which later became the African Union. He oversaw the maiden meeting of the continental body in 1963.

### ***...Egyptian President takes over as new head of African Union***

Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has taken over as chair of the African Union (AU) – a post that rotates annually between the five regions of the continent.



The Egyptian leader is expected to focus on the fight against armed groups on the continent and rebuilding of countries recovering from conflict.

Sisi takes the helm from Rwandan President Paul Kagame, who focused on creating an Africa wide free-trade zone during his tenure.

### **UN refugee agency praises Ethiopia's innovative approach to refugees**

While on a four-day visit to Ethiopia, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi praised the country's generosity in hosting refugees, and the government's openness to new and innovative approaches to improve the lives of the more than 900,000 refugees and the communities hosting them.

The High Commissioner spent two days in Melkadida, a region bordering Somalia, which hosts over 200,000 refugees. He saw first-hand how a \$100 million investment by the IKEA Foundation over the last seven years has transformed the semi-arid, isolated area into a thriving community.

Grandi visited projects funded by the Foundation, including an irrigation scheme where 1,000 hectares of barren land are now lush farms that enable refugees to grow crops such as watermelon, tomatoes and corn up to three times a year.

He also visited markets supported by microfinance and other economic empowerment programmes, where refugees and the local community buy and sell their crops. The programme has been so successful that some of the crops are being exported to other regions in the country. Refugees told the High Commissioner that they are saving some of their income to improve the markets themselves.

**“What has developed here is a unique approach to the self-reliance of refugees where the Ethiopian government has been extremely open to new approaches. The host communities and refugees have also been remarkably open to working together in harmony. This is something we don't normally see.”**

*- Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees.*

At a meeting with community leaders in Dollo Ado, the High Commissioner and IKEA Foundation CEO Per Heggnes heard how the investment has had a positive impact on the entire community. They

announced that the Foundation has decided to extend their investment in the project for at least three more years to ensure the community can sustain it independently.



UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi with IKEA Foundation CEO Per Heggnes and a student. © UNHCR/Georgina Goodwin

Heggnes calls the progress he has witnessed “a dream come true.” He said its legacy is as much about helping foster harmony between the refugees and the local Ethiopians, as it is about growing the economy.

“What always happens when large numbers of refugees descend on a small community is it creates conflicts, because everyone wants to have the firewood, everyone wants to have the grazing land for their goats,” said Heggnes. “We approached this in a way to say we’re going to help the refugees and the host community come together, farm the land together, share the crops and live as sisters and brothers.”

At the Melkadida Camp, the High Commissioner visited another IKEA Foundation supported project, a secondary school where refugee and host community students have access to quality teachers, well-equipped classrooms and a supportive learning environment.

While in Ethiopia, the High Commissioner also attended the 32<sup>nd</sup> African Union (AU) Summit in Addis Ababa from 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> February, where the annual theme for 2019 is the *“Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa.”*

This year’s focus on refugees comes as the AU commemorates key legislation on forced displacement: the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention on Refugees and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2009 AU Convention on Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention).

The High Commissioner spoke about the importance of the Global Compact on Refugees, adopted by the UN General Assembly last December, which calls for more inclusion of refugees in communities where they reside and more global support for countries like Ethiopia, who continue to welcome and host them.

“This the first year we’ll implement the Global Compact on Refugees,” Grandi said. “But I tell people we’re already implementing it here in Melkadida, with development partners from programmes in irrigation and vocational training.”

While in Addis, the High Commissioner also met with President Sahle-Work Zewde, and Ato (Mr) Kebede, the Director General of the government’s refugee agency ARRA. He praised Ethiopia’s new refugee law as forward-looking and upholding the principles of the Global Compact on Refugees.



South Sudanese refugee Ariat’s son, Angakuny, was amongst the first refugee children to receive a birth certificate in Ethiopia. ©UNHCR/Diana Diaz

Addressing the media following his meeting with the President, Grandi said “the proclamation is one of the best refugee laws, not only in Africa, but in the world,” and pledged to mobilize more resources for development, “not just for refugees, but also for their hosts.”



## Ethiopia Receives Universal Health Coverage Ministerial Championship Award

The Ministry of Health received the Universal Health Coverage Ministerial Championship Award in recognition of its homegrown, grassroots-oriented primary Health Extension Programme, launched in 2004, which has significantly improved the health outcomes of Ethiopia's population.

Ms Senait Fisseha, a model health extension worker, accepted the award on behalf of more than 40,000 health extension workers at the Africa Health Agenda International Conference in Kigali, Rwanda, which was co-hosted by Rwanda's Health Ministry and the African Medical and Research Foundation (Amref Health Africa).



Ms Senait (right) with Dr Amir Abiy, Ethiopia's Minister of Health next to her

Over the past decade, Ethiopia has radically reduced the child death and maternal mortality rates and there has also been vast improvement in hygiene and sanitation coverage and a reduction in major communicable diseases.

More than 40,000 female Health Extension Workers are deployed all over the country, providing key health services through fixed and outreach bases.

### **...Five-year National Health Security Action Plan launched**

Ethiopia launched a five-year National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS), which will run from 2019 to 2023. The World Health Organization (WHO) congratulated Ethiopia for launching the action plan, which is expected to bring significant improvement to preventing, detecting and responding to health threats.

## Second Electrification Programme launched

The updated version of Ethiopia's National Electrification Programme (NEP 2.0) was launched on 27<sup>th</sup> March during the 'Africa Energy Forum: Off the Grid' and 'Regional Energy Co-operation Summit'.



Ethiopia's Minister of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, H.E. Dr. Seleshi Bekele

The National Electrification Programme was first launched at the end of 2017 with a programme framework for achieving universal access by 2025.

NEP 2.0 provides a detailed framework for the integration of off-grid technologies with grid connectivity, with both public and private sector efforts, for the achievement of 35% of off-grid access by 2025.

The Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity will be joined by Ethiopian sector leaders and international experts, to discuss the future of the bold sector reform programme recently launched, including implementation of cost reflective tariffs, further unbundling of generation and transmission, and performance improvement in sector institutions.

These measures will further attract private sector participation and investment in renewable energy.

## TRADE AND INVESTMENT

### **Northern Powerhouse mission explores business opportunities in Ethiopia**

Companies from the Northern Powerhouse (North West, North East and Yorkshire & Humber regions) visited Ethiopia from 24<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March.

The mission offered a unique opportunity for the companies to understand the variety and depth of business opportunities on offer to UK businesses in sectors including manufacturing, engineering, construction, food & liquids processing and packaging, transport and logistics, airport design consultancy and planning and renewable energy.

The delegation visited the British Embassy in Addis Ababa for political, economic and cultural briefings; industry site visits; business to business meetings; Ministry meetings and meetings with local service providers, including law firms.

The Northern Powerhouse runs 20 trade missions annually to locations all over the world in addition to the Department for International Trade's central programme of trade mission activity. As the fourth largest economy in sub-Saharan Africa and predicted to be the third largest by 2025, Ethiopia is an important market for British companies.

British exports to Ethiopia rose 135% from £80 million in 2010 to £149 million in 2017 and the number of British companies investing in the country is on the rise. More than 34 companies currently operate in Ethiopia including the likes of Pittards UK, Unilever and Diageo, bringing new job opportunities, skills transfer and hard currency.

### **Ethiopia commits to easing business hurdles**

PM Abiy said his government is taking measures to ease the process of doing business in Ethiopia.

Chairing a national steering committee in charge of introducing new reforms to improve the public credit supply system in Ethiopia, PM Abiy announced the government's desire to increase revenue, saying the existing credit supply system

has been hampering citizens and investors from starting a business. "The red tape and lack of access to finance have been identified as major hurdles in this regard."

PM Abiy stated that reforms on service delivery systems and legal frameworks that inhibit ease of business will be carried out to correct problems. Reforms are also currently underway to improve access to supply of public finance and loans.

### **Africa Free Trade Agreement comes into force after Ethiopia and Gambia ratify**

The Ethiopian Parliament, on 21<sup>st</sup> March, approved Ethiopia's membership of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, bringing it one step closer to implementation.

The Agreement was launched last March in Kigali, Rwanda, during the African Union Summit, where it was signed by 44 countries. Since then, eight more have signed and on 2<sup>nd</sup> April Gambia became the 22<sup>nd</sup> nation to ratify, meaning the historic agreement can now come into force.



The African Heads of States and Governments pose during AU Summit for the agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area in Rwanda, in March 2018.

The trade Agreement, one of the biggest since the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), aims to create a single market in Africa.

Once it kicks in, AfCFTA aims to increase intra-African trade by 52% by the year 2022, remove tariffs on 90% of goods, liberalise services and tackle other barriers to intra-African trade, such as long delays at border posts.

If all 55 African countries join a free trade area, it will be the world's largest by number of countries, covering more than 1.2 billion people with a combined GDP of \$2.5 trillion.

### **Unilever inaugurates state-of-the-art toothpaste factory in Ethiopia**

Unilever has inaugurated a world-class oral care plant, the first of its kind in Ethiopia, at Unilever's factory in Eastern Industry Zone, Dukem, to spur growth and investment in Ethiopia.



Production of *Signal* will join previous Unilever investment in the soap, detergent, and Knorr manufacturing plants inaugurated in 2016 and 2017.



Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Bruno Witvoet, Unilever Africa President said “From today we will see locally produced *Signal* toothpaste from a world class oral care plant and, even better, we are inaugurating it with a 100% female workforce. The rising incidence of tooth decay is one of the major reasons kids miss school and increases medical fees for families. We can help stop that and nothing represents our Unilever values better than helping build an economy through a locally manufactured global brand like *Signal* with a strong purpose at its heart.”

“Today’s launch is also testament to Unilever’s strong commitment to expanding its business in Ethiopia and create more job opportunities while also working towards improving the lives and wellbeing of Ethiopian consumers at large,” he said.

Unilever Manufacturing PLC was established in 2015 in Ethiopia and is already supporting a growing network of Ethiopian suppliers, distributors and traders.

### **Hyundai opens vehicle assembly plant in Ethiopia**

In a major boost to Ethiopia’s automotive industry, Hyundai Motor Co has opened a 10,000-a-year \$17.5 million vehicle capacity assembly plant in Addis Ababa - its first factory in East Africa.



Foreign Minister, Dr Workneh Gebeyehu, inaugurated the assembly plant affirming the government’s commitment to continue supporting investors in the automotive industry.

Haile Gebrselassie, the former Olympian-turned businessman, has partnered with the South Korean firm in a venture that will see some of the cars exported to the region.

The firm's CEO, Won Hee Lee, said they were drawn by Ethiopia’s growth, one of Africa’s fastest for more than a decade.

“We have good opportunities in Ethiopia. We believe the economic growth in Ethiopia will be faster than any other country in Africa,” he told reporters at the inauguration ceremony.

### *...Ethiopia's untapped automotive sector attracts investors*

Ethiopia produces around 10,000 commercial and other vehicles a year for its home market. It imported more than 40,000 cars in 2017.

Assemblers in the country include Chinese brands Geely, FAW and BYD, as well as Lifan.

Earlier this year, a Memorandum of Understanding to develop an automotive industry was signed between Ethiopia and Volkswagen, for the establishment of a vehicle assembly facility, localisation of automotive components, mobility concepts such as app-based car sharing and ride hailing, and the opening of a training centre.

Fitch Solutions recently noted that Ethiopia's automotive sector remains largely untapped. Its attractiveness as an investment destination is continuously improving and will continue to attract investment, especially into the automotive sector.

As economic liberalisation efforts kick in, Ethiopia's automotive sector is well poised to become a regional powerhouse in the East African region over the coming decade, with the manufacturing sector standing to benefit the most owing to the vast growth potential in this untapped market, and the positive government efforts aimed at promoting the sector.

### **Ethiopia may triple coffee output in five years**

Ethiopia, Africa's biggest coffee producer, is introducing production and marketing reforms that could triple its output in five years.

The Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority said the country is replacing old trees and pruning existing ones to allow new stems to sprout as aging trees become less productive. That could help boost output to between 1.2 million and 1.8 million tons by 2024, up from an estimated 600,000 tons in the recent harvest.

Old trees account for about 60% of the 1 million hectares (2.5 million acres) of trees in production, while another 1.5 million hectares aren't yet yielding beans, according to the authority. New trees in the country, where smallholders account for almost all output, take about three to four years to start producing.

Marketing reforms are helping producers skip some stages of the supply chain, increasing income for farmers, who currently receive about 60% of the price of coffee. "Under the new reforms, farmers can directly export," Adugna Debela Bote, director general of the authority said. "We are creating awareness, and this will materialise this production year."

Ethiopia exports the bulk of its beans to Europe and the U.S., and is trying to tap new markets in Asia, especially China, South Korea and Japan.





Muslim girls in the colourful historic city of Harar

# Ethiopia records biggest growth in World Travel and Tourism

Ethiopia's Travel and Tourism economy grew by 48.6% in 2018 – the largest of any country in the world – according to the World Travel and Tourism Council's (WTTC) annual review of the economic impact and social importance of the sector.

In 2018, Travel and Tourism contributed \$7.4 billion to the country's economy, an increase of \$2.2 billion on 2017. The sector now represents 9.4% of Ethiopia's total economy.

The Council's research compares the Travel and Tourism sectors across 185 countries, and shows that in 2018 in Ethiopia the sectors:

- Significantly outpaced the global growth rate of 3.9%, the African growth rate of 5.6%
- Supported 2.2 million jobs, or 8.3% total employment
- Was primarily driven by leisure travellers: 79% of the spending was generated by leisure visitors and 21% from business travellers

- Is strongly weighted towards international travel: 77% of spending came from international travellers and 23% from domestic

Commenting on the numbers, Gloria Guevara, WTTC President and CEO said:

**“Ethiopia's Travel and Tourism boom was one of the great success stories of 2018. This has been driven by the very strong performance of aviation in the country and the development of Addis Ababa as a dynamic and growing regional hub.”**

“Travel and Tourism in Ethiopia now accounts for one in every \$11 in the entire economy and one in 12 of all jobs. I would like to acknowledge the country's commitment to the power of Travel and Tourism to drive economic growth, job creation and social enhancement.”

## Ethiopian Airlines named “African Champions of the Year”

During a special Ceremony organised by the Africa CEO Forum in Kigali, Ethiopian Airlines was awarded the “African Champion of the Year” award.



Receiving the award, CEO Tewolde Gebremariam, said “Thank you very much for the strong vote of confidence that Africa has given us even at the most challenging time in our history. We are still mourning the loss of the lives of our esteemed

passengers and colleagues in the tragic accident on ET 302 on 10<sup>th</sup> March. My heartfelt condolences go out to the families of the victims, the country and the continent of Africa... Thank you all for all the support you have given us and continue to give us. Together, we will make Africa great and we will put our continent in its right place on the global stage.”

### **...Ethiopian celebrates International Women’s Day with all-women flight**

Ethiopian Airlines once again celebrated International Women’s Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March by operating an all-female flight crew from flight deck all the way to the ground including airport operations, flight dispatch, load control, ramp operation, on-board logistics, safety and security, catering and air traffic control, on the Addis Ababa – Stockholm - Oslo route.

CEO Tewolde GebreMariam, said, “Women [have been] an integral part of our success story from the start and with this dedicated flight we honour and celebrate their indispensable contribution to our aviation Group.



Ethiopian Airlines has previously operated all-female flights to Bangkok, Kigali, Lagos, and Buenos Aires.

## SPORTS

### **London, are you ready? The Ethiopians are coming!**



The Virgin Money London Marathon is set to take place on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April.

In the men’s elite race, Ethiopia’s 22-year-old marathon star Shura Kitata returns to London Marathon after finishing runner-up to Kenya’s Eliud Kipchoge last year. The men’s race is set to be a mouth-watering clash with Britain’s Sir Mo Farah and world record holder and defending champion Eliud Kipchoge set to run.

In the women’s field, the Ethiopian trio of Tirunesh Dibaba, the three-time Olympic champion on the track and third fastest woman of all time, who finished second in London and won Chicago in 2017, Tadelech Bekele, who finished third in London last year and 21 year old Roza Dereje, second in Chicago and winner of the Dubai Marathon in 2018, are also confirmed to run.

TEAM ETHIOPIA	
Men	Women
Mosinet GEREMEW	Tadelech BEKELE
Tola Shura KITATA	Tirunesh DIBABA
Leule GEBRSELASSIE	Roza DEREJE
Tamirat TOLA	Birhane DIBABA
Mule WASIHUN	Haftamnes TESFAY

## Ethiopians shine at Birmingham Indoor Athletics

Team Ethiopia performed superbly during the IAAF World Indoor Tour in Birmingham, England.

Samuel Tefera broke the long-standing world indoor 1500m record finishing in 3:31.04, taking 0.14 off the previous record set by Morocco's Hicham El Guerrouj in Stuttgart in 1997.



Yomif Kejelcha followed Samuel and finished second in an outright personal best of 3:31.58.

By winning the women's 3000m, Almaz Samuel became the first confirmed World Indoor Tour champion of 2019.



She finished in 8:54.60 leading an Ethiopian 1-2-3 with Axumawit Embaye and Meskerem Mamo following closely behind.

## Yomif Kejelcha breaks World Indoor Mile Record

It was third time lucky for Ethiopia's Yomif Kejelcha, who smashed the world indoor record for the mile,

clocking 3:47.01 at the Bruce Lehane Invitational in Boston, Massachusetts, on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

Yomif took 1.44 seconds off the previous world indoor record set by Hicham El Guerrouj in 1997. Moments later, his 1500m split was confirmed at 3:31.25, making him the third-fastest indoor performer in history behind Tefera and El Guerrouj.



Yomif's mile time is also an outright Ethiopian record, bettering the outdoor mark of 3:48.60 set by Aman Wote.

Speaking to the BBC, the young Ethiopian athlete said his big plan is to break fellow compatriot, Kenenisa Bekele's, 5000m record.

## ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS

### Africa's women are rising to challenge gender discrimination

**FT** FINANCIAL TIMES

In an opinion piece in the *Financial Times*, ahead of International Women's Day, Ethiopia's first female President, Sahle-Work

Zewde says: "Change is sweeping across Africa. Systemic barriers to gender equity are falling and a growing number of women leaders are reshaping the continent."

Rwanda, Seychelles and my own country of Ethiopia now have gender-balanced cabinets, with some of the most powerful posts occupied by women.


A recent World Bank report highlights that Africa is seeing more reforms in promoting gender equality than anywhere else in the world.



As economic growth continues to expand in Ethiopia and across our continent, there is growing recognition that investing in gender equality is both the right and smart approach. Africa's women are rising and it's time the world took note.

Read more: <http://bit.ly/FT-Ethiopia>

## Top 10 destinations for foodies, 2019

 Planning the ultimate foodie getaway for 2019? BBC Good Food made a list of their top 10 foodie destinations that should be on anyone's bucket list and Ethiopia was among them.



"Ethiopia is arguably home to Africa's most unique traditional food culture. The staple *injera* (a sour, spongy flatbread) is the base for a rainbow mezze of salads, '*wats*' (stews), '*tibs*' (stir-fries) and pulses...As the birthplace of coffee, Ethiopia also has a vibrant culture centred around the drink, known locally as *bunna*. The Coffee Ceremony is regarded as a sign of respect and friendship, and is a cultural rite passed down the generations."

Read more: <http://bit.ly/BBCGF-Ethiopia>

## The Last Wolves



The Ethiopian Highlands are home to some of Africa's highest peaks. They're also the last (the only) stronghold of the continent's rarest carnivore: the

Ethiopian wolf.



There are currently only about 500 left in the world, distributed among six isolated populations, all on the highlands. The Bale Mountains in the southeast is home to the largest of the six populations. This is where researchers at the non-profit Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme have focused most of their efforts to learn about the wolves and the threats they face.

Read more: <http://bit.ly/ETHWolves>

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Published by the Public Diplomacy Department, Embassy of Ethiopia, London SW7 1PZ  
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