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MoFA outlines CoHA's pan-Africanist values

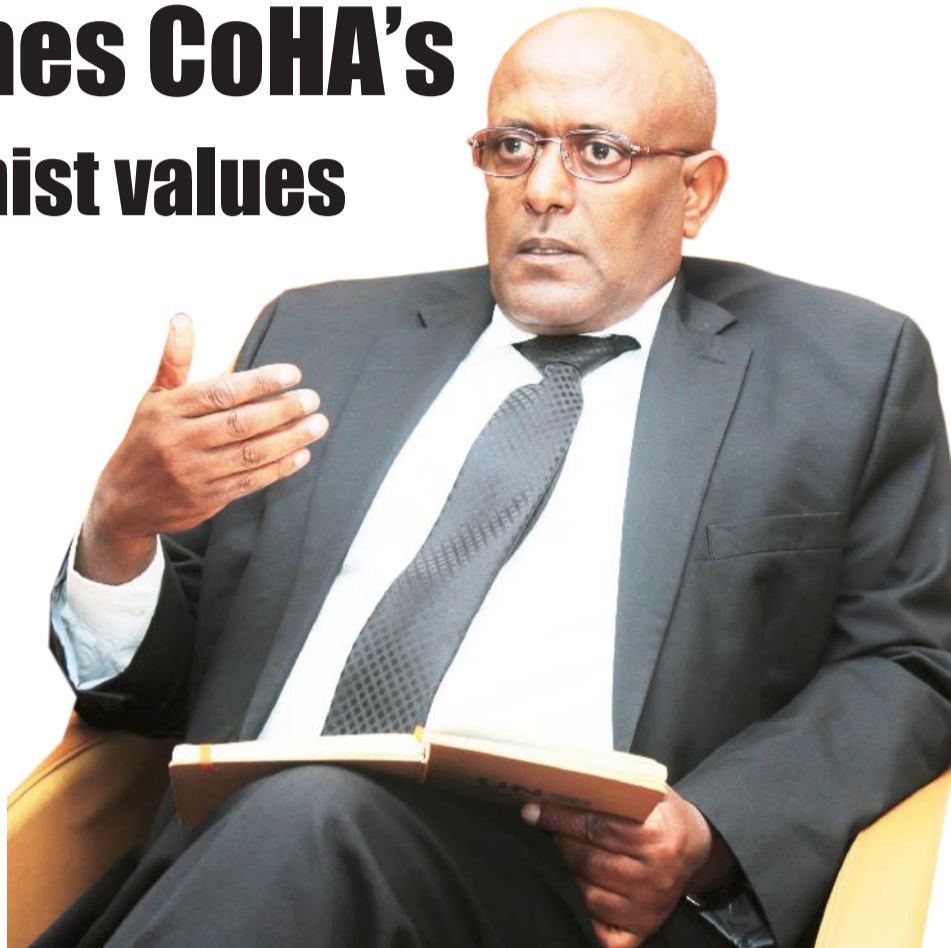
BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) between the government and TPLF would have a significant contribution for the nourishment of Pan- Africanism values, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), European and American Affairs Director-General at MoFA Ambassador Eshete Tilahun noted that the peace accord brokered by the African Union (AU) in Pretoria is a sign that Africans can solve their problems on their own. The truce is also an example of strengthening Pan-Africanism.

As to him, the peace agreement has a significant role in inspiring other Africans

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Ambassador Eshete Tilahun

UN agencies send life-saving humanitarian aid to North Ethiopia

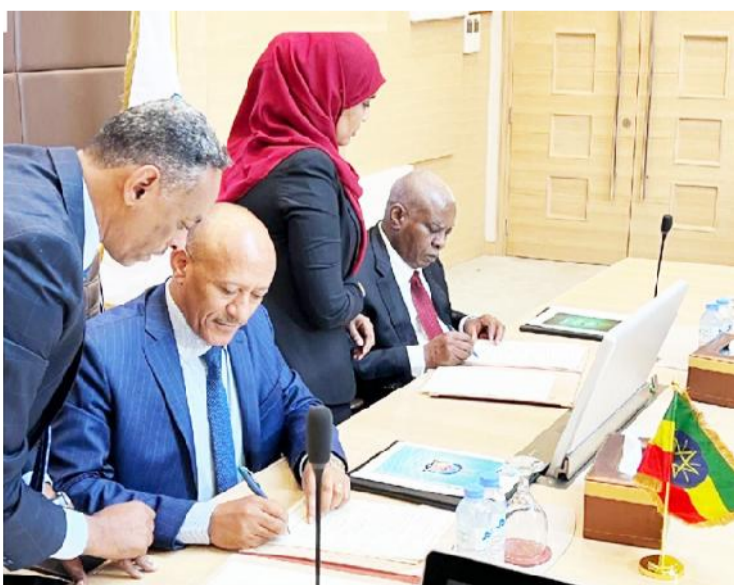
BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - The first United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) convoy carrying life-saving humanitarian aid arrived in Mekelle since August, UNHCR Ethiopia said.

According to the UNHCR's twitter message , the humanitarian aid includes medicines and shelter kits to treat the sick and repair destroyed homes, and more are en route to North Ethiopia as UNHCR has scaled up delivery of protection and solutions in the war affected areas in North Ethiopia.

Similarly, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

See UN agencies... page 3



Ethiopia, Sudan to combat terrorism together

BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia and Sudan Security agencies have signed memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together in sharing security related information for mutual benefits.

Ethiopia's National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) Director Temesgen Tiruneh on Sunday held talks with his Sudanese counterpart Ahmed Ibrahim Director - General of Intelligence Service (GIS) in Khartoum to enhance cooperation to fight against terrorism and cross boundary crimes through intelligence sharing. The officials have deeply discussed on ways to ensure peace and security in the two countries and the region.

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Qatar Embassy in Addis marks start of World Cup

• WC showpiece of global unity: *Kejela Merdasa*

BY BILAL DERSO

ADDIS ABABA- The host country of the 22nd World Cup, Qatar, hosted on Sunday the World Cup opening ceremony at its Embassy in Addis Ababa.

Speaking on the occasion, Culture and Sport Minister Kejela Merdasa said that

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News

Company underscores meeting social responsibility essence

• *Breakthrough inaugurates new branch*

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADAMA - Living up to public expectations via executing corporate social responsibilities is of significantly useful in bringing about real change, so said Breakthrough Head.

Speaking at the event organized in connection with new branch opening in Adama town, Breakthrough Trading Share Company (BTSC), Managing Director Asmera Defa stated that the modern branch office has cost over three million Birr and comprises modern training rooms with relevant equipment, offices and other service rendering spots.

He noted that BTSA has so far trained over 15,000 compatriots and the company is working hard to expand its branch across the nation.

He further stated that the company is exerting utmost effort to live up to public expectations by properly executing corporate social responsibilities. It donated books to Abrihot Library earlier and has planned to donate about 10,000 books to the same Library this year.

BTSC is a business entity which was established by Genuine Team in 2019 with vision of building far -sighted, healthy and wealthy generation.

As to him, over the last two years, the company has provided various business enterprises and individuals with consultancy services to help them innovative and execute their respective business keeping the required discipline, and establish effective collaboration with others.

Since its establishment, the company has shown progress and the third branch was opened in the presence of invited government officials, company staff members, young entrepreneurs and representatives of private companies.

Gov't resumes repatriation of citizens from Saudi Arabia

• *Arranges thrice -daily flights*

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA –The repatriation of citizens who have been in difficult situations in Saudi Arabia has resumed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) disclosed, adding that it returned 1,170 citizens to their home country yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Affairs State Minister Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, who is the chairperson of the national committee, which consists of 16 sector offices, reminded that the government has previously repatriated more than 71,600 citizens. The repatriation of more than 30,000 citizens who are in difficulty will be carried out in an intensive manner.

The repatriation process was halted for the past months due to various reasons and the government is arranging thrice-daily flights to Saudi Arabia and the flights are being undertaken three days every week, the state minister elaborated.

For her part, Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) Director General Teyba Hassan said that the returnees were assisted and registered by the committee and had been offered the necessary support, temporary accommodation, medical help and counseling services and others. “All stakeholders need to contribute share



Photo: Tsehaye Nigusse

to support returnees and successfully reintegrate them into their respective communities.”

The Middle East, Asia and Pacific Affairs Director General at the MoFA Ambassador Gebeyehu Ganga highlighted that the government has been working to repatriate over 100,000 Ethiopians who are in dire situations in Saudi Arabia. The national committee composed of various government agencies has been facilitating the repatriation process. For Ayelech Eshete, Women and Social Affairs State Minister, the government has done

commendable jobs in repatriating citizens who have been in difficult situations in the Kingdom. The ministry is also among government agencies that are standing in forefront in supporting the returnees.

Approached by The Ethiopian Herald, some Ethiopians repatriated from Saudi Arabia expressed delight on their return to the homeland and the promises the government and other stakeholders have extended to support them. They also vowed to practically prove that changing one's livelihood is possible through work at home.

Gov't focuses on enhancing labor attaché's capacity in number, skill

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The need to strengthen the capacity of all labor attaché's both in the number and in the skill have been given due attention by the government, so said Ambassador Birtukan Ayano.

Speaking at the opening of the regional training for labor attaché's of IGAD members states in the Middle East, State Minister for the Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Amb. Birtukan Ayano noted that the government has taken measures such as increasing the competitiveness of migrant in the labor market equipping them with the necessary skills and ensuring that their rights and wellbeing are guaranteed.

While assuring the safety and wellbeing of migrant workers, she underlined that it deserves the attention and commitment through concerted efforts with relevant bodies' involved and equal emphasis should be given to the potential and actual benefit that could be obtained from well governed labor migration by the origin and receiving end. In this regard, the role of the labor attaché's proves to be significant, as to her.

“Socio economic, environmental and

political crisis remains the driving force of migration in the IGAD sub region. The adverse effect of such challenges serves as push factors for citizens to migrating in search of jobs and better life.”

Thus, comprehensive and concerned effort is needed to tackle the challenges. It is with this understanding that the government has initiated programs and established structures with the view to effectively addressing challenges related to migration, she noted.

She emphasized that the government is working proactively to ensure the execution of its responsibilities and meet its obligations set out in different regional and global initiatives and convention on migration through joint effort with relevant stakeholders and partners.

By the same token, Ministry of Labor and Skills, State Minister Nigusu Tilahun said that since migration from Africa region to other regions particularly to the Middle East is growing, the role of labor attaché's in the management of this migration flows and in the protection of migrant workers is becoming more crucial.

He said that the migration is driven by

multiple and related factors including economic, political and environmental issues adding that high number of women, men and youth migrate to the Middle East where there is a notable increase in demand for the workers in the infrastructure, care, agriculture and hospitality sectors.

“You all are well aware of the challenges we face in the region to ensure full employment and decent works for all women and men in our countries.

In this context, labor migration is an opportunity that could ease the situation, if well managed,” he underscored.

“Migration workers contribute to the economic development of our country through competencies, skill and experience when they return back,” he noted.

With the increase in migration flow, migrant workers are becoming an important source of remittance that is used to improve the wellbeing of family and foster economic growth.

In order to realize the full potential from migrant workers, priority should be given to the empowerment and protection from unfair practices in their migration, he said.

News



IRC launches job-matching application portal

BY TEWODROS KASSA

ADDIS ABABA-The International Rescue Committee (IRC) in consortia with People in Need (PIN) and Solidaridad through the IRC and the European Union funding, launched the job matching application portal ModjoJobs in Modjo town.

In a press release sent to The Ethiopian Herald the platform is set to target 4,000 unemployed youth, women, and girls; 10 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) within the leather sector; service providers (TVET, PES, Job centers) and their staff, and 8 tanneries in Modjo and nearby communities.

Accordingly, the new platform services as one of the activities under “Green JOBS in the Leather Sector in Modjo.

Moreover, the project works towards the

overall objective of strengthening social cohesion, by supporting local economic and social development initiatives, especially for women and youth living in the Modjo area; and enhancing industrial and labor relations in the Modjo Leather City (MLC).

During the launching ceremony, the IRC Adama field office Coordinator, Lemessa Shiferaw started that unemployment is one of the significant problems of the country.

As to him, the IRC with its partners is doing different activities to create green jobs in Modjo town and surrounding areas by focusing on those affected by the waste products from Modjo leather factories.

On his part, Mojo city vice Mayor Tsegaye Teklehana said this project has been supporting the government’s big commitment to work on job creation mainly for youths advancing the service from

manual to digital.

As to him, this portal will have high benefits for the community, companies, and government in simplifying the data management of the Job and employment creation sector.

Modjo Job Creation and Skill Development Office Head SisaySime said since the implementation of this program, the youth's attitude towards work has changed.

Before, employment services for youth and women were very limited due to the low capacity of government and woreda-level offices to link them with economic opportunities.

Accordingly, this application supports Modjo town and nearby communities, private companies, and public Employment Service (PES) providers.

MoFA outlines...

to share Ethiopia’s experience and it demonstrated African’s ability to maintain their dignity and making them to have a common stand on issues of mutual significance.

“The peace accord has delivered a message for the whole globe about Africans capacity and readiness to lead, manage and administer our own affairs by our own. Indeed, the Ethiopian government has played a key role in this regard.”

The diplomat further highlighted that

Ethiopia’s acceptance of the AU as the only mediator for the northern conflict showcases its confidence in the African institutions capability to resolve differences in negotiation and in a peaceful manner. It is also testified the country’s commitment to avert some interest groups’ unwarranted intervention.

In the past, some complaints came against the AU Chief Negotiator and Former President of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo from the TPLF side while the government

respected its promise of holding the peace talks without any preconditions. “Our faith in African institutions preserves the spirit of Pan-Africanism among fellow brothers and sisters.”

Moreover, the peace deal has a great benefit to curtail the ill-conceived meddling of some interest groups which have aimed to capitalize on the conflict. The accord attested that Africans could stand by themselves without the backing of third parties, Ambassador Eshete emphasized.

Qatar Embassy in...

the World Cup is not only the instrument of promoting the culture and art of Qatar, but also helps strengthen international unity.

Expressing his delight over Qatar getting the opportunity to be the venue of the 2022 World Cup, the minister highlighted that the event would bring the people of the host country closer to the rest of the world.

“Ethiopia is also working to develop the

sport sector and wished that the 2022 World Cup, which started today, would be successful.”

Qatari Ambassador to Ethiopia Hamad Al-Dosari stated on his part that his country has carried out extensive activities to make the 22nd World Cup a success. “The players, supporters and guests of the national teams of the countries participating in the World Cup will have a good stay in Qatar.”

The event was also attended by Foreign Affairs State Minister Ambassador Birtukan Ayano and members of the diplomatic community based in Addis Ababa. The guests attended the opening ceremony of the World Cup, which officially started on Sunday.

At the event, the Embassy presented gifts to Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, Kejela Merdasa and diplomats of various countries residing in Addis Ababa.

UN agencies send...

Office disclosed that The first delivery of humanitarian aid arrived in Tigray yesterday as since the peace agreement was signed.

“This lifesaving support is critical for women and children. More supplies will be delivered to all areas impacted by conflict including in Afar and Amhara states”

Ethiopian embassy in Djibouti stated in its page that the provision of humanitarian aid and the restoration of essential services since the agreement was signed have proven and tested the Ethiopian government's continued commitment to the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA).

As learnt from the embassy, two rounds of food aid medical supplies and fuel has been delivered to the region. The work of the provision of basic services is gaining momentum. The government of Ethiopia continues to be fully committed to the implementation of the peace accord.

Three days before, UNHCR representative in Ethiopia, Mamadou Dbalde said, “With improved humanitarian access, we are ready to further scale up delivery of protection services and support solutions in Northern Ethiopia.”

UNHCR is distributing relief items to 50,000 people who are severely affected by flood. Items being distributed include sleeping mats, blankets, solar lamps, soaps, mosquito nets and kitchen sets.

By same token, U.N. World Food Program (WFP) announced on Friday that more 12 trucks that carry humanitarian aid were headed to Tigray through route of Afar state.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delivered medicines destined for medical facilities most urgent cases reported in 15 November 2022.

ICRC head of delegation in Ethiopia, Nicolas Von Arx said, “We appreciate the efforts undertaken by the parties to facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid, as people have endured tremendous suffering during the two-year conflict.”

The trucks have delivered forty tons of essential medical items, emergency medicines and surgical equipment to help cover the immediate needs of thousands of people in the region, it was learnt.

Ethiopia, Sudan...

The two parties agreed to cooperate in the field of joint training and sharing of experiences, enhance joint efforts in combating terrorism, organized crime and transient economic crimes, and address the issues of the nationals of the two countries.

It was learnt that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PH.D) received Yesterday a delegation led by Sudan Transitional Sovereign Council member Lt. General Ibrahim Gaber to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Opinion

Defending the peace agreement to silence guns

BY DEJEN RAS

Human beings value peace dearly. Peace begins within each human being, family, group, and society. It is harmony with self and others. Without it, the dignity and quality of life will be degraded. War is the optimal way of expressing that there is no peace. Of course, the absence of war in a given place does not always mean peace. Conflict and mistrust are elements that also show the absence of peace. “Peace is understood as a process in which the absence of war is the beginning of a path.” Willy Brandt emphasized how peace is vital for humans by stating: “Peace is not everything, but without peace, everything is nothing.” Almost all religions teach and preach about peace. Even the holy book teaches us to “Make every effort to live in peace with everyone... .” From these perspectives, we value making peace between conflicting actors.

On November 2, a peace deal between the Ethiopian Government and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) was signed in Pretoria, South Africa, mediated by the African Union special envoys, bringing the unexpected hope of ending a conflict that devoured hundreds of thousands and displaced millions. This peace deal is vital for everyone in the country, especially those who have suffered the most. The Pretoria peace deal lays out the roadmap for implementing a peace agreement. This was followed by the Nairobi meeting of the military commanders from both sides to agree on modalities for implementing the cessation of hostilities agreement. “Both sides said they were committed to the declaration, stressing it was the only way to restore peace and stability.”

Many people were pleasantly surprised as they were not expecting that. We thought they were leaving the country in the name of the peace deal. They proved us wrong on many levels. They agreed to disarmament! If this is implemented, it is a miracle. Since then, the reaction of the people in Ethiopia, including the Tigray region, has been mixed with emotion. However, some members of the Tigrayan diaspora entangled with TPLF seem to contradict the peace agreement. Their actions could block the process of the most needed peace at this moment in time as they are the main force for running the propaganda war on the world stage. Their opposition to the leaders will affect those who signed the deal to undermine the peace agreement to silence guns. This piece reflects why such reaction surfaced from these few individuals compared to most peace-loving people in the country.

Contradicted interest in the signed peace deal

Let us provide two scenarios that show the conflict of interest in the signed peace deal. The first is from Mekele. The city’s residents welcomed the news of the peace deal, expressing their cautious concern about what comes next. Especially kids,

as shown on TV, asked the elders to stop the war, and they were happy with their agreement. On the contrary, we find another scenario from Seattle, Washington, where hundreds of diaspora TPLF supporters blocked the highway expressing their anger and frustration on the peace deal. Since then, people have come out on social media and reflected on these contradicting scenarios. For example, one posted the following idiomatic expression on social media. It was shared by activists and many others: የምጣዱ እያለ የእንቅቡ ተንጣጣ!

Meaning “instead of the one on the fire, the one in the Enkib (handwoven bowl basket) shouts and jumps a lot. This is a very good expression of the contradicting scenarios described here. Why did those on the ground who experienced the ugly side of the war welcome the peace deal, while those very far away from the war zone, living in the most comfortable lifestyle, shout against the most needed peace? They used to express their emotions on social media, how they missed their families for two years without internet or phone communication. Now, the time has come for them to communicate with those on the ground. Instead, they are against the peace deal. They want the war to continue. Why do they act as a blockage to the peace deal right now? The answer to these questions needs a deeper understanding of the situation. We provide four main conflicting interests of those acting strangely to hinder the peace process implementation.

1) The consciousness that Tigray is an independent country while it is a region in a country.

The fact on the ground is that Tigray is one of the regional administrations in Ethiopia. But the mindset of those acting against the peace process is that Tigray is an independent country or should head that way. Since they lost the war on the ground in 2020, they also talk about Tigray Defence Force (TDF), like the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) and the Eritrea Defence Force (EDF). Even during the peace, there was a rumor that there had been disagreement on the usage of the term TDF. That is why the usage of the phrase “TPLF combatants.” Tigray is not a separate independent country; hence it cannot have a separate defense force. A country has only one legitimate defense force. Period! Under the country’s constitution, it is impossible to assume independence by default without an official referendum. Even the election that was done against the constitution was illegal. That is one of the agreements that come out of the peace deal. However, the diaspora supporters became angry and expressed anger against those who represented TPLF in the peace agreement. They even blame them why do illegal elections in the first place. Why even they did not make peace from the beginning with the central government? This is still a huge problem for many, and they cannot come to terms with themselves.

የምጣዱ እያለ የእንቅቡ ተንጣጣ!



2) **Claiming as a warrior and a victor while the result is the opposite.** Claiming that you are powerful and can win anyone is one of the core beliefs and convictions that can stir someone up for a continuation of the war. You claim that you can defeat anyone and start the war again and again. But you lost it big. Proclaiming “ድላችን በሀይላችን” which means our victory by our might, nonstop while you face a mountain of a problem is suicidal thinking. That is why huge destruction has come to the people in the region. When you are defeated bitterly, the reasonable decision could have been to give a chance for peace. That should be the wisest way out of your trouble. That is what the leaders on the ground in Tigray preferred to do. That is why they came to Pretoria and Nairobi. Of course, there may be other motives. But at least they have admitted that the fight did not help them. But then those trying to hinder the implementation of the peace talk have never accepted the real situation, and they are calling for more destruction. The conflict within these few individuals is the reality of the bitter defeat; against their winning mentality. They still believe that they can get what they want by force. This is a paradox with the reality on the ground.

3) **The twisted victimhood narration, even at the time when hurting others.** Since that day, the TPLFites attacked the Northern command in November 2020, and the genocide narrative has been pushed on too hard using mainstream media and social media. It was a sophisticated, coordinated digital diplomacy warfare, especially on Twitter, using Robot-assisted bots that have the potential to reach billions on the planet every week. They portray that image to the rest of the world: they are the only minors and victims. Even at the time the forces of the rebels were destroying everywhere they traveled to neighboring regions, they portrayed themselves as victims. It always works when one uses the victimhood card. That is why partially, they are getting the attention of the world’s mighty powers. Even now, they do not want to hear the people in Tigray expressing peace and safety in the places in Tigray where ENDF is controlling since it conflicts with the narrative of victimhood that they propagated to the world intensively.

Such a manipulative and deceptive character could be due to the fear one has. That is, if you create enemies 360 degrees around

you in your perception, then the fear will motivate you to stir up conflict instead of peace. You try to sow the seed of mistrust and conflict. On the one hand, you claim you are a warrior; on the other hand, you fear the enemies you created in your conscience. Why not make them friends with those who are around you? Why enmity, and why fear them? The peace talk provides a way to live in harmony. Why lose that opportunity? Why choose against peace?

4) Acting as reasonable people for the developed world and behaving otherwise.

Those acting differently to the peace deal have tried to reach out to the people they consider reasonable and peace-loving people in the world for too long. They have tried to convince many top international organization leaders, elites, politicians, scholars, media people, etc., to align with their interests. Of course, it might be a mutual symbiosis relationship. However, those indifferent to the peace deal cannot be reasonable. It is hypocrisy at its best. Reasonable people prefer peace. They calculate the benefit of peace and compromise. Especially those who call for a humanitarian situation in the region should be happy when peace is brokered. You cannot love both: war and peace. Choose and pursue one!

Of course, we humans cannot change so quickly. The mindset that was over three years (more than one year of preparation and a two-year war) cannot be changed in one night. There needs to be a process. However, if you only listen to yourself or only one side of the narrative, it is difficult to come to terms with peace. We all have to deal with this process. Time heals!

This piece is about not giving a chance to those hindering peace. They should not be allowed to ruin it. Peace is needed across the Horn of Africa. Those few should not decide on the majority of the people who are craving peace in the Horn. These enemies of peace are conflicted on many levels. Only the four aspects we raised here cannot describe their mental status. There are more. But we leave them on the side since we do not want to hinder the peace deal. Since peace is everything we need right now!

Editor’s Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

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General Manager

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Advertisement and Dist.
Department

email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew
email- workubelachew@press.et
Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city
Woreda - 05, House No---
Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama
Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu
Elizabeth Mengistu
Zekarias Woldemariam
Desta Geberhiwot
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et
email: ethiopianherald@press.et
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Editorial

Showing zero tolerance to corruption

Ethiopia has been advancing towards prosperity and development amid a range of bottlenecks retarding its bold trek towards real change. However, resource abuse and irresponsible move give it hard time more than war and instability do against it. Of the numerous obstacles from which the country is suffering, corruption comes at the forefront as it has severely been rampant and baffles the nation in weakening its capacity of properly running social, economic and political undertakings.

The high-level damage that systematic corruption inflicts on Ethiopian economy must not be overlooked and taken as a normal trend since it has sternly harmed the country as war has, and becomes a day-to-day activity across all the sectors.

Taking all the myriads of challenges sleaze brings to it, Ethiopia set up a seven member National Anti-Corruption Committee to scrupulously follow up national operations free of embezzlement and fraud via effectively containing the rapid prevalence of corruption—the undeclared epidemic.

No doubt, the impact of corruption is tantamount to the negative repercussions of instability and commotion. As the country is now securing grants and other important sources of revenue, public funds have to be properly pumped into the intended target since the society does have the right to be provided with the veracious services. Besides, the government has to take this initiative and make things appropriate devoid of fraud, and meticulously follow up senior officials and the style they are discharging responsibilities.

In so doing, it would be possible to contain this social menace as those who looted the nation for several years and accumulated money in foreign banks are now working from dawn to dusk to dismantle the country.

Most importantly, Ethiopia has to draw important lessons from countries which have long tradition of government openness,

accountability and transparency to successfully curb corruption and hold the rapid prevalence of vice back. Here, raising citizens' awareness about anti-corruption initiative and empowering them especially the youth to hold government officials accountable would be of a suitable approach that helps build mutual trust between citizens and the government.

Unambiguously, the illicit activity of senior government officials, investors, and business leaders is leaving the country unable to deliver the most basic services to its citizens.

True, not only is containing corruption essential to establishing firm adherence to the rule of law and politico-economic stability, but it is also of influential in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty at national level. It is also time for Ethiopia to assert its independence and demonstrate a resilient, reintroduced and vigorous commitment to mitigate the socio-political consequences of corrupt leaders and their style of headship.

Ethiopia should capitalize on the youth and they in turn should be made clearly aware of corruption as it is perhaps the country's number one problem. True, unless the government takes swift actions against the undying cancer of development, the social, economic and political undertakings across the nation may soon fall victim to this tacit but dreadfully lethal plague.

In sum, the leadership's commitment of showing zero tolerance for corruption should be applauded. What matters most now is to translate the commitment to tangible action. Besides, increasing incentives towards honest behaviors as well as instituting effective controls and penalties on the public services would help minimize the rapid pervasiveness of corruption. The government, for instance, awards honest taxpayers. What not replicating this good practice to honest civil-servants, businesspersons ... who abhor corruption in any form?

Opinion

EU-developing countries' Cop27 deal offers hope to climate victims

BY STAFF REPORTER

In a breakthrough at Sharm el-Sheikh talks, the EU agreed to back a dedicated fund for climate-related loss and damage.

The EU and a group of 134 developing countries, which includes China, have reached an "in principle agreement" at Cop27 to establish a loss and damage fund.

On Saturday afternoon, with climate talks in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in overtime, a compromise text finally emerged. Subject to approval in a closing plenary, the deal offers hope of relief for victims of climate disaster.

Shauna Aminath, environment minister of the world's lowest lying islands, the Maldives, emerged from the negotiating rooms smiling, hugging colleagues and taking selfies in the Sharm el-Sheikh sunshine on Saturday afternoon.

"That's the reason," Ambassador

Nabeel Munir, of Pakistan, chief negotiator for the G77 group, told Climate Home News. "Of course, it has to go to all the others first and then we will see. But I'm hopeful that it will be done," he said.

An EU source confirmed the terms of the agreement.

Both sides agreed to decide to establish the fund as part of broader funding arrangements to address the damage inflicted by the climate crisis. These would include channels outside the UN Climate Change process, such as debt relief, insurance and potentially taxing oil and gas profits.

And they specified that the fund would support "vulnerable developing countries".

Defining vulnerability

"Vulnerable" does not have an official definition in the UN climate process but has previously been applied to the poorest countries and small island states.

On Saturday morning, EU's climate chief Frans Timmermans clarified the term should extend to middle-income countries like Pakistan. The country is struggling to rebuild from devastating floods that affected a third of its population.

"Let's be very clear: if a country like Pakistan is hit by this tragedy that has occurred to them of course, they are a vulnerable country that would be eligible for support," he said.

It does not pin down who is responsible for paying into the fund. The EU and US have indicated they want to expand the donor base, against resistance from higher middle income countries.

The text hints at this, tasking a transitional committee with "identifying and expanding sources of funding," among other operational details. These should be adopted at Cop28 next year, it says.

Whether China and other large emerging economies such as Qatar, Kuwait and Singapore should contribute will be

part of that discussion.

The committee could also narrow down the definition of vulnerability. An EU official told Climate Home it should be based on GDP per capita as well as a country's vulnerability to climate impacts and ability to respond, they said.

How the US, the main holdout against setting up a dedicated fund, responds to the text is critical. American negotiators were in discussion with Australia and New Zealand as the news of the EU-G77 agreement broke.

David Waskow, of the World Resources Institute, was confident the US would support the text: "I think they'll be fine with it," he said, adding that the language reflected its own draft proposal on the issue, which was circulated on Friday night.

Source: Climate Home News

Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Curbing capital flight to boost the nation's foreign currency reserve

BY ABEBE WOLDE GIORGIS

Capital flight is a threatening phenomenon which affects the economy critically in Ethiopia. It harms economic growth and welfare, macroeconomic stability, and income distribution. Despite the huge capital flight problem in Ethiopia, there is no country-specific study on the impact of capital flight on economic growth and poverty reduction in the country. Due to the lack of rigorous and exhaustive study in the country, the pervasive economic malaise posed by the shortage of foreign exchange can be taken as evidence of rising capital flight.

Eyesus work Zafu is a senior citizen worked for various Insurance Corporations for more than five decades. As to him, there are a lot of factors which push people to be involved in illegal financial transactions and among others, over and under-invoicing for the importation of goods is a common practice in Ethiopia.

Importers open letters of credit at the national bank by over-invoicing to gain hard currency illegally. For example, when exporters want to import items worth two million dollars, they open a letter of credit to import worth three million dollars fraudulently. They deposit the balance of one million dollars in foreign banks as a result of which the nation loses a huge amount of capital.

Similarly, capital flights will take place under-invoicing. According to Eyesuswork, currently, most second-hand cars excessively found in Addis Ababa are imported by invoicing. Importers open the letter of credit only by purchasing 100 dollars to import small second-hand vehicles from countries but pay for the vehicle worth 1000 Dollars by channelling the money illegally abroad.

To control capital flight, encouraging people to do their business freely is vital. Accusing each other of such misdeeds is not a solution. Creating enabling environment to do business confidently and ensuring justice is essential.

The shortage of hard currency frustrates investors and traders and forces them to gain wealth fraudulently. As the result, they take out-flowing capital as an option.

As to Alemayehu Geda, an Instructor at AAU in the Department of Economics, to tackle the shortage of hard currency boosting export is a tool and to that extent depending on traditional export items must be changed and diversifying and increasing the volume of the export commodities is essential. The other thing helpful to increase hard currency reserve is encouraging the diaspora to send remittances through formal channels.

He further said that currently, more than 3 million Diasporas are living in Europe, USA and Australia. The nation garners more than 5 billion Dollars in the form of remittances



annually. But still, a large segment of the diaspora uses the informal channel which aggravates the black market and narrows the chance to gain capital. Hence to bring them into the formal channel encouraging and providing an incentive is essential.

Countries such as Malaysia can be mentioned as the case in point in this regard. When citizens send hard currency from abroad, it gives 15 per cent additional money in the formal exchange rate to incentivize them.

Currently, in Ethiopia the exchange rate of one Dollar is 51 birr hence, to incentivize the diaspora community providing 15 per cent additional birr can boost the inflow of hard currency. When they do not get incentive money senders might look for other ways to gain up to 50 per cent in the black market.

As to Eyesuswork, side by side with garnering foreign currency, it is necessary to ensure whether the money is properly allocated or not.

Currently imported artificial flower is widely seen in various shops. Traders spend a significant amount of badly needed hard currency to import the flower. Paradoxically the size of flower farms is increasing. Farmers in addition to meeting the domestic demand export to foreign markets. Hence spending the meagre resource to import artificial flowers is meaningless. Other luxury items must be abandoned which are not used by ordinary citizens.

The government also has to play its role to boost public confidence. Vague instructions which create ambiguities should be improved or removed.

Recently the National Bank of Ethiopia announced that diaspora Ethiopians have the right to have shares in banks and insurance companies in hard currency but

later changed its stance and announced that banks and insurance only can use 30 per cent of hard currency and the rest 70 per cent should be deposited in National Bank of Ethiopia.

As to Eyesuswork, it should be understood that the hard currency is the shareholder's money, it is not a profit or gained by export. Banks and insurances sell their goodwill to investors but the directive of the national bank makes them look other ways instead of attracting the diaspora. The shareholders need their money to run their businesses.

The government to halt the pervasive exchanging foreign currency in the black market has taken various measures but it is still in the vein to meet its objectives. Asked whether another alternate mechanism can be put in place, Eyesuswork said that, the unavailability of capital accounts and capital market is pushing people to utilize the black market as an alternative mechanism to get hard currency. The government control of the exchange rate distances people from a formal way. Some people have a capital account in hard currency but they are inhibited to utilize it. They are only allowed to use money when they get a visa for foreign travel. Such a situation erodes public confidence but if the restriction is relaxed the situation might be changed and the scarcity of money can be mitigated.

Encouraging the inflow of foreign currency through various means is vital.

But currently, exporters after they get the foreign currency instead of bringing the money to a national bank, import other goods or transfer the money to another person resided in abroad.

Again the person who received the money sent goods to them out of the bank system and such practices crippled the nation's efforts to boost foreign currency reserves.

Therefore, halting the practice of introducing an open and transparent exchange rate system is vital.

In addition, beginning a capital market is critically essential to alleviate the scarcity of currency.

Recently the government announced that to alleviate the shortage of hard currency it is eyeing to invite foreign banks to operate here in Ethiopia for the first time and noticed that local banks are ready to compete with foreign banks.

However, some disagree with the government's intention to invite foreign banks to come here and operate because the inefficiency of local banks in terms of technology, human resources and capital might be out weighted by foreign banks. Therefore the government should prolong the time of the coming of foreign banks.

Ethiopia still mainly exports agricultural un-processed products and due to the fluctuating trend of the price found itself in a disadvantageous position. In the world market, while the price of agricultural products particularly produced in developing countries is reduced contrary to this, the industrial products exported by rich countries are increasing.

In addition to these, due to climate change and global warming agricultural products mainly in developing countries are critically affected and the outputs are reduced which intern harms their chance to garner hard currency. Therefore, to overcome the problem in addition to mitigating global warming should enhance agricultural productivity by utilizing more inputs.

Currently, Ethiopia earns 3 billion Dollars annually from export and contrary to this, it imports 15 billion Dollar worth of goods which clearly shows how the nation suffers from a negative trade balance.

In the Sphere of Diplomacy

The Fruits of the peace deal

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

One of the most beautiful flags I know is the flag of the African Union (AU). The latest version of the AU flag, inaugurated in 2010, was designed by an Ethio-American artist Yadesa Bojia. It depicts a green Africa with the rays of the sun in the background.

Every time I look at the flag, it reminds me of the most inspiring time of the day, sunrise.- When the sun breaks through the dim, reddish horizon of dawn with a flash of light and fills the heart with a flood of optimism. This is what most Ethiopians feel after the signing of the AU- brokered peace deal.

Soon after the signing of the Pretoria peace accord early this month, formally known as the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, CoHA, the northern Ethiopia situation is improving fast beyond the expectations of Ethiopians and anyone following up on the situation. The wind of peace is blowing on northern Ethiopia at a faster pace than the marathon peace process that so far succeed in passing through two stages.

On the latest event of the peace talks held in Nairobi, we saw pleasing images and videos that were almost unthinkable just a few weeks earlier. The military chiefs of the warring parties in civilian outfits were sitting side by side, exchanging smiles and ideas, and shaking hands. Delegates from both sides were seen intermingled outside the negotiation hall, hugging each other to express their joy at the signing of the Nairobi declaration.- an agreement laying out the roadmap for implementation of the Pretoria peace deal signed 10 days earlier.

Both sides of the negotiation rejoiced at the emergence of a ray of hope for lasting peace in northern Ethiopia.-like the one seen in the AU flag. The mediators of the negotiation as well shared the feeling of the negotiating parties.

Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, the lead mediator of the AU-led peace talks, said: "The fact that we are here is to give everybody hope that the progress we expect will be achieved.". His associate, the former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta also shared Obsanjo's strong hope for peace in Ethiopia. He sounds very confident and satisfied with the way things are going following the signing of the peace deal in Pretoria. "We started in Pretoria. We are inching closer. we are now in Nairobi. We are very hopeful, and next, we will be in Mekelle for our meeting. And ultimately we will celebrate together in Addis Ababa. This is the prayer. This is the hope, This is what we see.", he said. Kenyatta pronounced Addis Ababa just like the way Ethiopians do. That indicates how Addis Ababa is a household name among all Africans.

The declaration ,the Declaration of Senior Commanders on the Modalities for the Implementation CoHA, especially focuses

on the implementation of disarmament of Tigray combatants and provision of humanitarian assistance and ensuring the protection and security of civilians in the Tigray region.

It should be noted here that the provision of humanitarian assistance to the majority of the Tigray region was going well underway even before the signing of the peace deals. It is those small, Tigray combatants-held areas including the regional capital, Mekelle, and its surrounding that shows a great improvement in getting access to humanitarian supplies, in the later days following the signing of the Nairobi declaration.

A week after the signing of the Pretoria peace deal, the Premier's national security Advisor, Radewan Hussien announced: "Aid is flowing like no other time. Even in the areas not yet held by ENDF[Ethiopian National Defense Forces].Thirty -five trucks of food and three trucks of medicine arrived at Shire[a major town in west Tigray]. Flights are allowed. Services are being reconnected. The agreement just provides opportunities to enhance services."

The fast-improving situation in the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Tigray region is a proven fact that has been verified by various international agencies and governments that had been closely following up on the situation as well as participating in the process as a stakeholder.

For instance, The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ethiopia has recently expressed appreciation for the announcement by the Ethiopian government on the opening of all humanitarian corridors to accelerate unhindered access to relief supplies in Tigray, Afar, and Amhara. "The government of Ethiopia has announced we would have access going in and out Tigray by roads and by air. That is really good news. It is not only a commodity but it is also people and personnel required on the ground to work with people in the various zones."

Now that humanitarian assistance is flowing to the Tigray region in all four major corridors without any hindrances. The people in Tigay, as well as those in the neighboring regions, will have full access to food and non-food items, medical supplies, and other basic necessities. An enabling atmosphere has been created for truck drivers, and other aid workers to access areas that were previously inaccessible due to security issues arose from the conflict.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has confirmed its convoy of trucks carrying medical aid arrived in Mekelle, Tigray's regional capital. The medical supplies are intended to support health facilities in Tigray to treat patients with conditions that need urgent care. A day later, ICRC and WFP test flights landed in Shire, a town in western Tigray. The agencies have expressed optimism that the resumption of airlifts to the Tigray region

will help carry urgent humanitarian aid to the region more quickly to alleviate the suffering of thousands in the area needing immediate support.

Similarly, WFP trucks have begun rolling into the war-affected areas via the Gondar corridor for the first time since June 2021, carrying critical food assistance to be delivered to communities in the area.

Officials of international agencies are in close contact with relevant government authorities and other actors to step up the delivery of humanitarian supplies to the people in the war-torn regions "We, along [with] our humanitarian partners, are continuing discussions with the relevant sides to resume aid and personnel convoys' movement to Tigray," a spokesperson for the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) aid said.

Government Communication Service State Minister has recently announced that following the signing of the peace deal, over 43,200 quintals of wheat and over 7,300 quintals of nutritious food were distributed to some 287,000 aid recipients in conflict-affected areas including Raya Bala, Alamata, and Quorum. She also mentioned that the work of delivering humanitarian services to needy people would be strengthened in coordination with non-governmental aid agencies.

The peace deal not only improved humanitarian access to the war-affected areas ,but also significantly reduced commodity prices in Tigray and the war-affected areas of the neighboring regions. This is due to the fact that traders have to send consumer goods to the areas and those who have been hoarding their goods commodities for the worst days are bringing their products to the market. As a result the high prices for staples such as teff and wheat have dropped dramatically. The emerging situation gives residents of these areas cause for optimism that things will soon return to normalcy.

Repair works has begun on damaged roads and bridges connecting the towns in the the war affected regions. As before, Members of the Ethiopian defense forces began last week helping Tigrayan farmers gather the harvest in the field. The ENDF's military engineers are setting up a detour in places where bridges are heavily damaged to help the transportation of humanitarian supplies and commodities, as well as the return of residents to their hometowns and villages.

All in all, the peace deal has brought immensely encouraging changes in the lives of the people in war-torn provinces in a relatively short period. So far, it appears that the hopes and optimism expressed by the mediators of the peace talks, Obasanjo and Kenyatta, seem realistic and achievable.

The wind of peace is blowing on northern Ethiopia at a faster pace than the marathon peace process that so far succeed in passing through two stages

Law & Politics

Political parties' positive outlooks on Pretoria peace accord

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The peace accord that has been signed in Pretoria, South Africa between the federal government and Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) in clear terms demonstrates the firm commitment of the incumbent to make peace happen at the earliest possible time.

On the heels of the successful peace accord that has recently seen light at the end of the tunnel under the auspices of the African Union, people from all walks of life have been praising the milestone.

Following the positive moves of the government to end the conflict, people in the length and breadth of the country have been feeling a sigh of relief on the grounds that peace is the foundation for the existence of the entire nation, prosperity, and sustainable development.

It is worth mentioning that in the absence of peace accomplishing the socioeconomic well-being of the nation and achieving the ongoing reform the country has embarked on.

In the wake of the unflinching stance of the government to beat swords into plowshares and devote resources to peaceful ends, a significant amount of changes has been witnessed on a national scale. Apart from making returning the country to normalcy, the deal will help ensure lasting peace and tranquility.

In the same manner, the unwavering stance of the government to make peace happen under the auspices of the African Union (AU) has been winning the hearts and minds of the wider international community. Notwithstanding the fact that some entities have been downplaying the role of AU coming up with a wide spectrum of treacheries, the latter ended up attaining the desired goal almost immediately. Needless to say, nobody expected Africa would get to the bottom of its own problem in its own way putting in place the catchall phrase "African solutions to African problems".

It is no hyperbole to say the peace accord has shown undoubtedly the fact that Africa can solve its own problems based on its rules and regulations that turned out to be the talk of every Tom, Dick, and Harry in a short time. Apart from serving as a great honor for the continent, the peace agreement has proved the capacity that Africa can do anything under the sun with regard to African problems in the shortest possible time.

On account of the peace accord, some entities that have been disappointed have been engaged in a smear campaign



against the government working hand-in-glove with the positive moves of the peace deal that have been metamorphosed into bearing fruits in a little while.

To everyone's dismay, some agents of war at home and abroad have been engaged in beating the drums of war coming up with quite a lot of fictitious stories that do not reflect the existing circumstances on the ground. For their evil missions, some of them have been pulling out all the stops to move the country into uncharted waters and turn the lives of the people upside down.

As things stand at present, as the general public is feeling over the moon and on top of the world on the topic of the peace agreement, they do want to live in peace and harmony with fellow citizens under Ethiopian skies giving the cold shoulder to the evil deeds of the doomsayers that have been dreaming of turning the lives of Ethiopians into a living hell.

As opposed to coming to the negotiating table and making an effort to resolve the problem in an atmosphere of calm, some adversaries of Ethiopia have been playing a part in provocative actions. As they are allergic to peace, they have been weaning themselves from resolving differences through dialogue as well as a round table discussion and pouring gasoline on the fire and twisting the knife in the wound.

Honestly speaking, the peace accord signed between the federal government and TPLF plays a paramount role in improving Ethiopia's diplomatic ties with quite a lot of nations worldwide urging some forces to go back over their diplomatic relationship with Ethiopia. They have been as well playing a paramount role in putting an end to the

possibility of the interference of some entities that hate to death to see a peaceful Ethiopia.

The peace accord that was concluded in South Africa is instrumental in bringing lasting peace and helping the country to shift to activities that could bring socioeconomic development, representatives of contesting political parties said.

Speaking to local media, members of the Addis Ababa Political Parties Council expressed the belief that the peace agreement that was concluded between the federal government and TPLF enables the country to turn its face to development. The deal also garnered worldwide acceptance and recognition.

For the Council's Public Relations Head Abraham Haymanot, the peace deal has been foiling the conspiracy of internal and external foes that have been working in tandem to destabilize the country. The agreement is chiefly beneficial to the people of Tigrayan as they have been suffering immensely from a number of conflicts and chaos for many years.

Ethiopia has been through various challenges which help to turn its attention to development and growth in the years to come. "Through this agreement, we have managed to foil the attempts of destructive forces working in tandem with foreign forces to hamper Ethiopia's journey to development."

Ethiopia Party Public Relations Officer and Secretary General Solomon Hanibal for his part indicated that the public need to uphold collaboration with one another in persevering the truce and fostering peace and stability in the country.

The agreement gives relief to the people "Since peace is the cornerstone of everything, political parties are expected to encourage supporters to sustain the much cherished Ethiopian culture of peaceful coexistence. Not only visiting the affected areas in person, but the political parties should also discharge their national responsibility."

Solomon further called on political parties to set ideological differences aside and contribute their share in supporting efforts toward the rehabilitation and restoration of war-affected communities and infrastructure.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), the Tigray Democratic Party (TDP) said that the agreement between the federal government and the TPLF is a historic gesture that sends a big message that Africans can solve their own problems.

Commenting on the peace deal, TDP Chairperson Aregawi Berehe (Ph.D.) stated that the peace accord gives relief to people who suffered from the war in all areas. "The sacrifice Africans made to negotiate by resisting external pressure is a peace agreement that sends a big message that the continent can solve their problems on their own without anyone's interference and that it will continue to maintain its independence."

Recalling TDP's perpetual stand for a peaceful alternative to the conflict, the chairperson highlighted that the peace agreement gives more satisfaction to the people of Tigray, who have been affected economically, socially, and politically by losing their lives and property.

The agreement should be implemented quickly as it will take a lot of time to recover from the economic and social psychological pressure. The people of Tigray have started to hope only because of the peace agreement and stated that the result of the agreement will bring back lasting peace.

The veteran politician further reminded that some foreign forces have been obstructing the African Union from leading the peace agreement for various reasons and expressed gratitude to African leaders for making the matter their own and making the peace agreement come to a successful conclusion.

To bring the agreement to the ground, every part of society should continue to strengthen the culture of solving its own problems.

By the same token, politicians and the media are expected to make a big contribution to make this agreement a success. On its part, society is expected to organize and fight against politicians and the media who make problems worse by focusing on their interest, according to Aregawi.

Society

Every child should feel safe and protected at all times

BY STAFF FREPORTER

“Like every child, I want to feel safe in all the places that I live my life – at home, at school, online and in the community. On behalf of children everywhere, we demand that governments work to ban all forms of violence against children, without any excuses.” It was a Brazilian youth activist Thiago who stated that aiming to draw the attention of global actors to show their genuine commitment and support to address violence in all settings and the protection of children’s rights.

True, children have the right to live in a peaceful and safe environment and lead a decent life as “children of today are the leaders of tomorrow.” However to help them realize their full potential for their future responsibility, and make them responsible citizens, bringing them with the right knowledge, skills, moral values, ethical behavior and mindset is prime.

In this regard, the community at all levels, especially parents and teachers, are duty-bound in cultivating children with the core moral and ethical values of the society, mentoring and producing respectful, caring and responsible citizens.

Concurrently, governments and policy makers should work arduously in supporting children by devising child friendly programs and strategies; and executing activities that would protect and guarantee the rights of children, ultimately to build a good society



and a prosperous nation.

Bearing this in mind, countries are working aggressively to shape the future of their young people. By setting goals to address the challenges of children and betterment their future, they are working committedly though the outcome in many countries is minimal.

As part of this effort, every year, November 20, 2022 the International Children's Day was marked globally to raise the voices of children on the issues that matter their life and wellbeing most, protect their rights, promote international togetherness and awareness among children by calling for adults to create a better future for children.

Last Sunday, the day was observed with numerous activities. Ethiopia also marked the day at various programs held in Mizan Aman Town, South West Ethiopia, with a

theme "Comfortable and peaceful Ethiopia for all children."

In her message with regard to the Day, Women and Social Affairs Minister Ergogie Tesfaye (PhD) said that all of us should have to lay a strong foundation for children of today and leaders of tomorrow to grow peacefully secured from any form of natural and man-made threats and in an environment where they grow up equipped with the required knowledge, ethics and love in a manner their rights, security and safety are respected, the Ministry reported.

“For this to happen, I urge parents, religious institutions, elderly people, governmental and non-governmental organizations those operating on children as well as the community at large to give due emphasis for children’s issues; and work in collaboration to lessen the burden of children,” she said.

Handing over in-kind supports worth 1.5 million Birr to State’s Women, Children and Youth Affairs Bureau gained through coordinating various entities with the aim to address the challenges of those children who are in more demanding conditions, the Minister extended her heart felt gratitude for all parties for their assistance.

National Child Parliament Secretary and Deputy Speaker of State’s Child Parliament Sosina Zeleke on her part said that children, more than anything else, need to have a peaceful and comfortable country. Due to this, everyone should exert utmost effort and work jointly to build a child-friendly and peaceful country. She also urged all to work in responsible manner to build a peaceful country.

President of the Ethiopian Patriots National Association Lij Daniel Jote Mesfin on his part shared his life experience to participants. He said that tomorrow’s leaders should learn their country’s culture and history comprehensively. They have to attend their studies properly, possess knowledge and good manners and should develop a special love and respect for their country.

At the program, including children, federal and states’ high government officials, representatives from MP’s health, social development, culture and sport standing committees, children parliamentarians, Ethiopia’s Patriots National Associations, women’s organizations, international institutions took part.



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Key messages of the 31 national education conference

BY DIRRIBA TESHOME

The Ministry of Education held the 31st National Education Conference for at Hawassa town last week that conveyed key messages of the officials.

Minister Professor Birhanu Nega said there is a necessity that every stakeholder should work with determination to solve the problems in the education system.

“We cannot continue with an education system where stolen and fake educational credentials are given. And we cannot continue with an education system in which a fourth grade student cannot read. It should not be a system in which stolen and fake educational certificates are given, so it needs to be reformed once and for all,” he explaining that it is necessary to solve the problems step by step and produce patriotic citizens.

“As an education society, we need to work to bring fundamental change in the next four years, consequently, we need the cooperation of the leadership of the education sector, stakeholders and the public at large,” he called on every responsible organ.

In particular, he disclosed that the ministry will implement clearing forged educational

credentials without anyone’s interference, and thus there is no way for it to go back. All should think about what they have to do in the education sector for the nation’s better future.

Similarly, he noted: “Efforts are put at work to ensure the quality of education are being done with priority attention,” pointing out that incompetence of teachers and education leaders, moral breakdown, political interference and local political sentiments are major problems and many reform works have been started.

He added that Ethiopia’s journey towards lasting peace is a result of the sacrifices of many parties, so everyone should take care of it. Efforts to solve the problems in a peaceful way will enable the country to see the reforms started in the education sector in a broaden way.

Likewise, State Minister for Higher Education, Dr. Samuel Khifle for his part said: “The reform activities of higher education lay the foundation for maintaining the quality of education.”

The 2014 E.C school year report of the changes and development activities that are currently being carried out and the 2015 E.C plan are promising, he valued them adding that the processes of



higher education institutions’ autonomy, internationalization of higher education, exit exams, management and development issues and other key issues.

He pointed out that in the process of making higher education institutions autonomous; they should take into consideration the existing conditions that enable them to use their local grace and other capabilities.

By the same token, State Minister for General Education, Dr. Fanta Mandefro has stated that all regions should work diligently to improve the standard of schools. “In particular, teaching and

learning should be done in a way that ensures the quality of education and should be supported by technology. It is necessary to work with special attention to improve the qualifications of teachers.”

It was also stated that in order to overcome the quality problem in the education sector, all stakeholders should be involved and confirmed in a short period of time.

The conference was held in the presence of education sector leaderships, State Education Bureau Heads, university presidents, educational partner organizations, stakeholders and other guests.

Planet Earth

Why are African Countries Affected by Electric Power Shortages and Frequent Interruptions, While Having Huge Renewable Energy Potential?

BY WONDIMU TEKLE SIGO (PhD, Eng)

PART I

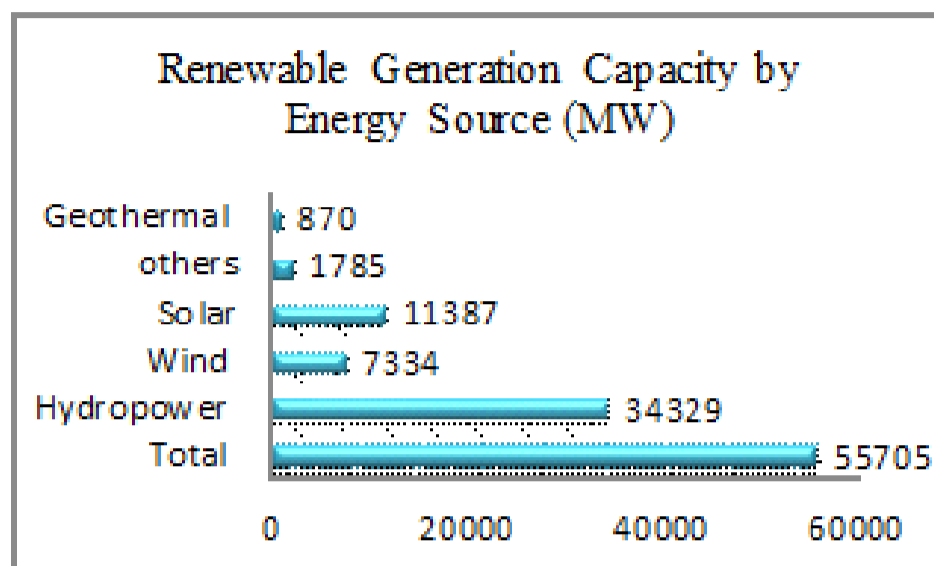
Modern energy in the form of electricity is vital for unlocking economic potential such as for getting clean water, healthcare, and education, for getting stable and effective lighting, heating, and cooking, as well as job creation. Sub-Saharan Africa has not discovered, but technically explored, energy resources expected at about 21.05 trillion cubic meters of gas and 115.34 billion barrels of oil. Similarly, Africa's renewable energy resources are various, randomly distributed, and vast in the quantity that is almost abundant hydro (350 GW), geothermal energy sources (15 GW), wind (110 GW), and unlimited solar potential (10 TW) (UNEP, 2017).

The entire generation capacity from renewables and fossil fuels in Africa as of 2019 was 232 GW, of which installed renewable energy from hydropower, the solar, wind, and geothermal accounts for only 56 GW. Hydropower accounted for the largest share of the African total, with a capacity of 34.33 GW (67%). Solar, wind, geothermal, and other renewable energy accounted for capacities of 11.39 GW (20%), 7.33 GW (13%), 0.9 GW (2%), and 1.79 GW (3%) respectively.

However, in most African countries, there is a huge shortage of electricity, frequent interruptions, and big gaps in access. According to the world development indicator data, 600 million people, or 43% of the total population lack access to electricity, most of them in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Sub-Saharan African countries, about 45 percent of people are leaving without electricity and most of them exist in rural areas (World Bank,

2016). As shown in the figures access to electricity (% of the population) in Sub-Saharan Africa reached about 48% in 2020 from 26% in 2000. On the other hand, those populations that have access to electricity in urban (% of urban population) reached 78% in 2020 from 62 % in 2000; while rural access to electricity (% of rural population) only reached 29% in 2020 from 12% in 2000. Therefore, to increase the population's access to electricity needs to be improved; especially much attention needs to maximize electricity access creation in rural areas.

Similarly, access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking in Africa is very low. As shown in the figures access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking (% of the population) in Sub-Saharan Africa reached about 48% in 2020 from 26% in 2000. On the other hand, those populations that have access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking in urban (% of urban population) reached 35% in 2020 from 23 % in 2000; while rural access to electricity (% of rural population) only reached 6% in 2020 from 3% in 2000. Therefore, to increase the population's access to electricity needs to be improved.



In addition to the lowest electricity access in the world the most recent World Bank Doing Business 2020 report, customers in 10 of the 24 African participants (42%) experienced on average at least 24 hours of outages over the period May 2018–May 2019, while 19 (79%) experienced at least 2 hours of outages. Due to these facts average electricity consumption in sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa, is only about 180 kWh per capita, whereas in the United States and Europe 13,000 kWh and 6,500 kWh per capita respectively (AfDB, 2017). But the source of electricity in most developed countries is fossil fuels, which has been contributing to global warming.

Renewable energy and sustainable development are essential expressions for human beings since renewable energy is clean and not hurtful and is important for sustainable development that reserves resources for future generations. Though Africa has huge renewable energy potential there are different outstanding challenges in the electric sectors such as ineffective and inefficient electric institution setup that has been causing inadequacy of electric power supply and frequent interruption; dissatisfaction over the poor technical and managerial performance; and the inability of utilities to setup their tariff and mobilize sufficient investment capital. Therefore, to examine the cause of the above outstanding challenges it is better to see each of them one by one:

1. Ineffective and Inefficient Electric Institution Setup

Around the globe, electric utilities/institutions are administrated by either public or private or both as public-private ownership. The enactment of the utilities/institution also varies from country to country. According to Holburn and Spiller (2002):

“Some countries have invited private investment in the generation sector only, financed by long-term supply contracts to state-owned utilities (e.g. China, India, Indonesia, and Mexico); some have vertically separated the industry but only privatized part of the sector (e.g. Colombia, El Salvador, Kazakhstan, and New Zealand); while others have privatized the entire industry and additionally created competitive generation markets (e.g. Argentina, Chile, and the U.K.) (Holburn, G. L. F., & Spiller, P. T., 2002)”

The electric institution's arrangements in most African countries are similar to the first option. As per this option, most African countries allow the involvement of the private sector in the generation to sell electricity to public utilities. In other words, public utilities are involved in all activities of the power sector starting from generation to distribution. The justification of the government to insist on the presence of the public institution is due to a society's low per capita income that couldn't afford to pay the electric tariff that may be forced by the private sectors as they will put huge profit margin with the principle of free-market.

Moreover, if the public utilities withdraw from the execution of the power infrastructure development in the rural areas where most the society lives couldn't get electric access easily. In the past, without proper investigation, some African countries had pushed to privatize the electric power sector through multilateral organizations but that created huge mess-ups without access electricity to for the people. Hence, other African countries are afraid of the involvement of the private sector and the electric institutions are almost owned by the public or state that is managing from generation to electric market distribution, which is so huge and difficult to manage as a single institution.

Therefore, the electric utilities are not effective and efficient in delivering their tasks but they are enjoying a monopolistic power over the sector, which caused shortage and interruption of electric power, dissatisfaction over the poor technical, financial, and managerial performance as well as the inability of utilities themselves and the government to mobilize sufficient investment capital for the electricity subsector's development and expansion.

2. Inadequacy of electric power supply and frequent interruption

As we have seen above due to the electricity access problem and shortage of electric power supply, Africa's electricity consumption per capita is the lowest in the world. Several citizens' customers are waiting for electric power service but they didn't get it for many years due to a shortage of electric power. Even those who got electric power service are affected by frequent power interruption due to aging of power generation, transmission,

substations, and distribution lines; high electric power loss due to inefficient device & appliance usage. Therefore, to address the shortage and interruption of electric power in Africa, in addition to upgrading the whole electric system starting from generation to distribution it needs a serious solution to develop the huge available renewable energy potential for accessing electricity.

3. Dissatisfaction Over the Poor Technical and Managerial Performance

The customers are also extremely distressed by the utilities due to a lack of electric logistics, accessories, and low technical standards, hence the people couldn't get an electricity connection to their house or service on time. These are primarily related to the lack of well-trained staff to make sure capable and proactive power system management in the areas of implementation, regulation, operation, and maintenance as well as the lack of managerial performance. Therefore, the dissatisfaction over the poor technical and managerial performance in African electricity utilities is another critical challenge that needs urgent solutions to develop renewable energy for accessing electricity.

4. The inability of utilities to setup their tariff and mobilize sufficient investment capital

The most critical challenge that contributes to all outstanding issues on African utilities is the financial status. Most utilities in Africa couldn't set up their tariff on their own because it needs government approval. But the government won't approve the tariff prepared by the utilities because it believes the low-income people couldn't afford it. This is one of the signs of a government price ceiling, which creates a shortage of electricity in addition to other factors mentioned above.

Supply and demand in economics tell us, about the connotation between the goods in our case electricity that producers want to sell at various prices and the quantity that consumers want to buy at the market. The succeeding price is denoted as the equilibrium price and implies an agreement between producers and consumers of the goods; it is at this point that the quantity of goods supplied by producers equals the quantity demanded by consumers (Lumen Boundless Economics, 2019).

However, many governments have been insisting that utility companies improve the outstanding issues that are mentioned above without approving or allowing tariff revision. This fact led to reducing the utility revenue. This is a paradox as per the utility argument because they couldn't rectify their poor performance such as increasing the electric power generation capacity, upgrading, and expanding the electricity system, operation & maintenance as well as getting efficient services unless the financial constraints are solved. Therefore, the financial constraints of the utilities in Africa need also urgent solutions to develop renewable energy for accessing electricity.