



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## Ethiopians' collective efforts urged to implement peace accord

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA-** All citizens are urged to discharge their responsibility for the successful implementation of the peace deal as it affirms Ethiopia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister and member of the peace alternative main committee Ambassador Redwan Hussein yesterday briefed the speakers of the two Houses, chief administrators of regional states, senior government officials and Prosperity Party branch office officials in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed regarding the overall process of the agreement and further works.

During the occasion, committee member and National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister, Ambassador Redwan said that



the agreement mainly focused on securing territorial integrity. Ethiopia's lasting peace, sovereignty and

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**Ethiopian Electric Utility**

## Sekota's power restoration progressing well: EEU

BY ABDUREZAK MOHAMMED

**ADDIS ABABA –** Power will be restored in two days in Sekota town after a yearlong electric service interruption due to the two year war in north Ethiopia, according to Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU).

Speaking to Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), EEU Corporate Communication Director Melaku Taye stated that the re-building of the Alamata–Sekota electric power substation is near to completion and the town and surrounding areas would soon get back electricity within two days.

The electric service was also cut off in the towns that used to have power from the

See Sekota's power .... Page 3



## AU-brokered peace deal's concessions driving force in implementation

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA-** The recently signed peace deal comprises fundamental concessions to end the two year conflict, said an expert on the Horn of Africa region.

Talking to international media, Balsillie

See AU-brokered ... Page 3



## Mekelle residents welcome AU-brokered peace deal

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDISABABA–**Residents of Mekelle city in Tigray State have welcomed a permanent cessation of hostilities agreement between the government and TPLF with open arms.

Residents of Mekelle told international

media that they are pleased to hear the news of peace agreement between the two parties and the residents are so hopeful that the deal would lead to achieve sustainable peace and stability in Tigray and the country as a whole.

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**Ethiopian food culture-bad habits or seasonal adjustments?**

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**Deserved praise to Ethiopia's peace deal**

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**External pressure will never fruit as long as Ethiopians unite!**

*Workiyi Demisse*

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# News

## Ethio telecom takes bold steps to digitalize Adama

BY BILAL DERSO

**ADAMA-** In line with its vision of digital Ethiopia, the state-owned operator ethio telecom signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Adama City Administration to implement the Adama Smart City project and launched a 5G mobile technology.

Speaking at the MoU on Wednesday, ethio telecom CEO Frehiwot Tamru said beyond its connectivity service, the operator is extensively engaged in modernizing and enhancing the day-to-day business activities of customers and being a leading digital solution provider.

The CEO further highlighted that the project will enable Adama City Administration to use ICT technologies and easily settle service payments via telebirr digital payment system thereby bringing efficiency in government services.

The project will also enhance the overall well-being of current and future generations with respect to economic, social and environmental aspects to improve the quality of life in Adama City for residents and businesses and make the city a more attractive venture for investors and tourists, Frehiwot elaborated.

In line with this agreement, ethio telecom



will deploy information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure such as Metro Dark Fiber, Cloud, Data Centers, and high bandwidth low latency wireless connectivity, digital payment platform and other beyond connectivity digital solutions to realize Adama smart city initiatives.

Furthermore, ethio telecom will develop Integrated Telecom and Information Communication Infrastructure in line with Adama Smart City Program Scope and will provide reliable and high quality wireless connectivity and Transmission Services via 4G, 5G, NB-IOT /Internet of things/ and other connectivity methods. The operator will perform the planning, design, implementation and operation of the Fiber to the Home, Fiber to the Building and fiber

to different required places.

Moreover, ethio telecom will also provide Cloud and Data Center services in the smart city program to make it easier to access city services by expanding them with cloud systems as well as integrate municipal services and other private services with telebirr to realize the digital payment as part of the smart city initiatives.

On November 2, the operator launched the state-of-the art 5G mobile technology at Adama city at six mobile stations on pre-commercial level by considering the existing and enabling conditions to fully expand and market the service in the time ahead.

The 5G Mobile Technology can unlock

blazing fast speeds in more places, real-time responses and massive connectivity. With such high speed, superior reliability and negligible latency, 5G will impact industries such as mission critical services requiring real time decisions, manufacturing plants, remote health care, precision Agriculture, self-driving vehicles and others.

“We believe that launching this 5G mobile technology will play significant roles in optimizing the overall functions of Adama city through deploying smart technologies of the day and is an important milestone in achieving the vision of making Adama a smart city. Specifically, this 5G service will provide our customers with best-in-class solutions, improve their experience and allow our enterprise customers to boost productivity, enhance operational efficiency, and introduce new solutions to customers.”

The 5G mobile service offers a far greater range of capabilities than any previous mobile technology with multi-faceted service provisions. This latest technology not only meets the ever evolving demands of customers, but can also have a transformative impact on the blossoming businesses activities and the ongoing national digital economy transformation agenda as well as will highly boost the level of the society’s technology usage.



## Diasporas commemorate Nov.3, support peace agreement

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA** -The Diasporas residing in Washington DC held a rally to commemorate the second anniversary of the massacre of Northern Command members and to support the peace agreement reached in South Africa.

As learnt from Ethiopian News agency, demonstrations that memorizing the Atrocities committed against the Northern Command and supporting the peace agreement signed between the federal government of Ethiopia and TPLF were held in Washington DC.

The mottoes shouldered during the demonstration read: “We will never forget the brutal massacre committed against the Northern Command,” “We support peace agreement,” and “all Ethiopians must live in harmony, love and fraternity respecting one another.”

The rally makers also urged the American government to provide Ethiopia with adequate support and encouragement in due course of implementing the agreement determined to come up with lasting peace in Ethiopia and back the peace agreement to be successful as well as meaningful.

## Africa becoming textile business hub: Minister

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA-** Africa has become conducive environment for doing business both for domestic and international investors especially the Diasporas who are bringing home skills, knowledge, and technology to the continent in textile and garment sector.

Opening the 8<sup>th</sup> Africa Sourcing and Fashion Week (ASFW), Trade Industry Minister Melaku Alebel said yesterday that fashion weeks like ASFW are important to foster linkage, cooperation and unity among the partners with the ultimate goal of promoting both local and international investors.

He reminded that a national movement ‘Ethiopia Tamirt movement’ which stands for let Ethiopia Produce has been launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 2021 to ensure collaboration in manufacturing sector.

Moreover, the government attaches great importance to the African Sourcing Fashion Week as it brings together fashion designers, manufacturers, buyers, sector specialist and policy makers to promote African textile industry, as to him.

He also stated that the week is important as it strengthen existing market linkages and new investment and market opportunities. With the combined efforts of the private sector and African governments, African manufacturing sector will take advantage of the opportunity of the local market. The African free trade area agreement, in this regard, offers an enormous opportunity that Africans need to take leadership of, as to him.

Ethiopian Textile and Garment Manufacturers Association Secretary General Agazi Hailemariam stated that ASFW has become Africa’s largest textile trade event where manufacturers, international buyers and investors meet together

to raise awareness of Africa as investment and sourcing destination,

Thus, he stressed it is time for Africa to explore potential business opportunities, develop regional textile supply chain and boost the intra-Africa trade through AfCFTA and utilizing the best out of it.

UNIDO’s Representative and Director of the Regional Hub in Ethiopia, Aurelia Patrizia, said the platform serves to attract buyers, investors, wholesalers and retailers from around the world.

She said it is also an important show where Ethiopian and Africans offers best products, and promote business investment opportunities in the manufacturing sector.

“The notion of brining key actor together can boost intra-Africa trade and investment and grow local business, create jobs and enhance industrialization. Trade and investment will boost local production entrepreneurs’ international competitiveness through technology transfer”.

Tourism Minister Nasise Challi on her part mentioned that the manufacturing industry has long been the largest employers and accounts a significant share of the world economy. Ethiopia has a tradition of producing handmade textiles such as *Gabi, Netela, Kuta and traditional Kemis*, which are key traditional clothes that are worn throughout Ethiopia.

These cultural assets have significant implication for tourism and represent the intangible traditions of the nation which needs to be nurtured.

The event serves as one of key outlets to promote and market our cultural wealth. Thus, we need to put light to the indigenous textile production, design skill, supply aspect and promote them as tourism attraction thereby enhance economic growth, she underlined.

# News

## EZEMA calls for swift implementation of peace pact

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – EZEMA called up on all concerned bodies to play their part in implementing the peace agreement concluded between the Ethiopian government and TPLF as the process demands the combined effort of all.

Briefing journalists on Thursday centering the peace accord reached between the two parties in South Africa, party's Public

Relations Head, Mululem Tegegnwork (PhD) stated that both parties must play their part to practically apply the deal so as to get sources of conflict dried for good.

According to local media reports, the Head said that as the peace agreement is carried out keeping principled aspects, it is an appreciable and promising measure. To end this, all stakeholders remain responsible for the effective implementation of the peace talks.

He further stated that all concerned bodies should extend and emphasized the peace agreement to other armed groups to bring lasting peace across the country.

Moreover, the Head has admired the efforts of South Africa, which hosted the AU-led peace talks between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF keeping "African Solution to African Problem" principle. He also said that EZEMA has full hope that AU will continue its effort to implement the peace agreement and ensure sustainable



peace in Ethiopia.

It is to be recalled that the peace agreement was signed on 2 Nov. 2022 in Pretoria, South Africa between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF.

## Network highlights Diaspora's role to rebuild Ethiopia

BY ABDUREZAK MOHAMMED

**ADDIS ABABA** – The role of the Ethiopian Diaspora in rebuilding the country and providing relief supplies to the displaced citizens and promoting peace, according to the Ethio-Canadian Network for Advocacy and Support (ECNAS).

In its press release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*, the Network welcomes the signing of the peace agreement between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF to cease hostilities. Members of the Network commit themselves to rebuilding the country and support people's aspiration for democracy and equality for every citizen of Ethiopia," the Network added.

"We recognize and champion the important role of the Ethiopian Diaspora in rebuilding the destroyed infrastructure, providing

immediate humanitarian assistance to the displaced and promoting peace and prosperity for our nation."

While the Network applauds the conclusion of this peace agreement, it is also mindful of those who have sacrificed their lives and paid the ultimate price to defend Ethiopia's sovereignty and those who have suffered immensely due to this tragic and senseless war, it was stated. "We are immensely grateful for those who have facilitated this negotiation to broker peace."

This unique opportunity for peace marks the beginning of a long-term process that will require a determined effort in the course of its implementation, the Network said, adding, that it shares the hope that this peace agreement will provide a basis for building lasting peace, which will usher in a new chapter for peaceful, vibrant, democratic

and united Ethiopia.

The Network further urged all Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia to support this new beginning of the peace that is indispensable for the protection of human rights and for achieving equality and sustainable development for the nation and the Horn of Africa and Africa at large.

The Network also expressed its appreciation to all Ethiopians and friends who stood with Ethiopians in this difficult time and supported nation's efforts. It added that it is grateful to the leaders and members of the Consortium of Eritrean Canadians and Eritrean Canadian Organizations in Canada for their solidarity and support. "Thank you for making your remarkable talents and commitment unreservedly available to advance mutual causes of justice and peace."

## Ethiopians'...

He stated that the peace agreement was concluded in a manner that respected the common interests of the people of Ethiopia.

During the peace talk, it was agreed that there cannot be two armed forces in one sovereign country and that the rule of law must be respected, Redwan added.

Moreover, he elaborated that activities outside the constitution will be stopped and an Interim Regional Administration will be established in Tigray state until elections are held in accordance with the constitution.

"The option and solution we have is to go together in harmony. In this regard, we will work together to bring the affected communities to their feet and previous social interaction."

The damages encountered are damages of all Ethiopians, he said stressing the need for concerted efforts of rehabilitation and reconstruction by all.

The works of networking and communication should also take into account the common journey of the people.

He elaborated that it is necessary to work together to rehabilitate the affected citizens by coordinating the existing capabilities.

There is also a need for enhanced collaboration in order to correct the pressure incurred on the economic, diplomatic and other fields due to the conflict, the Security adviser underlined.

In this regard, he stressed that the media should work and play its active role in creating a situation where citizens can learn from the problems and strengthen their solidarity.

"It is our common country that is affected by the conflict. Hence, the peace deal will create a great opportunity to elevate Ethiopia to a higher level with the participation of all its citizens."

He also underlined the need to work together to prevent the acts of elements with a view to hindering the process knowingly or unknowingly.

Redwan called on all citizens to discharge their responsibilities for the implementation of the agreement.

The peace agreement signed this week between the Ethiopian Peace Talks Delegation and TPLF in Pretoria, South Africa, has reiterated respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia and to upholding the Constitution of the country.

## Mekelle...

They also said that: The announcement of the agreement has made all of us to be blissful. The truce would play a due role in bringing about normalcy particularly in Tigray and across Ethiopia. "We are eager to see the implementation of the accord in the near future."

"The agreement would be taken as a role model for other African countries in terms of settling differences under the auspices of AU. We are so optimistic about the permanent agreement for cessation of hostilities between the two parties."

As to the residents, peace has been a priority of the priorities for the people of Tigray. For about the past 24 months, Tigary people have been leading a miserable life. "No one seeks peace more than Tigray people."

They, moreover, said that the accord has a paramount importance for all fellow Ethiopians as it would end displacement, further casualties and destruction.

## AU-brokered peace deal's...

School of International Affairs Political Science Prof. Anne Fitz-Gerald said that it should be embraced and this is a win for the African Union, a win for African voices and leaders that really have a proven track record in meaningful dialogue with meaningful outcomes.

Anne Fitz-Gerald, who is also an expert on the Horn of Africa region further stated that there was enormous pressure for these peace talks to result in some kind of outcome. Everyone is tired with the conflict. There has been a lot of unnecessary bloodshed.

"Until this agreement, formal peace agreement had not been signed. Statements have been made on Twitter, but there has been no formal declaration," she said.

"So it was more than appropriate to make all efforts to bring this to an end, but what is different about this effort is that it is a formal declaration with detailed terms that has been signed by both sides," she noted.

The conflict has affected the whole country. There have been communities affected in many different regions, regional states across the country, but of course, the focus has been on the northern states of Tigray,

According to Melaku, the interrupted electric services that were coming from Alamata-Kobo have been restored and also power has resumed in the historic town of Lalibela as of Wednesday.

He thanked employees of the EEU and segments of society and security forces in the areas where the maintenance is being

Amhara and Afar. Due to this, some of the provisions that have been listening about come from Pretoria including disarmament are terribly important, she noted.

"A nation cannot have two different military command structures; we have seen a regional militia structure in the country since the EPRDF led government introduced the 1991's constitution," she opined.

"That was never going to work towards a sustainable peace in the country either; because their direct chain of command is to the regional president. If the president had differences in view with the federal government, would lead to conflict and violence," Anne Fitz-Gerald commented.

"So, we hear a lot about disarmament and a lot about the handing over of all artillery and heavy weaponry that should fall into the auspices of a federal military."

The would be established interim regional administration will also help the federal government to play a leadership role in providing citizens with social provisions, returning arrangements for IDPs transitional justice frameworks, she said.

carried out for their contribution to the resumption of the service.

Meanwhile, Ethio Telecom disclosed that some of the areas that have been affected by the war have now telecom service and the remaining ones would enable to access the service after the repair works are completed.

## Sekota's power...

Humera substation due to the damage on the infrastructure, he said adding, that the damage on the infrastructure has already been assessed and the restoration work has been already commenced.

# Opinion

## Brief thoughts on the peace agreement in Ethiopia

BY LEMMA DESTA

*There is a peace agreement in Ethiopia after two years of bloody, unwanted, could have been avoided war! What does it mean for the region, for the country and the continent and even beyond? What hopes in the agreement to sustain and bring lasting peace? What fears and risks are there? What is the contextual background for the agreement? What could we do to help foster culture of peace, restoration, healing of wounds and memories?*

First thing first, this war could have been avoided, had there been sanity, restraint, courage, realism, and wisdom in the minds of the core actors of geopolitical powerplay in world today. It is to be recalled the Ethiopian people generously forgave all the pain, plunder and injustice they suffered under TPLF's brutal regime from 1991-2018, some would even include the war years of 1976-1991. The promise of a peaceful, harmonious, synergized Ethiopia was worth more than the poisonous ethno-politics of divide and rule Ethiopia. Furthermore, by imposing ethnocentrism sentiment, TPLF stayed in power subjugating all others. Their promise of democracy, rights and economic growth help build globally well connected kleptocracy of a selected families from Tigray. Everyone including the self-appointed guardians of rights, democracy and freedom knew very well what TPLF was doing but turned blind eye and deaf ear. When the people of Ethiopia have had enough, they protested and managed to bring about reform. TPLF leaders had no choice but accept people's power. The success of the Ethiopian reform emanates from the power and demand of the people, the presence of proponents of reform from within and from the fact that the brutality of TPLF regime had reached an intolerable level. TPLF accepted to step aside, as we now can see in retrospect, with the hope to strike back again.

### Why did the whole world failed to stop drumbeating for war?

Before the war broke out efforts have been made to bring the Tigrayan liberation front leaders to take part in the ongoing political reform in Ethiopia (both in the ruling coalition that was transforming and outside). Ethiopian elders, religions, leaders, mothers, even Tigrayan business leaders, diplomats, everyone tried without success to bring TPLF to commit to peaceful means. To the surprise and perhaps irritation of many Abiy Ahmed refused to use power to contain and force TPLF to comply peaceful means to express and achieve political ambitions. The last interview with Abiy Ahmed on national TV whether he would send the army to Tigray region, his replay was he would rather send facemasks to protect the people against COVID-19. TPLF's refusal to take part in the political reform in Ethiopia, their role in orchestrating conflicts all over the country

### Ethiopia's commitment to peace and unwavering insistence to seek African solutions for African problems proven right and fruitful as we now are witnessing an African union brokered peace agreement is signed

was widely known. Even more shocking was their bold claims and preparations for war from 2018-2020. Many diplomats visited Mekelle, the defacto center of power, albeit they came back with no result. So the war in Tigray, was long in the making and the world powers who started to blame Ethiopia after the treasonous attack on the 4<sup>th</sup> of Nov 2020. It is only in retrospect that we can understand the warnings of some of the now deceased TPLF leaders that if war breaks out other actors would come. The war in Tigray, with extraordinary diplomatic pressure on Ethiopia, prove to be more than a confrontation against TPLF, it rather was a war for Ethiopia and indeed the whole Africa's survival and sovereignty. Ethiopia, a nation of 120 million people, has withstood, and one can perhaps say, survived highly likely threat of disintegration. It has costed our country and our people immeasurable price, but Ethiopia has overcome the threat at least for now.

When war broke out in Ethiopia, some global powers, bypassing their moral and

international obligations to condemn violent attack on a nation that has championed international peace and humanity, calls to cease hostility flood the media. Having insisted the legality, the duty and obligations to defend the nation, restore law and order, bring accountability for impunity, the government of Ethiopia stood its ground. It fought back the war in the battle front, in media and diplomatic circles. The leaders called on the people, the fierce Ethiopian patriotism woke up to rally support, withstand and even beat back TPLF'S aggression more than once.

But realizing the war had external hand although our own people from Tigray were put in the frontlines, the Ethiopian government made efforts to seek help from its African brothers and sisters refusing to bow to the powers that frequently use international governance architecture to spread and perpetuate hegemony. Ethiopia's commitment to peace and unwavering insistence to seek African solutions for African problems proven right and fruitful as we now are witnessing an African union brokered peace agreement is signed.

### A victory for Tigray, for Ethiopia, for Africa and for humanity

The peace agreement that aims to bring immediate and permanent cession of hostilities, restore constitutional order in Tigray, rejects violence as means of resolving political differences, grantee security of all, ensures lasting settlement of the conflict, ensures accountability, fosters reconciliation, restoration and rehabilitation is great good news that will bring relief, saves lives and properties, and spark a hope of lasting peace in the region. This was great victory that will benefit the people in Tigray, rest of Ethiopia, the horn of African and beyond as well. The peace agreement was a great achievement and all who labored to get it written and signed must be applauded. The communication, the implementation and monitoring will be closely and expectantly watched.

As we welcome the peace agreement, we must be wary of pundits that will want to spoil this meager hope of ending meaningless and tragic war. On the positive side, let us not forget the peace agreement was made possible with the inevitable victory of the Ethiopian national defense forces to take control of Tigray in response to the TPLF'S in third round of aggression, and an eventual knock out! I am confident and carefully optimistic the peace agreement will last although there is every reason to doubt the sincerity of TPLF. Peace will hold if TPLF is fully disarmed and demobilized, Ethiopia's territorial integrity and national sovereignty is protected. The Ethiopian people have full trust in their government and rally behind the national defense forces, not least maintain good will based on the unbreakable bond of brotherhood between our people residing in Tigray and the rest.

### What are the fall outs of this war?

Ethiopia has bled and suffered most, but also proven its resilience to withstand enormous challenges. The fact that TPLF agrees to disarm, refrain from enabling any use of force, respect the federal constitution, would mean the chapter of war-lordism and trust in the power of guns have ended. Ethiopia ushers a new era of seeking and gaining political power with use of non-violent means. In the regional and geopolitical sense, it would mean Ethiopia has proven itself yet again that it would not bow to foreign pressure and meddling. Ethiopia's example of freedom, self-reliance, resistance will chart a way for many other nations in the world especially in Africa. In the immediate vicinity the end of conflict would mean much more for the people of Tigray that will, for the first time almost in three or four generations, can live at peace, dream to build houses, start business, seek employment, enroll at schools, start family, marry and beget, send kids to school, celebrate festivities, dream to transform the rugged land of Tigray region into a destination of peace, fraternity and hope. The peace agreement with Eritrea will enable to rebuild the Ethio-Eritrean-Djibouti-Somali corridor into the Scandinavia of Africa, where the brotherly people can travel free, trade and intermarry, worship and pilgrimage. This will open a big protentional for businesses from all over the world to come and invest in our lands for mutual benefit and fair share. I do hope the peace agreement in Ethiopia will inspire leaders of the Ukraine-Russia deadlock to begin to set aside differences, talk to each other directly towards solving disagreements. Humanity benefits greater from peace than war.

### What could be done?

Now that there is a peace agreement among the waring parties in Ethiopia, it is the duty of all to support the agreement achieves its objectives. We must refrain from too much interpretation and re-interpretation of things. We must allow people to express their joy, sorrow, regret, anger, whatever with the hope of that being part of the healing and restoration. We must reach out to each other with the intentions of good will and desire to build peace. We must seek and bring help to those in dire need. In Tigray the humanitarian, psycho-social, emotional, socio-economic needs could be dire. We must be prepared to withstand efforts to drive us back to the binary terms of winner and looser. We all have lost; we all have won. We all have fought; we all have learnt. Now we know the friend and the foe. When all is being said and done, now is the time for hope and healing, time for peace and prosperity.

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

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**The Ethiopian Herald**

# Editorial

## It has proved AU's skillful leadership!

It is not plain issue bringing to end the bloody war between Ethiopia and the other party through peace agreement under the auspice of African Union. The Union achieved big deal carrying out the process wisely.

This great responsibility that AU was shouldered and the promising result gained manifest wisdom of Africans in handling serious issues upholding the motto of "African solutions for challenges facing Africa".

Regarding the agreement, the African Union (AU) High Representative for the Horn of Africa, Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, said: "We have seen in practice and actualization what we have tried to achieve for ourselves over the years. And that is African solutions for African problems. We also see in today's agreement signing exercise the implementation of Agenda 2063 which embodies silencing the gun in Africa."

This achievement that aroused doubt among many earlier, should really deserve commendation. Apart from great effort exerted by the African Union, the readiness of both sides has highly contributed for the initial success of the peace talks of which implementation on the ground waits ahead.

The Ethiopian government used to urge the necessity of peace and was repeatedly trying to ease the tension even earlier to the conflict. What is most welcoming is that at this time both parties agreed to pursue peace for the benefits of the people of Ethiopia in general.

Most importantly, the process to arrive at this momentous deal was fully taken over by the African high level panel that in turn proves the fact that the continent is capable to deliver per the promises expressed in the Agenda 2063, silencing the guns and taking matters

of resolving conflicts with own capacity.

Unusually, Ethiopia's case presented at the UN Security Council several times though in vain thanks to some friendly countries those who stood by Ethiopia's side during such difficult times underlining Ethiopia's issue is internal and can be handled accordingly.

Declaring its readiness to the peace talks anytime, anywhere and without any precondition, Ethiopia stood firm but only under the auspice of the African union and finally became successful. It has great meaning that individuals those led the peace talks are all Africans.

What comes next is implementation of the agreement on the ground that needs commitment of both sides for the sake of the Ethiopian people.

Regarding this, Redwan Hussein (Ethiopian Representative) said: "It is now for all of us to honor this agreement. We must be true to the letter in the spirit of this agreement. The people of Ethiopia expected more than the text of this agreement. They demand peace and harmony. They desire development. They have drafted a promising and bright future."

Prime Minister Abiy ahmed also called on the people of Tigray to support the implementation of the peace agreement reached in order to avoid war and achieve lasting peace.

As it is said, "Better is the end of the matter than its beginning," the implementation of the agreement should be performed cautiously. It must be under the monitoring, supervision and verification of concerned bodies and both parties ought to continue in the spirit during the signing time and others those love peace must provide necessary support.

# Opinion

## Women shortchanged by digital finance

BY STAFF REPORTER

Africa must invest in Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education for women and girls, disciplines which would boost their economic empowerment and access to digital finance.

Keiso Matashane-Marite, Acting Chief of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section, Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) says women and girls are marginalized economically. Women and girls face deep barriers in financial inclusion because they do not have the requisite skills and knowledge that STEM careers avail.

Ms. Matashane-Marite, speaking at a media briefing to present the results of the African Women's Report on 'Digital Finance Ecosystems – Pathways to Women's Economic Empowerment in Africa', lamented the many barriers that prevent financial access for women in Africa. The study was done to promote economic empowerment of women and girls.

"Without economic empowerment of women, substantive empowerment of

women is an issue," Ms. Matashane-Marite," noted, arguing that economic empowerment for women is the right step in ensuring women are empowered in the social and political spheres.

Tied to its mandate, the ECA was providing technical support to member countries in promoting women empowerment through policy implementation and the transformation of the financial system. The Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division at ECA has developed a result area on digital transformation to ensure that gender informs digitalization in every aspect.

"We have set out a number of pillars where we are starting... the first one is on STEM because we want to see African member states institutionalizing STEM education for girls and to see a movement just beyond policy pronouncement to implement the policy undertakings that have been done on STEM. STEM is critical," said Ms. Natashane-Marite.

Furthermore, the ECA is working with the African Union Commission in a campaign on financial inclusion for women. Ms. Natashane-Marite revealed that the ECA was undertaking research on digital transformation in 'making a case for ensuring that STEM does take

root'.

Digitalization, particularly in the financial sector, has the potential to be a critical backbone for economic and social transformation in Africa where the digital economy is envisaged to reach \$300 billion by 2025 as a result of a fivefold increase in digitalization and internet use.

"Digitalization is critical to the realization of all components of women's empowerment," said Mr. Syed Ahmed, the Lead author of the three-year study conducted jointly with the Graca Machel Foundation, highlighting that digital finance has a critical role to play in women's economic empowerment'.

Digital finance refers to digital forms of credit, savings, insurance and financial transfers.

Mr. Ahmed noted that digital and mobile connectivity, digital finance readiness and ICT usage have enabled women's access to digital finance. However, women have limited access to internet usage than men across Africa. Furthermore, women have other limitations such as affording digital tools, poor digital literacy, poor digital skills and restrictive social norms.

The study recommended concrete policy

responses to overcome these barriers such as lowering the risks of accessing credit by women, removing inherent, invisible and unwitting barriers to women's access to financial products and services.

Besides, financial laws at all levels of government should be amended to encourage mobile money uptake particularly for women, across Africa, thereby increasing savings ratios and enhancing their economic empowerment Mr. Ahmed urged.

"Although mobile money services are more common in Africa than in other regions of the world, only 29 % of women in sub-Saharan Africa use mobile Internet, compared with 48 % of women globally," said Mr. Ahmed, adding that "In Africa as a whole, approximately 12 % of women have sufficient digital finance-related ICT skills, which is below the global average. Capacity development programs are therefore clearly needed to enhance digital finance skills."

Source: UNECA

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

# Art & Culture

## Ethiopian food culture- bad habits or seasonal adjustments?

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

The rains have gone and the dry season has set in. Memories of *kiremt* or the rainy season in Amharic, are still vivid together with the street side hustles and bustles in the major cities where corn and roasted potatoes are sold to passersby. Young women were particularly busy selling these foods that are consumed by pedestrians young and old as if they come only once in a year. The real reason for rising demands for corn and potatoes during the rainy season is that the public believes that these items, rich as they are in carbohydrates and starch, are good in keeping people warm or deficiency in meet the body's deficiency in high calorie.

Now that *bega* or the dry season has set in, the public craving for roasted corn and potato is replaced with another Ethiopian specialty, namely meat-raw, cooked, boiled, minced, ..you name it. Although the price of meat has gone through the roofs, the public is in no way hesitant to pay any price as long as it is good meat that has become an addiction to many people. Ethiopia is one of the few countries in the world whose livestock population ranks among the top ones.

By the same token, Ethiopians are among the people who consume meat more than anything else because it is easily available, was cheap until before inflation intervened to spoil the show. The typical Ethiopian meal is nothing without meat recipes where butter prepared in the Ethiopian way and spices give it a hell of a taste. It should not come as a surprise that Ethiopia's food culture changes as the seasons change naturally and people's preferences also change. May be this is nature's way of telling people to make timely adjustments as cold gives way to high temperature and the public taste follows suit.

Now that the "meat season" is ushered in with weddings and holiday luncheons, meaty foods are on the minds of many urban Ethiopians who have a lot of money to burn. This article is inspired by a recent (or ongoing) TV advertisement whose main emphasis is on eating meat (raw or cooked) at this particular time of the Ethiopian Year or in the month of Tikimt (October) when the weather is supposed to go mildly cold and that the body needs more energy to fight it off. The claim that goes under the well-known Amharic proverb of "*betikimt and atint*" (literally meaning a bone in October) that can be translated as "it is necessary to eat meat in order to stay healthy when it is cold". The interpretation of the adage may vary according to your culture, diet, economic status or whether you care or not about the saying at all.

Meat vendors seem to care about the saying. One of them is advertising it on TV and inviting the meat lovers with fat purses to come to its place and enjoy this traditional Ethiopian specialty, namely the raw meat. If you are one of those people hard-hit by the galloping inflation these days, you better not even watch the advertisement as it is meant for the haves and not for the have-nots or those imprisoned for life in the lowest socio-economic bracket.

This is best expressed in a popular Ethiopian tune whose lyrics that goes like "*eyaleh kalthone, keleleh yelehim*" roughly translated as "you can live as long as you have money and you cannot live if you have no money". Sung by the legendary Tilahun Gessesse, the song is not only politically stinging or a critique of money worship that had caught on society even at his time but also a warning against poverty.

As we watch the advertisement, it seems that the invitation of *betikimt and atint* mainly goes to the well-fed people who have the financial means to wrestle with tons of raw or cooked meat washed down with barrels of beer or wine. Otherwise, what the common people can do it to past meat vending stores, looking at the fat and lean raw meat and swallow the saliva that accumulates in their mouth.

Even for the few better off compatriots, the expenses for visiting the most expensive meat shops in the wealthier parts of our great city, the going is tough. According to hearsay, one has to go with their pockets stuffed with an average of ten thousand Birr if they want to fully enjoy the food and drinks available in those places for one evening. While they savor the meat with much gusto, inflation is gnashing at their purses. The difference is that ordinary people complain about the astronomic price of meat while the regulars at expensive meat joint regale at the occasion and at being the lucky few who have an exclusive access to those places of wining and dining with all the accoutrements worthy of VIPs.

Let us go back to the advertisement and its content and look at it from the scientific point of view. Does eating too much meat real protect one from the cold weather during the rainy season or now that the Ethiopian summer has set in? To begin with, here is nothing comparable to the European or American winter in Ethiopia. The coldest season in Ethiopia must be a mildly pleasant climate for Europeans accustomed to the snow and blizzard of the Western winter when people go out covered with thick clothes from head to foot and breathing steam into the cold air. Here in Ethiopia, there is no cold season that forces that to eat meat in great quantity as the people in the above example often do.

I guess the wisdom reflected in the traditional adage is misunderstood these days. Our forefathers who were almost all residents of the rural areas advise their compatriots to eat meat in October because they have been eating mostly vegetables and grains all year-long and a little meat during the mildly cold season can be a good dietary balancing act and good for the body. However, this has been misunderstood by the mostly obese meat lovers and their advertising friends as meaning that October should be a good occasion to celebrate the gods of satiety and big eating as if their overfed bodies would not survive until November.

According to available information, "In Addis Ababa, a city of more than 3.5 million people, raw meat lovers flock to butcher shops that serve raw meat any time of day." This is to say any time of day, week and year. This does not however mean that Ethiopians have a gene that make them susceptible to

the passion for meat. It simply means that Ethiopia is one of the leading countries in the world with the highest cattle population and that Ethiopians can afford to buy and consume oxen meat whenever they feel like it and that the price of meat was relatively low mostly before the current inflation that has put it beyond the reach of the poor and downtrodden.

Meat consumption the way it is used or abused at the high-class butcher's shops in the posh part of the city may cause some health problems. Health professional often advise meat lovers against overeating it as it may be the source of many non-communicable diseases like obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and what not. Whether eaten in October or in July, meat remains a highly useful and even indispensable diet for the body to stay healthy. As all advertisements are exercises in exaggeration and dramatics, they are expected to exaggerate the positive effects of meat without cautioning the consumers against the potential risks.

Raw meat in Ethiopia is considered a delicious delicacy despite doctors warning that eating uncooked meat can have serious health complications. However it is difficult for most of us to kick off bad habits and as the saying goes "Bad habits die hard." Eating raw meat has now become not only of kind "addiction" among young men and women but it is also generating its own myths and legends. Some people are eating goat meat in particular in their drive to boost their sexual drive or avoid the excesses cholesterol in meats which is not allegedly found in goat meat. These assertions however are not supported by science.

Back in the old days, it was shocking to see young women and girls sitting alongside their male counterparts and munching raw meat and washing it down with beer or wine. It was even an act worthy of excommunication by the church and condemnation by men who consider them tomboyish to eat raw meat in shops with their men counterparts. Times have now definitely changed and eating raw meat in popular places has almost become a sign of pride, wealth, or macho behavior.

Nobody seems to care about the health hazards because tradition still holds sway even among the educated and well-informed citizens. However, health professionals often warn us that the country is spending hundreds of millions of dollars every year for the treatment of non-communicable diseases, money that could otherwise be used to treat other diseases.

Ethiopia is one of the countries with the highest number of cattle but the scenario for the future does not augur well. As population growth is uncontrollable and the cattle population does not catch up with it, the country is going to face some kind of shortage unless the agricultural sector is radically improved. Otherwise, our food culture is going to be negatively affected because this culture is also one of the reasons why tourists flock to our country to so many varieties of meat dishes in their search for the taste of a country that has still kept its tradition in the middle of irresistible modernization.

# Law & Politics

## Deserved praise to Ethiopia's peace deal

BY DESTA GEBRHIWOT

From the very onset of the unprovoked attack, Ethiopia has been throwing its full weight to resolve the issue in an atmosphere of calm; the former did not reciprocate though. The federal government's resolve has been substantiated by practical steps.

From declaring strings of humanitarian truces to releasing members of the group's criminal individuals, the incumbent has shown repeated and commendable gestures. Most importantly, the government has been toiling to allow unfettered humanitarian aid to the people of Tigray contrary to the coordinated media propaganda and lame accusations. In fact, Ethiopia was forcefully pitted into the conflict.

Also, the incumbent has been doing its level best to create fertile ground for peace initiatives. Particularly, given its unflinching stance on the value of African institutions and the principles they stand for, Ethiopia has been cooperating with AU in its efforts to mediate talks. Peace has been the top priority of the country but its efforts have not been well received.

The country has shown the world that its keen interest in the peaceful settlement of the conflict cannot be questioned despite the misinformation campaign that has been ongoing to tarnish its genuine intentions.

The efforts of the AU and other peace-loving partners, Ethiopia and the other side have reached a peace deal as per the AU-led negotiation after days of intense consultation in South Africa.

The remarkable breakthrough has been realized as Ethiopia stands firm in peace. It has also shown the world that African institutions are able to resolve their issues through African mechanisms.

With the peace deal, the country has emerged victorious in the peace accord against all odds including the coordinated unjust foreign pressures. The deal has proved Ethiopia's virtue and even-mindedness as the notion of the signed agreement perfectly fits the country's long-term demands.

Most importantly, the landmark peace deal was concluded in a way that would further cement the country's coveted values of sovereignty and territorial integrity. It was in fact violations of these noble values that led to a bloody war.

It becomes apparent that deal demonstrates the continental bloc's capacity to help resolve conflicts under the notion of

African solution for African problems. A stand very much echoed by the Ethiopian government and the peace-loving people of Ethiopia.

The agreement signed last Wednesday in South Africa is monumental in moving Ethiopia forward on the path of the reforms, the government embarked on the past 4 years, said Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D) in a statement issued on Thursday.

"Our commitment to peace remains steadfast. And our commitment to collaborating for the implementation of the agreement is equally strong. We count on your continued support in reconstructing conflict-affected areas in the Northern part of the country and an enhanced partnership with Ethiopia in our countrywide development endeavors."

Speaking to the public gathered at Arba Minch Stadium last Thursday, the prime minister revealed that Ethiopia's proposals were fully accepted at the peace talks in South Africa.

Elaborating on the peace agreement, Prime Minister Abiy said the two sides have fundamentally agreed that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia is non-negotiable.

The struggles of those heroes who sacrificed their lives and were wounded for the unity of Ethiopia deserve special thanks as their dreams have come true, the premier stressed, according to ENA.

Both sides have also agreed that the country has only one national defense force and that is a big victory for Ethiopia.

He further explained that as legality is the basis for the existence of a country, the cancellation of the illegal election held in the Tigray region and the holding of another legal election has been accepted.

The prime minister noted that bravery is not only about winning the war, but also about kindness and forgiveness after victory. The victory gained is a great opportunity, Abiy said, adding that Ethiopia's enemies are ashamed.

The effort will be enhanced to let the people of Tigray develop together with fellow Ethiopian brothers and sisters, he pointed out.

The prime minister further said that Ethiopian heroism can be assured when we share and support our compatriots affected by the war in Tigray. "We need to uplift Ethiopianness by sharing what we have and offering love," he underscored.

Since the announcement of the peace

accord, the international community has been expressing its praise.

The Secretary-General of UN welcomes the signing of the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front.

The Agreement is a critical first step towards ending the devastating two-year-old conflict in which the lives and livelihoods of so many Ethiopians have been lost. The Secretary-General urges all Ethiopians and the international community to support the bold step taken, indicated the international bloc.

The Secretary-General pledges his support to the parties in the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement and urges them to continue with negotiations on the outstanding issues in a spirit of reconciliation in order to reach a lasting political settlement, silence the guns, and put the country back on the path to peace and stability. The Secretary-General appeals to all stakeholders to seize the opportunity that the cessation of hostilities provides to scale up humanitarian assistance to all civilians in need and to restore desperately needed public services.

The Secretary-General commends the African Union and its high-level panel for the facilitation of the peace talks and the Republic of South Africa for hosting the peace talks. The United Nations stands ready to assist with the next steps of the African Union-led process and will continue to mobilize much-needed assistance to alleviate suffering in the affected areas.

For its part, the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Workneh Gebeyehu, congratulated the Government of Ethiopia and TPLF on the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement in Pretoria.

"By signing this agreement to silence the guns and end the armed conflict, the people of Ethiopia now have the opportunity to establish a long-lasting peace", he stated.

Dr. Workneh commended the leadership and commitment of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his Government to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

He also commended the important role of the African Union (AU), especially the role played by Moussa Faki and Olesugun Obasanjo, the former president of Nigeria, Uhuru Kenyatta, the former president of

Kenya, and Phumzile Mamo-Ngcuku, former deputy president of South Africa in facilitating the talks and congratulated the team of negotiators from both sides for conducting the dialogue in a responsible manner.

Workneh further thanked the Government of the Republic of South Africa for graciously hosting the talks.

The Executive Secretary encouraged all parties to the agreement to live up to their commitments in implementing all its provisions.

"We welcome the momentous step taken today in Pretoria to advance the African Union's (AU) campaign to 'silence the guns' with the signing of a cessation of hostilities between the Government of Ethiopia and the TPLF," the U.S. State Department said in a statement.

In this regard, the United States praised AU Commission Chairman Musa Faki for his "leadership," as well as the extraordinary efforts of AU High Representative Olusegun Obasanjo, whose facilitation "has led to this important step toward peace."

The United States remains a committed partner in this AU-led process and in our collaboration with the UN, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and other regional and international partners to support the implementation of today's agreement," the State Department added.

The European Union High Representative for Foreign Policy, Josep Borrell, has acknowledged welcoming the agreement reached between the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) for the cessation of hostilities.

Borrell praised the "commitment" of both parties, as well as their "courage" in taking steps towards peace. He also praised the work of the African Union (AU), a mediator in the agreement, and South Africa, the host country of the talks.

The agreement also attests to Ethiopia's consistent position to a peaceful settlement of the conflict under the auspicious of the African Union. Most importantly, the peace deal showcases the government's unreserved stand for the alleviation of the suffering of citizens in the conflict and facilitates an expedited resumption of basic services in Tigray, Amhara, and Afar and regional states.

# External pressure will never fruit as long as Ethiopians unite!

*Workiye Demisse*

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

*Today's Guest Author and Accountant Workiye Demisse was born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He attended primary and secondary school education at Menilik II and Haile Selassie I schools respectively. He had got a diploma from Harar Teachers Training Institute.*

*He then joined National Cash Register (NCR) Corporation based in US and served the company for years in various capacities. He left for the US through a scholarship opportunity he had got. Workiye has received BA in accounting from one of the universities there. Over the past 34 years, he was engaged in various businesses which created job opportunities for many Ethiopians.*

*Though he spent much of his time in business engagement, today's guest had published a book titled: "Kefiker Bestejerba" or "Behind the Scenes of Love" from contributing some articles for Addis Zemen daily newspaper and Yezareyitu Ethiopia newspapers.*

*He recently published a half-philosophical touch book called "Yeaymero, Yeayen and Yejoro Mesiker" literally meaning witness of mind, eye and ears. The Ethiopia Herald spent a few hours with him to raise and discuss a range of issues. Have a nice read!*

**Could you tell us about what motivated you to return to your homeland after spending more than half of your age abroad?**

I came here mainly following the government's call to all citizens residing abroad. After the regime change, I and others had a great desire to return to our country. In the course of those periods, I came to visit my country only a handful of times. For more than thirty years, I had opened my own business in the US and led a moderate life.

Though you have got every good thing, there is nothing like a country of birth. As it is not your own country, you always feel stupid. As many of the people residing abroad say, my heart was attached to my country and the people. Especially as you get older, "how long am I living?" is the question you ask every day. The money and wealth you earn abroad will never be compared with what you can get at home as you share with poor people.

After much thought about this idea of returning to the country, I discussed it with my wife and she accepted the idea without any hesitation. Many of our friends are surprised by the decision, and quite a few of them were also inspired to return to their country. However, they are always regretting it as they cannot do it easily.

**We must be aware of this evil W**agenda and wake up. We must strengthen our unity and friendship. We Ethiopians are the people of the world who are envied and have a wonderful history

Of course, even though it has been two years since I came, occasionally, I still come and go, but I permanently settled here in Ethiopia. In general, being able to return to my country has given me great relief and peace.

Of course, before we came here, some people said, how can you go to a country where there is war and full of troubles? Death is inevitable neither in America nor here. Everything has happened as per the will of God. I think my decision is right. The relative peace and harmony in Ethiopia are not found in Europe and America.

**Although you have spent most of your time doing various businesses, you are known for writing two books and various articles. Please briefly remember about those works.**

It is true. Even though I was in various businesses for many years, I enjoy reading and writing. Since I wanted to keep up myself with the ever-growing world, I have a habit of reading books using every single opportunity. It gave me great pleasure to write what I felt, realized and deliver to the readers. Especially since it was a time when there were not as many entertainment

options as there are now, so my articles on Ethiopia in the new era and today gained me great popularity.

However, I was sending my article directly to the author and General Manager of the Ethiopian Press Agency. Even the journalist who worked there did not know me physically as I do not appear in person. As a result, they presumed that many of the articles were written under the pen name of the renowned author Bealu Girma. It was only after I wrote my first novel, "Behind the Scenes of Love," that many people came to know about my true identity. After publishing this book in America and marketing it here, I went back. The book was so popular at the time and sold out immediately. But I published very few copies and not everyone who liked it could find it.

The idea for my second book, "Eye, Ear and Mind Witness" was conceived when I was in America. This book is mainly based on human life. The content revolves around how everyone should stand independently; Especially how they should prepare themselves before entering the abyss through the leadership of others; Instead of simply accepting what is said,

it is imperative to ask the why and how? There is also a philosophy and research that analyzes how the culture of reasoning should be developed.

**Over the past 27 years, the TPLF administration had divided the unity of Ethiopians residing locally and abroad. Please tell us about the situation in the US and the recent "No more" campaign.**

As you said, they divided the people into ethnic groups and made them fight each other. The situation was arduous, especially for the diaspora like me who believed in national unity. They made the diaspora think about its differences rather than create a coalition. It had a negative role in spoiling the image of our country.

However, the secret conspiracy to divide the people and the country is not only happening in our country, the whole world has been plagued by this divisive agenda both in the past and now. Still, many countries are victims of this problem.

Why do you think is Korea divided into two? Russia's 15 provinces turned into small states? Why did Pakistan separate from India? If you ask me where the division in the whole world comes from,

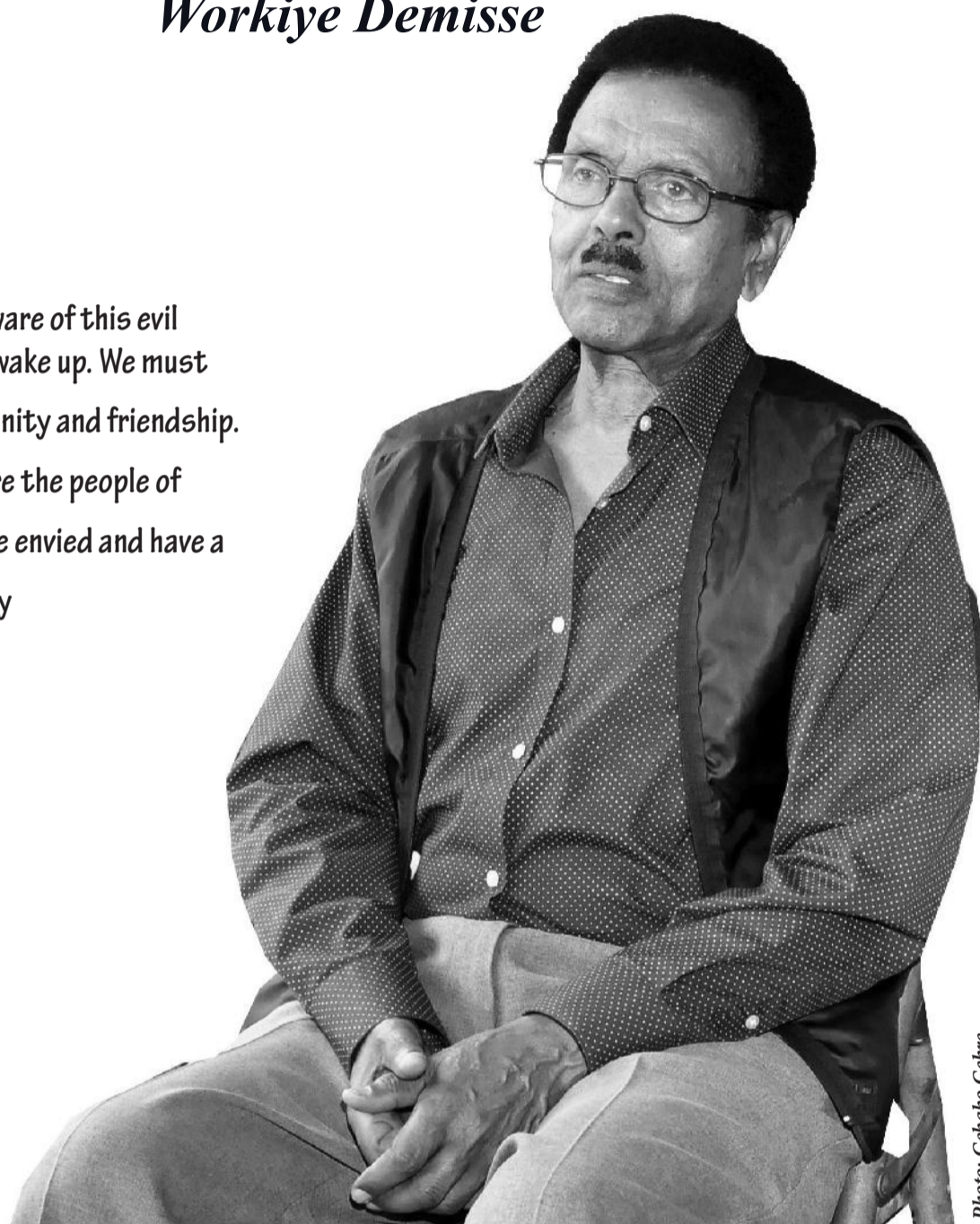


Photo: Gebabo Gebre





my response is the evil system of the so-called New World Government led by the West. They still try to separate Tigray from Ethiopia.

As I mentioned, this evil administration led by the Westerners is working with a plan to make the world a center of corruption and destruction by dividing countries and separating the people of one country in a way that suits them. It is known that even in the past, Westerners have been making a great conspiracy to divide us based on religion and ethnicity.

The TPLF, as the executors of the Western agenda, tried to disperse the people fighting and creating ethnic differences. The reason why most American organizations tried to divide the people under the pretext of aid is to divide Ethiopia. They also tried to detach Tigray from Ethiopia. The Westerners created a divisive policy with the help of the TPLF.

Still, the evil agenda that has been planted in people's minds for years is being imposed more and more today. People of both ethnicities are married together and lived together in peace and love. However, now we are fighting each other in a way we have never seen before, and we have become the laughingstock and plaything of the West. Reducing the population of a country is a big thing for this organization.

As it is known, the TPLF has been following the evil policy of the West since its inception and has been able to control Ethiopia and live as they wish. Now that the evil intentions of the West and the TPLF have become clear, there would be no hole that they will not touch to destroy us.

Thus, we must be aware of this evil agenda and wake up. We must strengthen our unity and friendship. We Ethiopians are the people of the world who are envied and have a wonderful history. Neither the westerners nor other enemies will succeed. It is only a matter of time before we will return to our previous unity. After all, when the country is stable, we are bound to return to the situation we were in. I have full faith that a situation will arise where we can forget all the bad memories and make our country better by coming up with new hope.

**How do you see the pressure that the United Nations is currently putting on Ethiopia?**

I mentioned some of the points earlier. UN and some western countries are enablers of TPLF. In my opinion, it is naïve to expect good things from these organizations. On the other hand, I do not think that they lack awareness of the conspiracies and destruction that the terrorist group is doing here. They know it. They committed a crime against the Defense Forces.

The enablers of TPLF know that the group was brutally killing and torturing innocent people as they vividly saw everything via satellite. However, enablers of TPLF want a disintegrated Ethiopia. On one hand, TPLF expressed its readiness for negotiation but on the other hand, they are the ones who accept weapons.



**What I want to mention again and again is that as long as the Ethiopian people continue to strengthen their unity, no matter how much influence the Americans or other Westerners try to create, they will not be able to defeat or disperse us.**

**How do you see the government's endeavor and people's collaboration to protect the country's sovereignty?**

In my opinion, this work is mainly the responsibility of the government. Protecting the sovereignty of the country is the government's mandate as it is the only body entrusted by the people to do so. I say that attention should be paid to the issue of independence and giving appropriate reaction to those who intervene in domestic affairs. In this regard, the government should clarify the current situation to the people and coordinate the society to stand by its side for the success of its foreign policy.

Once again, the government should listen to the heartbeat of the people instead of deciding everything based on the wishes of the politicians. As it has been said, the US and other western countries are currently putting pressure on Ethiopia, as they did during the Derg regime. It is because of the Westerner's influence, President Mengistu Haile Mariam, was suddenly separated from his beloved country. I do not believe that they will stop interfering in our country as long as there is no suitable administration for them. Because they don't care how many people die until they achieve what they want in this country.

What I want to mention again and again is that as long as the Ethiopian people

continue to strengthen their unity, no matter how much influence the Americans or other Westerners try to create, they will not be able to defeat or disperse us. As I said before, as Ethiopia is a land of promise, god will give us justice.

**The government is also expediting efforts to make the country self-reliant and fend off foreign pressure. How do you think should these efforts be further handled?**

By the way, this is to be expected. They have influenced us in the past as well. They will still pressure us to bow to them. No matter how strong the influence of the West is, we must resist and defend the sovereignty of our country. The Ethiopian government should never surrender. I believe that it should stand firm in its position and protect the sovereignty of the country.

We should also realize that the pressure is temporary and we should not retreat from our position in fear of them. In this regard, I understand that the position being promoted by our Prime Minister is correct and reflects the undaunted nature of Ethiopians. They tried to persuade him in different ways; he however refused and woke up earlier. Therefore, I would like to thank him for his actions and decisions.

**In what way should the diaspora play its role in developing the country?**

Forgive me; I think it is naïve to expect too

much from the diaspora as residing abroad does not mean having a better income. Even in the country where I lived, few of the diaspora made more than their daily wages. Some are in serious trouble. Even now, the diaspora is supporting the country because it cannot just watch its people suffering, not because it has that much wealth.

Therefore, for me, instead of waiting for the diaspora to come and develop the country, I believe that better change will come if the people here strengthen its unity. In particular, I say that the government should shoulder the biggest responsibility to revive the economy that has been devastated by war for more than two years.

For this reason, I believe that it is necessary to support the people and customize a system that will allow them to become entrepreneurs. More than anyone else, we should support the farmers to ensure our food security. As it has been repeatedly said, since the majority of the population is dependent on agriculture, it means a lot to support this section of society and make it independent.

**I would like to thank you for your time.**

**It's my pleasure.**

## Investing in posterity through quality education pays off

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Cognizant of the fact that investing in posterity is building the future of the nation, the Ministry of Education is relentlessly endeavoring to ensure quality education. True, quality education and well confidential way of examining students helps the nation produce competent, productive, responsible, civic minded and innovator generation. That is why the country has started capitalizing on a range of viable ways in schools, colleges and universities as well.

Education Minister Prof. Berhanu Nega said, “The way we have been following right now would unequivocally help the nation bring about the desired change with regard to the education sector especially focusing on quality.”

According to him, the country hasn’t so far well focused on quality though changes have been recorded concerning education accessibility. Hence, to well bridge the gap witnessed with regard to quality, the combined effort of all is badly required.

Ethiopia has well comprehended that achieving quality education is one of the most powerful and proven vehicles for sustainable economic, social, cultural and political developments. Besides, the country has embarked on ensuring quality education as it is a viable for progress and attaining multiple goals.

As to Prof. Berhanu, students were sent to higher learning institutions to take university entrance exam and scrupulously invigilated there, and it would be crucial for having productive generation.

“The Ministry is working to come up with competent citizens as schools and grades are key elements of education. That is why it has been investing time and resources to educate the next generation who will take over the country with its future. This move also needs some standards that can be used to measure how effective education is,” he added.

This year’s means of testing students at universities would help them, be they are from social science stream or from that of natural science or from private schools or public ones, gain the skills and capacities as well as knowledge to succeed in fostering their academic life devoid of cheating and other irregularities.

Really, the Ethiopian government is now working more on education as it expands access to quality education though a lot remains to be done. In spite of widespread access to education throughout the nation, a range of challenges have remained intact with regard to quality of education.

It is also undeniable fact that Ethiopia has left with a long journey to do away with schools over crowdedness; teacher’s limited training, low learning outcomes to prettily swap the trajectory of the education industry. It is quite decisive to well comprehend that population growth in Ethiopia and the influx of refugees has placed additional pressure



Students taking university entrance exam at higher learning institutions

on the country’s public education system, and students fall out of the system would lack opportunities to get back on track.

He said, “Ethiopia has recently experienced massive improvement in access to education despite weaknesses in terms of ensuring quality. Taking this fact into account, the Ministry is now extraordinarily investing in quality.”

Prof, Berhanu further elucidated that Ethiopia has been capitalizing on quality in all education levels centering secondary school streams and higher education departments, including, technical, engineering and scientific programs, vocational training and information and communications technology so as to enlist itself in the category of middle income countries within the shortest time possible, and be competent with other developed nations of the globe, in the future.

Prof. also said, “Students who have been passing through quality academic channel are going to combat corruption and any form of malpractice. Besides, they would be of significantly useful in coming up with problem solving ideas and contributing to the comprehensive development of the nation instead of fattening their private pocket and quenching self-interest.”

True, when these citizens come to power, they would be great weapons for the county to contain anti-peace move, terrorism, inefficient government undertakings as well as threat of illiteracy and poverty. Yes, this threat is less evident in affluent and fairly well-organized societies. The new generation at schools has to have idea free of partiality, and should not be dominated by others’ ideology.

Abera Tadege is an education expert working for quality assessment. He said that without doubt education has been laying a solid foundation for healthy human development as it is strongly correlated with various social and economic benefits. Hence, all actors running the sector, concerned

educational institutions, policymakers, and teachers, even the entire community, have to focus on quality improvements to make a difference in the sector.

He further stated that the government has trekked a long journey and continue doing so in order to create a more conducive learning environment. This is really a promising move.

This impressive move requires the combined effort of all since making a difference through quality education should not be left solely to the Ministry and others working in the area, Abera opined.

Every generation’s complaining about the succeeding or descending generational flow leads nowhere. What matters is consolidating the positive aspects and lucrative trajectory and doing away with the negative repercussions of any act in the world of education.

These days, it is repeatedly heralded that the education policy in Ethiopia has to incorporate indigenous knowledge and wisdom from the school system to help the nation have confident and determined citizens to serve the country and its people. Such a local capacity helps students or trainees have courage to easily assimilate themselves with modern education and global literacy arena.

The present step of the ministry targets at two fundamental thematic areas namely, to excellently avoid the culture of cheating among students and help them acculturated themselves with the next level of academic success knowing at what level they are, i.e capable ones can easily penetrate the cliff and those who didn’t study would critically look into themselves.

As to Abera, obviously, quality education enables students to do what they want and society’s demands for conformity to their own necessities, which people become engineers, scientists, lawyers, teachers,

journalists, soldiers, or specialists of some kind. This is the world of students in which they would be change engines and have become a part of intellectual club through quality education.

It is well recognized that education has both global and local aspects and it should be framed with indigenous knowledge as local context matters the most. If the country intends for its new generation of students to develop problem-solving skills, it has to well embark on the generation to be critical thinkers, innovators, and those who can be models for their juniors, Abera underlined.

Basically, he said, acquiring knowledge and skills needed to promote personal development, social-wellbeing as well as national progress, among others, through education—especially via quality one—is instrumental in coming up with sustainable lifestyles, ensure human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and improving working culture.

In sum, to ensure quality education the country should train teachers well thereby making them competent, and recruit them from the very beginning breaking the old trend of assigning students who score lower grades in their secondary school or first year of their university stay to the teaching stream. For runners of the education sector—educators or teachers— have to be free from political affiliation as the sector itself requires citizens working for producing productive and innovative fellow citizens who have developed sense of belongingness, patriotism, spirit of fraternity, amicable approach and harmonious way of living.

Besides, providing students with good teaching and learning process and examining them in a very orderly manner would help ensure quality education and this in turn can be regarded as a viable step for ensuring quality education. In simple terms, investing in posterity is building the future of the nation.

# Verbatim and Caption

## On the peace accord



*“The agreement was made after multiple back and forth, open and close, larger & small group debates. Hence there were several drafts from both sides. Some being circulated may be earlier versions which may give wrong impression,” Minister, National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of FDRE, Redwan Hussien.*



*“Welcome important agreement between the Ethiopian Government and the Tigray People’s Revolutionary Front (TPLF) to end the terrible conflict in northern Ethiopia. I applaud their choice of peace, and the mediation efforts of African Union, South Africa and Kenya. UK is ready to support the peace process, MP for the Braintree Constituency,” Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, James Cleverly.*

*“The EU welcomes the announcement of a Cessation of Hostilities and congratulates both the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front for their commitment and courage towards peace. The EU commends the African Union mediation and its observers, as well as the South Africa host and reaffirms its readiness to support peace efforts moving forward in a process owned and led by Ethiopians. A swift implementation on the ground of the agreement reached today is needed. Priority is to resume humanitarian access in all affected areas and to restore basic services. Further negotiations are encouraged to reach a permanent ceasefire agreement and launch broader political talks. As we approach the second anniversary of the beginning of the war, the EU reaffirms its solidarity with the people of Ethiopia on its way to reconciliation and recovery, like it has constantly remained*



*by their side through humanitarian and development assistance,” Josep Borrell, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.*

*“We welcome the momentous step taken in Pretoria today to advance the African Union’s campaign to “silence the guns” with the signing of a cessation of hostilities between the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front. We commend the parties for taking this initial step to agree to end the fighting and continue dialogue to resolve outstanding issues to consolidate peace and bring an end to almost two years of conflict. We welcome the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance and the protection of civilians that should result from implementation of this agreement. The United States commends AU Commission Chairman Faki for his leadership as well as the extraordinary efforts of AU High Representative Obasanjo, former South African Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka, and former Kenyan President Kenyatta, whose facilitation led to this significant step toward peace. We also commend South Africa for generously hosting the talks. The United States remains a committed partner to this AU-led process and to our collaboration with the UN,*



*IGAD, and other regional and international partners to support implementation of today’s agreement. We welcome the statement of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy expressing gratitude to the AU and share our support for his desire for an enhanced partnership to support reconstruction and development for all communities in northern Ethiopia affected by the conflict, Ned Price, US State Department Spokesperson.”*



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## AHRI at the grand challenges annual meeting in Brussels

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

The Ethiopian delegation led by Professor Afework Kassu and representatives from Ministry of Health (MoH), Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI), Addis Ababa University (AAU), Ethiopian Public Health Institute, (EPHI), St. Paul’s Hospital Millennium Medical College (SPHMMC), and other institutions partook at the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting from October 23-26, 2022 in Brussels, Belgium.

Prof. Kassu who is head of Armauer Hansen Research Institute in Ethiopia and his delegation had productive discussions along with senior leaders of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Grand Challenges Canada, Grand Challenges India, Grand Challenges Brazil, Grand Challenges Africa, The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and with a number senior scientists on areas of mutual interest that will help in strengthening Research, Development, and Innovation in Ethiopia.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in collaboration with the European Union hosted the 18<sup>th</sup> Grand Challenges Annual Meeting.

The opening session was graced by senior



officials, including Dr. Ursula von der Leyen, President of European Commission, Mr. Alexander De Croo, Prime Minister of Belgium, Mr. Bill Gates, Co-Chair of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Mrs. Bettina Stark, Federal Minister for Education and Research of Germany, and others. The dignitaries emphasized “The importance of innovation and Research and Development in a rapidly changing world; and the case for investing in innovation and collaboration”.

Pre-opening session high-level meetings included a ‘Funders Forum’ which was

aimed to encourage partners to explore how funding decisions and partnerships can help to strengthen locally led research and development, and ensure that innovation is both developed by and accessible to those most affected by the problems we seek to solve.

The three days annual event attracted policy makers, researchers, practitioners, media and funders from different parts of the world.

During the course of the annual meeting, the Ethiopian team had useful interactive meetings with teams from the Bill and Melinda Gates

Foundation, GC Canada, GC India, GC Africa, EDCTP, Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) and other attendees to collaborate and strengthen Research, Development and Innovation in the country.

Grand Challenges Ethiopia (GCE), an initiative of the Ministry of Health that was launched in 2015 to address major health sector grand challenges within the Ethiopian context. The prime focus of the initiative includes, curbing high maternal and child mortality, poor adolescent and youth health, pastoralist health, emerging and increasing trends of antimicrobial resistance and deaths due to non-communicable diseases through fostering health innovations.

As of 2017, GCE has been hosted by AHRI and has its own secretariat and taskforce. Since 2017, a total of 550 health innovation project proposals have been submitted; 320 proposals for proof of concept and 230 for transition to scale grants. The GCE taskforce has thus far reviewed and evaluated all the 550 proposals and selected 70 best proposals for funding: 52 seed, 17 transitions to scale, and one validation test health innovation projects.

Next year’s GCAM will be hosted by Senegal in Dakar. It is to be recalled that Ethiopia hosted the 2019 GCAM meeting in Addis Ababa.