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THE BRIEF

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ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY, LONDON

Africa Unites on Climate

THE BRIEF

CONTENTS



3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

*At the G20, Ethiopia Advances Africa's
Vision for Inclusive Growth*

5. PEACE, DIPLOMACY, AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

*Advancing Peace, Integration, and
Influence: Ethiopia's Perspective*

7. TRADE AND ECONOMIC POLICY

*From Perception to Performance: Africa's
Trade Realities and Opportunities*

9. CLIMATE LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

*Preparing for COP32 with Ethiopia at
Africa's Climate Table*

11. ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Ethiopia Bets on an Electric Future

14. ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

The Human Behind the Conservation



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and President Cyril Ramaphosa meet with their respective high-level delegations at the G20 Summit in Johannesburg.

At the 2025 G20 Summit, Ethiopia's participation reflected a country assuming a confident and purposeful role in global affairs. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's presence marked an important moment for the country's international standing and, more broadly, for Africa's evolving place in global decision-making. Speaking before the assembled leaders, he described a nation in the midst of a significant transformation and a continent increasingly intent on shaping its own develop-

AT THE G20, ETHIOPIA ADVANCES AFRICA'S VISION FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH

ment narrative.

The Prime Minister, in his remarks, repeatedly emphasized that inclusive growth is not simply a moral ideal but a practical path toward national resilience. He described a country investing heavily in modern industry, agriculture, and digital infrastructure, and he presented Ethiopia as a place where young entrepreneurs and farmers are beginning to redefine what is possible.

The concept of shared progress, long central to his domestic agenda, was offered to the G20 as a lens through which global economic cooperation might become more effective and more equitable.

Debt relief formed one of the central themes of Prime Minister Abiy's message. He urged the world's major economies to view support for debt-burdened nations not as a temporary fix but as a

way to unlock investments in classrooms, hospitals, transport networks, and other foundations of long-term prosperity. He also emphasized the importance of climate-responsive development, pointing to Ethiopia's large-scale reforestation efforts and its growing portfolio of renewable energy projects. These investments, he argued, are essential not only for Ethiopia's future but also for Africa's ability to contribute constructively to global climate goals.

The Prime Minister's vision aligned neatly with the commitments em-



Inclusive growth is the most practical path to a resilient nation—and a stronger Africa.”

— Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed

bedded in the G20 Johannesburg Declaration. The final document stressed the urgency of addressing unsustainable debt, the need for a just energy transition, and the importance of expanding access to technology and digital infrastructure. It called for strengthening social protection, supporting smallholder farmers, and promoting sustainable industrialization. These themes closely reflected the priorities outlined in Prime Minister Abiy's speech, reinforcing the sense that Ethiopia's message is part of a broader shift in the global conversation about development and equity.

Ethiopia's engagement extended across the Summit's many side meetings. During the Compact with Africa gathering, an initiative that supports countries working to strengthen their investment climate through sustained reform, Prime Minister Abiy emphasized the need for stronger financial guarantees, deeper private-sector partnerships, and renewed support for large-scale transformation. He pointed to Ethiopia's own reforms in finance, telecommunications, and capital markets as evidence that African economies

are ready to match internal reforms with ambitious investment strategies when global support is consistent and predictable.

Building on these themes, the Prime Minister also held a series of bilateral meetings with leaders of international organizations and partner countries, using the same spirit of constructive engagement he highlighted in his remarks. The discussions ranged from climate resilience to regional stability and development financing—areas where inclusive, cooperative approaches are essential. For Ethiopia, these exchanges provided a valuable opportunity to deepen partnerships and to present itself as an active, solutions-driven international actor ready to collaborate on shared challenges. His meeting with the United Kingdom's Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, further underscored this commitment, as both leaders explored ways to advance the strong and longstanding ties between Ethiopia and the United Kingdom.

Taken together, Ethiopia's participation at the G20 conveyed a clear message about its diplomatic posture. The country is seeking not only to benefit from global initiatives but also to contribute ideas and experience to the world's policy debates. As Prime Minister Abiy framed it, nations like Ethiopia have stories of innovation, resilience, and ambition that belong at the center of global economic dialogue.

The Johannesburg summit suggested that Africa's voice is being heard with growing seriousness. Ethiopia's engagement, rooted in a confident articulation of national priorities and a willingness to collaborate, illustrated how African countries are preparing to shape the global agenda at a moment when new ideas and new partners are in high demand. In that sense, the significance of Ethiopia's presence at the G20 reached beyond the summit halls. It pointed toward a continent intent on defining its future within a rapidly changing international order, and a country stepping forward to help lead that conversation. ■

Advancing Peace, Integration, And Influence: Ethiopia's Perspective

Addis Ababa has long been a hub of African diplomacy, and in November 2025 it hosted high-level forums where Ethiopia's foreign policy priorities were articulated with clarity and purpose. Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos addressed two major gatherings, presenting a consistent narrative that highlighted Ethiopia's commitment to regional stability, continental integration, and a proactive African presence in global affairs.

At the Foreign Policy Forum on Developments in the Horn of Africa, convened by Horn Review and Addis Ababa University, Foreign Minister Gedion underscored Ethiopia's pursuit of peace and cooperative development. He emphasized that sustainable solutions in the Horn depend on understanding the region's historical complexities, fostering dialogue, and cultivating mutual respect among neighbouring countries. Chronic tensions with Eritrea, he noted, stem from a mix of historical grievances, structural challenges, and divergent political approaches. Ethiopia's restraint in the face of provocations reflects a deliberate choice to prioritize long-term economic recovery and stability, even while the country maintains its right to self-defence. Foreign Minister Gedion presented Ethiopia's approach as one rooted in responsibility, regional cooperation,



Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos addressing the Foreign Policy Forum at Addis Ababa University.

and the pursuit of shared prosperity. In addressing the historical context of Ethio-Eritrean relations, Foreign Minister Gedion traced the conflicts over decades, from federation and unification to secession and intermittent war. While acknowledging the aspirations of both peoples for peaceful coexistence, he highlighted structural drivers of tension including Eri-



Audience at the Africa's Rising Influence conference, co-hosted by Chatham House, UNDP, and Amani Africa.

trea's governance model and regional posturing. Ethiopia's foreign policy, as he described it, seeks to balance strategic patience with active engagement, promoting dialogue and development as pathways to durable stability.

Earlier in the month at a conference co-organised by the Chatham House, UNDP and Amani Africa on Africa's Rising Influence, Foreign Minister Gedion presented Ethiopia's vision within a broader continental framework. He argued that Africa's rising agency in global affairs requires more than presence; it demands coordinated strategies, institutional coherence, and tangible outcomes for African citizens. Ethiopia's participation in regional integration projects, particularly the African Continental Free Trade Area, reflects a practical commitment to building interdependent economies. Foreign Minister Gedion noted the recent shipment of goods from Ethiopia to Kenya, Somalia, and South Africa as a symbolic yet concrete step toward intra-African trade and shared prosperity.

Ethiopia's vision extends beyond economic integration. Foreign Minister Gedion stressed the importance of African-led approaches to peace and security, advocating for reforms in global governance structures that reflect the continent's contributions and interests. He called for permanent African representation in decision-making bodies such as the United Nations Security Council and for financial frameworks that enable countries to invest confidently in development, climate adaptation, and regional security initiatives.

Throughout both forums, a consistent theme emerged. Ethiopia's foreign policy is built on three pillars: advancing peace through restraint and dialogue, strengthening regional and continental integration, and playing its role in asserting Africa's influence in a multipolar global order. The country's engagement in the Horn of Africa illustrates the first, while participation in AfCFTA, the African Union, and the G20 exemplifies the second and third. Foreign Minister Gedion framed these actions as part of a long-term strategy to secure tangible outcomes for citizens while contributing to a stable, interconnected, and self-determined continent.

Ethiopia's approach also acknowledges the role of soft power. Foreign Minister Gedion highlighted the continent's culture, creativity, and innovation as assets that complement political and economic influence. By telling Africa's story in its own voice, Ethiopia aims to reshape global perceptions and embed African perspectives at the center of international discourse.

Taken together, the remarks of Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos articulate a coherent vision: Ethiopia seeks to advance peace, integrate economies and societies, and translate Africa's presence in global forums into actionable influence. The twin imperatives of regional cooperation and global engagement, grounded in African agency and responsibility, define the contours of Ethiopia's foreign policy today. In a world of shifting power dynamics, the country presents itself as a partner, a mediator, and a participant in shaping a future where the Horn of Africa and the continent at large can contribute constructively to global governance, development, and security. ■

FROM PERCEPTION TO PERFORMANCE

Africa's Trade Realities And Opportunities



BY H.E. AMBASSADOR BIRUK MEKONNEN

Africa's economic story is often misunderstood. Headlines still question productivity, reliability, and export readiness, while overlooking a quieter reality: African firms are increasingly resilient, innovative, and connected—especially in times of global uncertainty. Across the continent, governments and businesses are proving that perception often lags behind performance, and closing this confidence gap is key to unlocking Africa's potential.

In Ethiopia, for example, last year's coffee exports soared 147 percent, reaching record highs. This was no accident. Policy reforms enabled direct exports, improved traceability, and opened new markets. At the same time, African financial instruments like the Afreximbank Trade Facilitation Programme provided crucial liquidity, allowing exporters to maintain operations even in tight times. And digital tools—from e-commerce platforms to interoperable payment systems—helped firms reach customers when traditional logistics faltered.

Ethiopia's experience reflects a broader lesson for the continent: African firms are capable and hard-working, but they need systems that let them perform at their best. Misconceptions about labour productivity or upfront payments ignore a crucial factor: many African firms operate under liquidity constraints and financing gaps that their peers in other regions do not face. Hence, this behaviour is driven by the finance gap, not by culture. But the

architecture is shifting: the Pan African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) now connects 150+ commercial banks, about 15 central banks, and more than a dozen switches, enabling real-time cross-border payments in local currencies across 17+ countries. This is exactly the kind of backbone that reduces liquidity pressure and normalises payment terms.

Value addition is another part of the story. Across Africa, governments are investing in local processing and manufacturing to reduce dependency on raw commodities. Ethiopia's import substitution strategy, for example, has boosted domestic production of chemicals, plastics, glass, and agro-processing goods, creating jobs, saving foreign exchange, and strengthening the economy against global shocks. Industrial parks and agro-industrial zones are multiplying these effects, producing goods for both domestic consumption and export.

And then there is the African Continental Free Trade Area. AfCFTA holds enormous promise for intra-African commerce, yet adoption remains uneven. Institutional complexity, manual procedures, and dollar-dependent payments slow trade across borders. But solutions are emerging. Digital customs, interoperable border systems, and digital payments and regional payment platforms are already simplifying transactions. Ethiopia's first AfCFTA shipments to Kenya, Somalia, and South Africa illustrate how integration can work in practice, while bilateral arrangements, such as a local-currency swaps demonstrate innovative ways to navigate foreign exchange pressures. ►

Perhaps the most important challenge is perception itself. African workers are productive, firms can meet global standards, and export successes are growing steadily. Yet outdated narratives continue to inflate perceived risks, undermining investor confidence. Closing this perception gap and correcting the wrong narration requires making performance visible through data, strengthening trade and financial systems, and supporting firm-level reliability through certification, digital quality controls, and supply chain clusters.

The story is larger than any single country. Across Africa, these efforts—modernising trade systems, facilitating finance, and investing in industrial capacity—are transforming vulnerabilities into strengths.

AfCFTA is not just a trade agreement; it is a vehicle for continental confidence, demonstrating that when systems work, African businesses can thrive regionally and globally.

Africa's trade narrative is shifting. From perception to performance, the continent is proving its resilience, reliability, and readiness. The challenge now is for systems, policies, and global observers to catch up with reality—and recognize that Africa is not only capable of participating in global markets but shaping them. ■

This article was authored by His Excellency Biruk Mekonnen, Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the United Kingdom of Great Britain.



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Members of the Ethiopian delegation at COP30 in Belém, Brazil.

Preparing for COP32 with Ethiopia at Africa's Climate Table

At the close of the COP30 plenary in Belém, Ethiopia secured a milestone moment on the global climate stage. Addis Ababa was confirmed as the host of COP32 in 2027, a choice that reflects not only the country's growing technical capacity but also Africa's coordinated endorsement of its climate leadership. The decision capped a year of strategic diplomacy, anchored by the Second Africa Climate Summit held in Addis Ababa only months before COP30, and signalled that the continent is ready to shape the next phase of global climate action.

The decision reflected a year of coordinated African diplomacy, Ethiopia's expanding climate portfolio, and the political weight of Africa Climate Summit (ACS2). Together, these developments positioned Ethiopia as Africa's most broadly acceptable and technically prepared candidate.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed welcomed the endorsement by all African states and the global community. He said the outcome demonstrated "confidence in Ethiopia's leadership in climate action and its capacity to host major global events," adding that Ethiopia would deliver "an inclusive COP32 that advances collective action."

Africa's Unified Support and What It Signifies

African backing for Ethiopia's candidature was cohesive. The African Group of Negotiators adopted Ethiopia as the continental nominee well before COP30 opened. By the time the

proposal reached the UNFCCC plenary, it had already received strong continental consensus.

For Ethiopia, this support carries diplomatic weight. AU Commission Chairperson Mr. Mahamoud Ali Youssouf described Ethiopia's selection as "a recognition of longstanding leadership," citing the Green Legacy reforestation campaign and Ethiopia's steady role in continental climate diplomacy. His statement underscored why the choice resonated across African capitals. Ethiopia has consistently framed climate issues not only as environmental imperatives but also as questions of development, security, and economic growth. ►



Leaders of the Ethiopian delegation at COP30, Belém, Brazil.

ACS2 and the Addis Ababa Declaration Shaped Belém

The Second Africa Climate Summit, hosted in Addis Ababa, was essential in setting the tone for Africa's engagement in Belém. The summit brought together more than 26,000 participants and produced the Addis Ababa Declaration, a detailed collective position on finance, carbon markets, adaptation, and African-led innovation.

In Belém, negotiators repeatedly referenced the declaration while calling for improved access to climate finance and a stronger role for African institutions. Two initiatives championed by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the Africa Climate Innovation Compact and the African Climate Facility, which aim to mobilize significant annual financing for adaptation and green growth were highlighted during the Belém Summit. International partners recognized that these proposals strengthened Africa's agenda and helped clarify priorities during negotiations.

Ethiopia's Actions at Belém Reinforced Its Case

Throughout COP30, Ethiopia's delegation played a visible and technically focused role. Minister of Planning and Development Fitsum Assefa led engagements with the LDC Group, Turkey, Australia, Azerbaijan, and several multilateral institutions. Ethiopia's pavilion hosted sessions on carbon market readiness, restoration, climate finance, and regional cooperation.

Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos, recently appointed President-Designate of COP32, remarked that Africa's climate challenges required "predictable and accessible finance" and warned that global ambition would fall short without structural reforms. Ethiopia's updated NDC and its new carbon market strategy were among the most detailed documents presented by any delegation in Belém.

The themes that resonated most strongly were Ethiopia's domestic programs. The Green Legacy initiative, which has planted billions of seedlings, renewable energy expansion anchored by hydropower, and a growing legal framework for carbon markets were repeatedly cited by international partners as evidence of sustained commitment.

Context From Belém: A World Still Searching for Momentum

Belém's leaders' summit reminded delegates of the urgency surrounding global negotiations. Representatives from Least Developed, Small Island, and Developing States warned of mounting climate impacts in their countries and voiced frustra-

tion over delays in accessing financing, notably from the Loss and Damage Fund established in 2022. Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva called for a practical roadmap to reduce deforestation and strengthen global carbon markets, arguing that countries with low emissions should be fairly compensated within international trading systems.

Against this backdrop, Ethiopia's bid resonated with countries seeking a host that could credibly speak on resilience, adaptation, and climate-aligned development.

A Rapid Start to COP32 Preparations

Immediately after the announcement, Ethiopia initiated its preparations. The Prime Minister's Office confirmed that Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos would serve as COP32 President-Designate. A national steering committee met with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to outline early logistical, diplomatic, and policy priorities.

Ethiopia's advantage lies in its existing infrastructure. Addis Ababa is home to the African Union, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and numerous international institutions. Ethiopian Airlines offers extensive global connections, and recent experience hosting ACS2 demonstrated Ethiopia's capacity to manage large multinational events.

A Strategic Moment for Ethiopia and Africa

Hosting COP32 presents Ethiopia with a dual mandate. Domestically, it must continue progress on emissions reduction, clean energy, sustainable land management, and carbon trading systems. Diplomatically, it will be expected to coordinate African positions, elevate issues affecting vulnerable states, and craft a COP agenda that delivers more than symbolic commitments.

Ethiopia's trajectory toward a green, resilient economy reinforces its credibility as a global climate leader. International partners have recognized this approach as an example for other developing countries seeking to combine ambitious climate action with sustainable development.

Ethiopia's journey from ACS2 in Addis Ababa to the global spotlight in Belém offers more than a diplomatic victory. It reflects a broader continental shift in which African countries are asserting their role as architects, not just participants, of climate policy. With COP32 on the horizon, Ethiopia faces both opportunity and responsibility: to showcase its domestic achievements, elevate Africa's collective priorities, and set a benchmark for how climate ambition can align with sustainable development. The world will now be watching as Ethiopia translates recognition into action. ■

ETHIOPIA BETS ON AN ELECTRIC FUTURE



When Ethiopia's Ministry of Transport and Logistics unveiled its E-Mobility Strategy and Implementation Plan (2025–2030) in recent weeks, the announcement did not come with the fanfare of a technological revolution. Yet in a country grappling with fast-growing cities, climate pressures, and rising transport demand, the document represents something far larger than a policy release; it is a declaration of intent, a statement that Ethiopia is ready to reimagine how its citizens move, breathe, and live.

The 56-page strategy, developed over a year with contributions from government agencies, urban planners, industry experts, and civil society, lays out a vision for an electric transportation system that could fundamentally reshape Ethiopia's mobility landscape. It is ambitious, technical, at times sober, and yet unmistakably hopeful. In it, the government positions electric mobility not just as a climate necessity, but also as an economic catalyst, a public-health intervention, and a gateway to a more modern, equitable urban future.

A Strategy Rooted in Urgency and Opportunity

Ethiopia's transportation sector is growing rapidly to meet the needs of its expanding urban population. Road-based vehicles, including cars, minibuses, three-wheelers, and freight trucks, account for more than 90 percent of transport emissions, with Addis Ababa contributing a significant share of national road emissions. The rapid rebuilding of Ethiopia's cities and their bustling streets highlights the importance of modernizing mobility while ensuring cleaner, more efficient transportation for residents.

The urgency is not solely environmental. Climate change is a global challenge, and Ethiopia, like all nations, is both affected and responsible for acting. Droughts, floods, and other climate pressures increasingly test the limits of resilience. In response, Ethiopia has committed to restoring nature through initiatives such as the Green Legacy, planting billions of trees, and promoting a green economy where



Fast-growing Addis Ababa exemplifies the rising demand for electric vehicles in Ethiopia; just last week, Ethio Telecom opened its third high-capacity EV charging station.

policies in energy, transport, and urban development align to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while promoting inclusive growth.

Fuel imports weigh heavily on foreign-exchange reserves. The transport sector faces rising demand without adequate infrastructure; yet this is precisely where the government sees opportunity.

“The convergence of climate imperatives, technological innovation, and changing expectations gives Ethiopia the chance to leap into the clean-mobility era,” the strategy declares. Electric vehicles, the government emphasizes, are not a luxury; they are a pathway to a more resilient and competitive economy.

The strategy’s goals reflect this vision. It outlines a national push to deploy charging stations, create EV-friendly urban plans, encourage the shift to electric buses and commercial vehicles, develop local technical capacity, and expand renewable energy generation to support the fleet that

will plug into it.

The Promise of Cleaner, Smarter Cities

At the heart of the document is a vision of cities that move differently. Addis Ababa, where diesel buses and aging minibuses remain the backbone of mobility, stands to benefit the most. Electric buses, which are zero-emission, quieter, and cheaper to operate, could cut pollution dramatically and transform the daily commute for hundreds of thousands.

The strategy emphasizes transit-oriented development, underscoring the need to build compact neighbourhoods around public transport and charging hubs. It is a subtle but meaningful shift. Rather than accommodating more cars, Ethiopia aims to redesign cities around efficiency, walkability, and clean mobility. By integrating e-mobility into broader urban planning, the initiative touches multiple sectors, from housing to energy and from local manufacturing to public services, creating exciting opportunities for investors to participate in shaping a sustainable urban ecosystem. ➤

This emphasis reflects a broader global trend, with a uniquely Ethiopian approach. The strategy supports a direct transition to electric mobility for public transport and commercial vehicles, aiming to accelerate electrification while expanding access to cleaner, more efficient transportation for all citizens.

Economics as a Driving Force

The economic logic is compelling. Electric vehicles cost more upfront but far less to maintain. For a country that spends significant foreign currency on petroleum imports, the shift holds strategic value. EV adoption can reduce the burden on the national budget, spur local assembly industries, and create employment in charging infrastructure, battery maintenance, and technical training.

Already, the government has rolled out sweeping tax exemptions for EV imports, making Ethiopia one of the most attractive EV markets in Africa. Beyond policy, this is a clear invitation for domestic and international investors to take part in the emerging electric transport ecosystem. Strategic investment in charging stations, battery assembly, and urban integration promises both returns and contribution to national development goals.

The Infrastructure Question

Yet, beneath the optimism lies a practical question; can Ethiopia build the infrastructure fast enough? The country's power grid, largely sourced from hydropower, is expanding but still faces areas where reliability and coverage are improving gradually. Rolling out charging stations from Addis Ababa to regional towns will require coordination, investment, and resilience.

The strategy acknowledges these hurdles. It calls for public-private partnerships, grid modernization, and incorporation of solar-powered charging hubs in off-grid areas. It outlines safety guidelines, technical standards, and regulatory frameworks that have been missing from Ethiopia's EV landscape until now. In doing so, it demonstrates something important; electrifying transport is not merely about importing or assembling vehicles, it is about building an integrated ecosystem that supports sustainable

urban growth, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and invites cross-sector participation.

Why This Strategy Matters

Ethiopia is not the first country to adopt an e-mobility strategy, but the stakes here are distinct. This is a nation whose development trajectory is increasingly shaped by its pursuit of climate neutrality. It is a country whose cities must embrace smarter growth, shaping the future of urban living. Young people, who make up more than 70 percent of the population, are eager for technological progress.

The strategy matters because it is a rare policy document that speaks not only to emissions and energy use but also to aspiration. It envisions an Ethiopia that breathes cleaner air, spends less on fossil fuels, embraces modern industry, and aligns its growth with global climate commitments.

Perhaps most importantly, it conveys confidence, not in the sense of certainty, but in readiness. Ethiopia is not naïve about the challenges ahead, but it has chosen to step forward anyway.

A Roadmap, Not the Destination

The 2025–2030 E-Mobility Strategy is far from a quick fix. Electrifying transport is a marathon, not a sprint. Implementation will require discipline, funding, partnerships, and public buy-in. The document signals that Ethiopia understands both the magnitude of the work and the promise of the reward.

In a nation where mobility shapes daily life—from the streets of Addis Ababa to the roads of Hawassa, Mekelle, and dozens of other cities—this strategy represents more than a policy shift. It is an invitation to imagine a different future; quieter roads, cleaner air, cities built for people rather than vehicles, and a transportation system aligned with a sustainable, prosperous Ethiopia. ■

For readers interested in exploring the full strategy in detail, the Ministry of Transport and Logistics has made the complete document available here

https://www.motl.gov.et/sites/default/files/resource/V4_Oct%2010_E-mobility%20Strategy%20and%20Implementation%20Plan.pdf

THE HUMAN BEHIND THE CONSERVATION

Kumara Wakjira has spent more than three decades in service to Ethiopia's wildlife. Growing up surrounded by the country's diverse landscapes and rich biodiversity, he developed a deep sense of responsibility toward nature that would guide his life. Today he leads the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority and has been recognized with the Prince William Award for Conservation in Africa, the highest honour at the Tusk Conservation Awards in London for his outstanding contribution to preserving the continent's wildlife.

Conservation, Kumara says, is about survival. It is existential and about humanity. It is not a luxury. He speaks from experience. Ethiopia faces vast arid regions where water and moisture are scarce, and wildlife populations are un-

der constant pressure. "There are a lot of challenges. Their habitat is being destroyed," he says.

Kumara approaches conservation with precision and focus. He prefers to tackle one species at a time. His early work involved the Nile crocodile, which had come into frequent conflict with fishermen. "There was a lot of killing. The crocodiles sometimes got entangled in nets. The regional agriculture bureau took my recommendation and banned the use of some nets. The killing of Nile crocodiles stopped and their population began to recover," he recalls.

Another of his pioneering projects took him to Bale Mountain National Park. For three years he tracked an elusive primate that had not been formally recorded in the park. His meticulous research revealed its feeding behaviour, distri-



bution, abundance, and altitudinal range. The data became instrumental in supporting the nomination of Bale Mountain National Park as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. “It took me three years just to follow the monkey,” he remembers with a smile.

Kumara is also deeply committed to the rangers who protect Ethiopia’s parks. He helped establish the Ethiopian Rangers Association to recognize their dedication and strengthen their skills. “Rangers in conservation are sacrificing their lives to protect nature and the planet. They deserve the highest recognition,” he says. Colleagues echo this admiration. One wildlife researcher reflects, “Kumara deserves a lot of recognition. He works tirelessly. All the success stories in this organization are due to his leadership. I always wish I could be like Kumara, but I couldn’t.”

The Prince William Award for Conservation in Africa is one of the highest honours recognizing lifetime achievement in conservation. Presented annually by Tusk, in partnership with HRH The Prince of Wales, it celebrates individuals who have transformed the protection of wildlife across Afri-

ca. In receiving it, Kumara not only joins a distinguished group of conservation leaders but also serves as an inspiration for Ethiopians and Africans committed to safeguarding their natural heritage.

His vision extends beyond national borders. “Animals do not have political boundaries. They cross beyond the national borders. We share animals,” he says. Through his work, Kumara has built partnerships with local communities, schools, religious leaders, and more than twenty conservation organizations. His programs have reached millions through public education, television, and community engagement, creating a culture of respect and responsibility toward wildlife.

Kumara Wakjira’s dedication exemplifies how one individual’s commitment can make a profound difference for nature, animals, and people. In celebrating him, Ethiopia and the United Kingdom share a moment that highlights collaboration, science, and the power of leadership in conservation. His story is an invitation to the next generation of Ethiopians to value, protect, and cherish their country’s extraordinary natural heritage. ■

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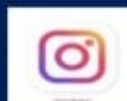
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