



# The Ethiopian Herald

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Vol. LXXIX No 081 14 December 2022 - Tahesase 5, 2015 **Wednesday** Price Birr 10.00



## Green Legacy Initiative creates healthy ecosphere: Premier

- Lauds U.S. institutes for acknowledging green initiative

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA—Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed underscored that reinvigorating Green Legacy Initiative is a tool to own a

healthy ecosphere as it preserves earth and its ecosystem well.

He also thanked the American Academy of Achievement and the Global Hope Coalition

(GHC) for extending a hand of friendship to the African continent and for recognizing Ethiopia's Green Legacy initiative as an

*See Green Legacy ... page 3*



## Two private banks to resume service in Tigray

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA—Wogagen and Anbesa International Banks have finalized preparations to resume financial service in Tigray state of Ethiopia.

The two banks told local media that, having received the notice of the National of Bank Ethiopia (NBE) to restart service in the conflict-affected areas, both have been working to fulfill the NBE's requirements of reconnecting bank service

Anbesa International Bank, therefore, noted that it has accomplished preliminary

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## Ethiopian Airlines: Best airline in Africa in 2022

- To construct mega Airport soon

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## No more excuses for Ethiopia's AGOA reinstatement: Fmr. Commissioner

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA—With no excuses left, Ethiopia has to regain its AGOA privilege sooner than later, so remarked Former Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Commissioner.

The ex - EHRC Commissioner Ambassador Tiruneh Zena told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that, special interest groups have been using human rights and humanitarian provision as a means of obtaining political leverage.

“As the humanitarian assistance is determined by their willingness and

no international law guiding such a sly situation when they cut the provision, they have created a convenient environment to impose pressure on Ethiopia to serve their best interest,” he added.

According to the ambassador, the question of the some quarters posed to the government to reinvestigate the northern issue so as to be reinstated to African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) has clearly shown their ill intent to undermine the joint effort investigation of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the

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# News



## Diplomats pledge to promote Ethiopia's trade, tourism, investment potentials

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** – Diplomats vowed to promote Ethiopia's trade, tourism and investment potentials to the international community to flourish tourism flow and export.

Diplomats who recently took part in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MoFA) Ethiopian Foreign Relation Policy training reaffirmed their commitment and readiness to promote trade, tourism and investment opportunities to international communities.

Diplomats told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that they witnessed activities and operation of various tourist destinations and manufacturing industries.

MOFA Expert Zerubabel Getachew (PhD) said that, he has visited various tourist destinations of the country including Gorgora project although the flow of tourists and activities of tourism in these areas has been decreasing than ever after the outbreak of COVID-19 and northern conflict. In some

areas, industry zones are operating in their half capacity due to some restrictions.

The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) has been enabling tourist sites to be comfortable for tourism and trade. He guaranteed that he would perform his responsibility to make the sector competitive. The tours in tourist sites and manufacturing industries were constructive, he said.

"We have a responsibility to diversify and expand Ethiopia's market destinations. Diplomats should recognize their huge role in transforming knowledge and technology, attracting capital investment and facilitating export." We should continue strengthening our responsibility to enable the sectors to the previous activities and operations, he added.

Abrehat Mehari, MoFA Expert in Brussels for her part said that, she witnessed the flow of tourists in tourist sites registered a reduction. To avert the situation, diplomats have to perform tangible activities in the

future.

"Most of the manufacturing industries are operating and we witnessed reduction of production of some industries. The responsibility of diplomats is to attract more investors and exploit alternatives from the respective countries that they work."

The government should continue strengthening its focus on economic diplomacy. All diplomats are ready to expand market destinations and persuade respective countries' investors to invest in Ethiopia. Stakeholders have a responsibility to monitor effectiveness of investors, she added.

MoFA Middle East Affairs Director Roba Demme said that, economic reform is an indicator of the implementation of government efforts. They have a paramount importance to improve the lives of Ethiopians. Recruiting investors, solving their facing problems, creating linkage and others are the responsibility of diplomats and stakeholders.

## Efforts underway to provide potable water in conflict-affected areas

**ADDIS ABABA** - Amhara State is working to reconstruct potable water facilities in 31 war affected Woredas with 114 million Birr, according to the State's Water and Energy Bureau.

Citing the federal and region's joint studies, the State's Water and Energy Bureau told ENA that about 2 billion Birr worth of facilities—i.e. 1,400 potable water institutions were destroyed during the conflict.

Currently, activities are being undertaken to reconstruct one potable water project in each of the 31 Woredas, it said.

The Water and Energy Bureau also said that, the bureau in collaboration with the state's Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Fund Office has allocated more than 114 million Birr for the first phase of the reconstruction works.

## Alliance vows to foster rehabilitation, reconstruction in conflict affected areas

BY TAMERU REGASA

**ADDIS ABABA**— Global Alliance for the Rights of Ethiopians (GARE) has vowed to provide war affected citizens in the northern part of Ethiopia with a rehabilitation and construction supports.

Signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with different partners on Monday, the alliance announced that it is ready to extend its supports in all conflict affected areas through providing humanitarian supports and reconstructing the destructed public infrastructures.

The alliance said that, it has opening branch offices to extend the rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in conflict affected areas.

The alliance signed an agreement with Amhara Development Association and Afar Development Association in Amhara and Afar states to reconstruct Miya School and Modena school in Amhara state and Afar state respectively.



Alliance CEO, Betru Gebre Egziabher said that the alliance has undertaken different development and humanitarian activities in collaborating with other associations to reconstruct public institutions destroyed following the conflict in the states.

He said: "In collaboration with Amhara Development Association the alliance has reconstructed Hayik Primary school, Woldia Health station and other institutions. Likewise, the alliance has been playing

immeasurable role in rehabilitating the internally displaced people."

Similarly, the Alliance signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Alliance for Green Economy and Resilient Ethiopia (AGERE) to achieve a climate resilient, green, inclusive and prosperous Ethiopia for rapid and sustainable socio-economic development towards the Sustainable Development Goals through playing a constructive role in social and environmental spheres.

AGERE CEO, Eshetu Bekele (PHD) said that, his organization has been operating in line with UN Sustainable Development Goals to achieve climate resilient developments.

He underscored that Global Warming has been increasing from time to time due to industrial expansion and other factors. Hence, measures should be taken to address this global problem.

Quoting the World Bank report concerning the adverse impact of climate change on the lives of all living things including human beings, he said that more than 200 million people are likely to migrate over the next three decades because of extreme weather or the slow degradation of their environments unless measures are taken.

He said that, his organization has signed the agreement with GARE to undertake evidence based advocacy on environmental issues through undertaking different researches to identify the type of intervention to tackle environment related challenges in Ethiopia.

# News

## African gov'ts urged to cooperate for maximum benefit from mineral wealth

**ADDIS ABABA-** African countries need to cooperate to ensure maximum benefit from their mineral wealth, African Minerals and Geosciences Centre (AMGC) Director-General Ibrahim Shaddad said.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, the director-general said cooperation of institutions responsible in the mining sector among African countries is of paramount significance for integration and exchange of information, and building skill of expertise.

This could be done through exchanges of visits and training opportunities with countries, he added.

"We have to cooperate in the field and offices by exchanging data and sharing best practices. This is the only way we survive and promote our multilateral and bilateral benefits from the mineral potentialities and mineral resources to be a real mineral wealth."

There are small-scale miners along the border who engage in smuggling, illicit mineral trade,



and affecting countries not benefit from their own wealth, Shaddad noted.

Through discussion and cooperation, the ministries and geological institutes could formalize the sector and control the benefits of each of the countries.

According to him, illicit mineral trade may create conflict and "we (therefore) need conflict free beneficiation of mineral wealth between African countries."

Countries could come to discuss

about multilateral and bilateral benefits of mine technically, he added.

Regarding the efforts being exerted by the Ethiopian government to intensify regional integration, Shaddad said it is an appreciable effort that all the governments of the region should join.

"They (the countries in the region) have to encourage such things and they make the middle of the bridge not waiting for the Ethiopian government to come across the bridge."

It is in the interest of our nations and we have so many common tribes along the borders, which is something arbitrary that has been created by the colonial powers, the director-general elaborated.

He advised all Africans that have common borders to carry out trans-boundary activities to benefit the huge number of people traveling across the borders.

"In this regard, I appreciate the effort of the Ethiopian government, and call on the other governments to cooperate for multilateral and bilateral beneficiation."

The African Minerals and Geosciences Centre (AMGC), formerly known as Southern and Eastern African Mineral Centre (SEAMIC), was established in 1977 to principally carry out regional geological surveying and to provide minerals exploration and consulting services for programs of its founding member states.

The member states are Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mozambique, later joined by Uganda, Angola and the Comoros.

Kenya became a member in 2006 and the Sudan joined in 2010. In 2007, the ministerial meeting in Maputo decided that membership is open to all African states.

To reflect this expansion of the scope, the name of the Centre was changed to African Minerals and Geosciences Centre (AMGC) starting from July 2015.

## Ethiopian Airlines: Best airline in Africa in 2022

### • To construct mega Airport soon

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA-** The Ethiopian Airlines Group has been chosen as Best Airline in Africa in 2022, according to Global Travel Magazine.

Meanwhile, the Ethiopian has announced that preparations are underway to start the construction of the new "Airport City" mega project in the current fiscal year.

It was learnt that the Global Travel Magazine made the announcement in its 19th annual survey of GT Tested Reader Survey Awards of various world countries airlines rank recently.

In addition to this, the magazine disclosed that Addis Ababa Bole International Airport is the **best Airport in Africa**.

Accordingly, to award the prestigious honor

each year, a select group of *Global Traveler* staff, Advisory Board members and those who subscribe of the magazine and global board choose the winners through a series of considerations and factors.

On the other hand, The Ethiopian Airlines Group has announced that preparations are underway to start the construction of the new "Airport City" mega project in the current fiscal year, the CEO of the Airline said.

It has been stated that 5 billion USD budget has been allocated to build the mega project.

According to the report by Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), the "Airport City" mega project is expected to be completed within five years.

It is said that this project, which will be built in Oromia State, will have modern hotels, a duty-

free shopping center and a cargo logistics center.

Mesfin Tasew, CEO of the Ethiopian Airlines Group, told ENA that the airline has completed a study through a company in France to start the construction.

He stated, the airline is working closely with the Oromia state to start the construction of the project.

Mesfin said a tender will be issued to the companies that will design the project and it will start construction after the completion of the preparatory work in the current fiscal year.

The CEO indicated that the project could be divided into two phases, if necessary.

It is to be recalled that Ethiopian Airlines Group announced the detailed plans of this mega airport project two years ago.

## Green Legacy...

African success story.

Receiving the Outstanding African Leadership Award for his effective leadership of the Green Legacy Initiative on Monday in the U.S., Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) extended his gratitude to the organizers, American Academy of Achievement and the Global Hope Coalition (GHC).

"Indeed, our continent is filled with many success stories past, present and future. The perspective that African countries are net producers of problems that always require external assistance is an outdated one. Therefore, great appreciation to the organizers for lighting a torch on the continent's net production of solutions," Abiy stated.

As the global community continues to be confronted with the adverse effects of climate change, in Ethiopia we chose to undertake bold and practical solutions to address the issue. It is to be recalled that Ethiopia launched the Green Legacy Initiative in 2019 with an ambition of planting 20 billion seedlings in a span of four years, the Office of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia indicated.

"In most of Ethiopia, June to August is the rainy season, where the air cools, the dust settles, the rain quenches the thirst of the land after 9 months of heat, and the soil softens, making it hospitable for young fragile seedlings to establish roots," he stated.

Premier Abiy explained that, having exceeded the set goal and fulfilling the four year challenge with 25 billion seedlings planted throughout the country, the impact could be equated to removing 64 million gasoline-powered cars from the roads for a whole year. Ethiopia has been recognized globally for its reforestation efforts and contribution to addressing climate change

Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative is the most extensive afforestation and reforestation program next to the Amazon. Besides, apart from the afforestation and reforestation efforts, Ethiopia has also put over 700,000 hectares of existing biodiversity and carbon-rich natural forests under a sustainable participatory forest management scheme.

"Moreover, by 2022, Ethiopian Green Legacy initiative has fostered a flourishing national green culture, tripling the number of seedling nurseries to more than 121,000; creating more than 750,000 jobs mostly for women and youth; and generating

1.3 billion Ethiopian Birr income. Seedlings have also been shared with neighboring countries to bolster regional cooperation for trans-boundary ecosystem management," he noted.

Ethiopian Green Legacy Initiative will certainly contribute towards removing the equivalent of hundreds of millions of tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and reduce deforestation.

Ethiopia's tangible contribution to the overall global afforestation and reforestation pledge is impressive by any standard, but even more so when it has been financed primarily by domestic resources and efforts. Ethiopia plans to restore an additional 22 million hectares of degraded land by 2030 aside from developing a green fund and will pursue carbon trading schemes to help raise additional financing, he stated.

The premier said: "As a nation, we may and we do have differences in the way we interpret the past and the way we envisage the future, but we are united in the hope we have for our children and planet. We aspire to reverse deforestation and build a green society in Ethiopia and Africa. We have no doubt that Ethiopian Green Legacy story will motivate a global mobilization toward reconciling our modern civilization with our planet and ecosystems."

## Two private...

preparations to provide re-banking services in the state.

The media further stated that, Anbesa bank has also completed identifying the level of financial losses via checking the customers' accounts, providing banking service through matching with core banking system running other related activities very soon. Likewise, Wogagen International Bank is on the verge of reopening the bank service.

It was learnt that, following the Cessation of Hostility Agreement (CoHA) signed between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF, damaged banking infrastructure has been restored to some extent in the state apart from returning normalcy.

## No more...

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

"No need of reinvestigating the report as it has fulfilled what is expected to be hit, and because the joint investigation clearly showed the human rights violations, violations of international humanitarian law, and other related issues based on the conflict in the northern parts of the country," the ambassador noted.

He further stated that, delisted Ethiopia from AGOA is human rights violations by itself since it lacks rationality. Therefore, explaining Ethiopian facts to the pertinent bodies during the U.S. -Africa Leader Summit, encouraging diplomatic role, discussing the consequence of delisting Ethiopia from AGOA and the likes need to be underscored to ensure national interests at large.

# Opinion

## Implementing the peace agreement to ensure lasting stability

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

It has been over a month long since the peace agreement was signed between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Tigray People's Liberation Forces (TPLF) in Pretoria, South Africa. The two years long war between the two parties brought a heavy toll in various forms.

Hundreds of thousands of combatants and civilians were killed, infrastructure such as academic institutions, hospitals and bridges are demolished; economic sectors among others agriculture, and manufacturing, trade and tourism have been crippled.

Hence, it can be said that the peace agreement paves way to start a new life and rehabilitate people suffered from the physical and psychological trauma due to the war. It also creates conducive environment to supply unfettered humanitarian aid to the war affected people.

The full peace agreement contains a preamble and 15 articles with the objective of the agreement. It also requires both parties to implement components of the agreement in good faith.

The agreement forbids all forms of hostilities both direct and indirect which include engaging in proxy war and collaborating with any external forces against each other. Both parties also agreed to pursue international human rights' laws and restrain from violation of human rights. The government is also required to allow unrestrained relief aid to the war affected civilians in Tigray and neighboring Amhara and Afar regions and reintegrate the internally displaced people. Both parties also agreed on disarmament and demobilization of TPLF forces.

TPLF unilaterally agreed to respect constitutional order, respect the authority of the government, not to recruit soldiers, not to deploy or conscript, not to plot to change the government without the constitutional means.

After they signed the Nairobi agreement which is a mechanism tool for the implementation of the Pretoria agreement, the council of Ministers endorsed the draft law to establish the national rehabilitation commission. The commission works on how the disarmed groups rehabilitate and join the civilian life. In the past weeks, officials from the Ethiopian Defense forces and the TPLF military officials elaborated the issues related with disarmament to their combatants.

According to the information obtained both from the government and TPLF, the two parties are exerting their effort for the implementation of the peace agreement as it is the best solution to attain lasting peace. The TPLF military officers also explained their commitment to be abided by the Pretoria agreement.

Recently, the TPLF forces' commander, General Tadesse Worede, announced that 65 percent of his forces are disarmed and relocated some 50 kilometers back from the front line and stationed in camps. In line with the agreement, the TPLF forces withdrew from their holding areas such as Amakla, chercher, zalanbessa, kukuftu, gondale, habergele and Beritekly. Residents of Mekele also told German Radio, Deutsche Welle (DW) that no one benefits from war and they said they have been longing peace since the outbreak of war two years ago.

Humanitarian aid destined to Tigray through various directions such as through the main road from Kobo to Alamata, Korem and Mychew; from Afar region through the town of Abala towards mekele.

Aid supply has also undertaken from northern Gonder to Maitsemri, Shire and Axum as well as from Humera to Shiraro. Since the beginning of supplying the humanitarian aid, more than 78 thousand metric tons of food and none food items have been destined to Tigray.

In addition, up to 30 Dec, 2022, 72,160 metric tons of food and none food aids supplied by donor countries reached Tigray. In line with these, 575,000 litter of fuel reached to Tigray. In addition to the government's effort, 23 none governmental organizations have been participated in distributing food and none food items to the needy.

Thousands of people displaced from Tigray who were stayed in Afar region in camps returned to their residential woredas of home region. Others also from northern Wollo repatriated to their places of origin in Tigray.

Meanwhile, based on the Pretoria agreement, the Ethiopian defense forces controlled the air ports located in Tigray region towns of Shire, Axum and Mekele.

Air planes which loaded relief aid including medicines have resumed landing in Shire airport twice a week.

In another development, the Mekele town electric power station which was halted due to the war became connected to the national power grid and has begun to be operational.

According to Mogose Mekonen, Communications Director of the Ethiopian Electric Power the Mekele electric power station is connected with the electric line stretched from Alamata to Mehoni which comes from the national grid with 230 kilo volt high power transit. On the maintenance of the north eastern region electric power line, all the professionals resided there and participated in the task. The maintenance accelerates the power supply activities in Tigray region. It is also learned that the maintenance of the 230 volte electric power line stretched from Humera to Shire is completed. However, the electric power

line which provides power to shire and stretched from Tekeze to Axum is highly damaged in eight places. Therefore, it was connected to the Tekeze Power generation dam and within three weeks towns located from Adwa up to Mekele will be supplied electric power.

The Ethio-telecom also announced that it resumed telephone service in Tigray region. Government sent maintenance workers and technicians up to the Woreda level. As soon as the maintenance of the Shire Telecom station is completed, towns such as Alamata, Korem, and Axum will secure the services. As a result, people will be able to communicate with their relatives through mobile telephone within a short period of time. Till now maintenance work is conducted to 266 kilometer fiber telephone wire and to complete the maintenance only days are remained. Many reservoir telephone wires have been operational and relayed sounds after the maintenance.

Checking all infrastructure weather they are functional or not and maintaining the dysfunctional has been continued. The other thing related in rehabilitating the region is making operational of fuel stations located in various places.

In the coming days, gas stations located from Mekele up to Shire will be checked, maintained and become operational.

The Ethiopian airlines also announced that it is waiting the green light that is going to be given by the civil aviation and the security officials to fully engage in passenger and cargo flight to and from Mekele.

Traditionally, Ethiopians have a culture of resolving their differences through dialogue. Various ethnic groups have their own mechanisms to resolve differences within themselves and with other groups. But in the modern history of the country, following the importation of left wing ideology in 1960s, it has become challenging to use traditional ways to resolve political differences.

During the imperial era, it was the student's movement which laid ground for the dissemination of revolutionary ideas particularly the Marxism and Leninism ideology. The students' movement leaders took none indigenous ideology as a tool to resolve the nation's generational socio-economic problems. The ideology they lifted up by its nature does not give space to contrasting ideas. It forces the followers to accept and indoctrinate the same ideology. Most of today's political parties that put their foundation on the 1960s students' movement took the ideology as the only solution without looking other options. They disseminated the ideology to their followers by imposition rather than convincing on the top down approach.

The revolution that brought the down fall

of the old imperial regime in 1974 was in a peaceful manner at the beginning. But after it was derailed by the Derg, the situation was changed from peaceful dialogue to that of the gun battle.

In the earlier time of the revolution, opposition parties such as EPRP tried to overthrow the Derg by armed struggle waged in the urban areas but within short time the Derg reciprocated by responding maximum military force in a disproportionate manner and ultimately routed out them.

However, the power struggle between the Derg and its opponents by military means did not stop their struggle. The opposition group such as TPLF continued its armed struggle by waging gorilla fight in the rural areas and after 17 years' long fierce battle their difference resolved by the downfall of the Derg.

The change of power by military struggle did not bring any political development except changing the governors. After it assumed power in 1991, TPLF imposed its rule without tolerating different ideas. Though the multi-party political system was enshrined in the constitution and there were some indications of winning limited seats by some opposition parties in the parliament, it was not fully applied as it was narrated.

As a result, resolving the idea difference by dialogue, stayed aside and dictatorship continued as a norm. However, in 2018 new political development witnessed and some progressive elements of the members of the ruling party gained upper hand and the new reformist is government established. Therefore, we can fairly say that struggling to meet one's objective by military means took the nation to nowhere.

The recently reached peace agreement between the federal government and TPLF, thus, can be taken as a new commendable trajectory in the nation's long history. The fruitfulness of the agreement, however, puts burden on both parties to act according to the agreement. So far, the federal government has gone long distance in implementing the agreement that necessitates the other part should also go along the agreement.

On the other hand, there are still some opposition groups that waged war against the government to attain their aim by forgetting the past. We hope they will come to their mind and divert their struggle into peaceful means because; there is no other viable option than coming to peace talks for the benefit of the people utilizing the conducive environment created.

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

# The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays  
By The Ethiopian Press Agency



General Manager

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

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# Editorial

## Determination, hard work pays off

Irrespective of their economic success, climate change is swiping nations' pride across the whole world. There is no a single country that is not visited by the adverse impacts of climate change. Despite all the global conferences on the ways and means of mitigating climate change and attempts of climate experts to avoid the daunting impacts of carbon dioxide on humankind and the environment alike, the results are not that heartwarming. Due to this, planet earth is suffering from drought, wildfires, flooding and other catastrophes which had never been seen in human history.

Extreme weather and rising seas are having a wider impact, affecting more communities and business in more places. The harshest part of all these climate change is its seriousness in affecting the livelihood of those economically poor nations, mostly, developing countries like Ethiopia.

With all available opportunities technologies, skilled human power and financial muscles,—economically advanced nations preferred to turn a deaf ear on this critical issue. However, seeing the severe impact of climate change on their socio-economic undertaking—countries like Ethiopia—have traveled extra miles to avert the situation; hence, tangible results are being witnessed.

Equipping with its Green Legacy Initiatives in one hand and good leadership in the other, Ethiopia is surpassing global records and surprising the whole world through its re-afforestation projects. As mentioned by Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed on his acceptance statement for “Outstanding African Leadership Award” organized by the American Academy of Achievements and the Global Hope Coalition in Washington, DC, “As the global community continues to be confronted with the adverse effects of climate change, in Ethiopia we chose to undertake bold and practical solutions to address the issue. When in 2019, we launched the Green Legacy initiative as a proudly African nation and as a government navigating turbulent times, Ethiopians from corner

to corner rose up armed with seedlings to cover the nation green.” Over the course of the years, Ethiopians have done remarkable achievements in areas of Green Legacy by excreting their utmost energy and togetherness. Four years into the implementation of the Green Legacy Initiative, millions of Ethiopians across the nation were mobilized and not less than 25 billion seedlings which is equivalent to 250 seedlings per Ethiopian were planted which is equivalent to removing 64 million gasoline powered cars from roads for a whole year.

Indeed, this is more than a surprising news not only to Ethiopia which is successfully discharging its responsibilities in areas of climate change but also to the whole planet that is caught between life and death because of Carbon emission.

Receiving the “Outstanding African Leadership Award” Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D.) said that Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative is the most extensive afforestation and reforestation program next to the Amazon. “Ethiopia's tangible contribution to the overall global afforestation and reforestation pledge is impressive by any standard, but even more so when it has been financed primarily by domestic resources and efforts. Building on this success, Ethiopia plans to restore an additional 22 million hectares of degraded land by 2030. We are also developing a green fund and will pursue carbon trading schemes to help raise additional financing.”

Needless to say, the Green Legacy Initiative is also playing a significant role in Ethiopia in areas of job creation and generating income. So far, 750,000 Ethiopians have benefited from the job opportunities and, 1.3 billion Birr was earned. In this regard, the Outstanding African Leadership Award given to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed is a timely one and serves as an impetus for the nation in particular and the whole African continent in general to invest more time and energy for the sake of carbon free planet.

# Opinion

## Chinese companies corporate social responsibility to social good

BY BALEW DEMISSIE

Corporate social responsibility is a company's responsibility to contribute to social good. It is not an obligation, but a choice. The role of corporate social responsibility in promoting road safety is not limited to building roads and providing funds, but also educating people on how to make their city safer and how to help themselves be safe. Recently, a Chinese-sponsored 8-km relay race was held in Addis Ababa after being on hiatus for three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I followed the event in my personal capacity. The International First Highway (IFH) Engineering, a branch of China Communication Construction Company (CCCC), in collaboration with Great Ethiopian Run (GER) and Addis Ababa City Roads Authority (AACRA), sponsored and co-organized the event. The competition took place on the Alexander Pushkin Square-Gotera Interchange road project, a 3.8 km road with three sections and the construction of a two-lane, 320-meter tunnel, carried out by IFH Engineering/CCCC. Professional and amateur runners participated in the 17th edition of the competition.

Few may consider such mass sports activities a waste of time. Nevertheless, such run has its value in preserving the social good, especially in creating social awareness of traffic accidents. It is designed to promote road safety while creating a culture of healthy lifestyle among the public. Studies show that such promotional events and various initiatives that companies have implemented

reduce the number of deaths and injuries caused by traffic accidents. Road safety is a pressing concern in many countries including Ethiopia. Every year, millions of people die in traffic accidents and many millions more are injured as a result of these accidents. Such relay races organized by Chinese companies can help reduce the number of traffic accidents and make roads safer for drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

Chinese companies undertaking corporate social responsibility in Ethiopia emphasize the importance of building a culture of road safety beyond road construction. For this reason, the International First Highway (IFH) Engineering of CCCC promotes road safety in the East African country beyond road construction. The Ethiopian government should also work with Chinese companies in its fight against road accidents. The work of Chinese companies that focus on corporate social responsibility beyond alleviating the chronic traffic problem should be appreciated. Companies' managers should also think of corporate social responsibility beyond physical work. At the opening of the latest relay on the Addis Ababa road, Wei Qiangyu, General Manager of CCCC East Africa Branch, said that, his company aims to both build high-quality road infrastructure and promote road safety in Ethiopia. He added that road safety has always been the focus of road infrastructure developers. Building a quality road does not guarantee road safety. Wei said that, his company always puts road safety first by guaranteeing quality

throughout the design and construction phases. He also added that this race makes its own contribution to road safety. Companies need to raise awareness among citizens like CCCC's IHF to create awareness about road safety.

Corporate social responsibility should not be a one-time thing. I learned that IFH Engineering first sponsored the competition in 2004 to mark the completion of the eastern section of the Addis Ababa Ring Road. After the third edition of the relay in 2006, the event was moved to other locations in the city to celebrate the opening of other new roads the company had built in partnership with AACRA. The last edition of the competition, the 16th edition, was held three years ago in 2019, before the race was suspended for three years due to the outbreak of the pandemic COVID -19. This year's edition of the race saw the participation of around 100 teams representing a range of enterprises and other organizations in eight categories, according to the organizers. Such competitions are a very good platform to promote road safety while raising awareness of sports activities among the public. They encourage young Ethiopian athletes to become world-class athletes. They can be used to raise people's awareness of the dangers of traffic accidents and other social problems and issues. The competition can be an effective way to educate people about how to behave safely on the road and how to avoid accidents. It can help people understand what to do if they get into a dangerous situation on the road. Road safety is a serious issue, and corporate social responsibility is one way to

address the problem. Combining sport and corporate social responsibility is an effective way to promote road safety.

Grassroots sports promote road safety by inviting enterprises, schools, colleges and other youth-oriented organizations to organize or participate in this event. In my personal observation, Chinese enterprises show their dedicated social responsibility and contribute to society, which should be appreciated. Both domestic and international enterprises should take more social responsibility activities. They should do more for public welfare, environmental protection and also traffic safety. Companies should do their part to improve society. A corporate social responsibility strategy is not only an attempt to build goodwill among locals, but also an attempt to improve the lives of Ethiopians so that Ethiopians can effectively cooperate with companies to become successful. Overall, Chinese companies have engaged in a number of corporate social responsibilities in Ethiopia beyond various investments. Other local and international companies must also participate in corporate social responsibilities to improve the future world.

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

# Business & Economy

## Influx of digitization in Ethiopia: new trend of business dynamics

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Human being has passed through situations and precarious circumstances to cope up with nature. It devises mechanisms to overcome complication it encounters. The very visionaries are always change challenges to opportunities from hunting gathering savagery social system to the era of digitization.

The innovation of updated technologies and new outlook are making life easier and easier. In this connection countries are playground of competitiveness to safely survive in the concurrent world of digitization.

Presently, the adoption of updated technologies will be the only saver for institution especially service rendering firms to stay in the competitiveness arena. Banks, immigration, tax collecting firms among others are frequently observed with long queues which left clients compliant and grievant.

Cognizant of the above fact, there are the influx of digitization to work with Ministry of Revenue and National ID ink an accord to work in collaboration envisaging Ethiopian digital identity a robust and reliable identification for all Ethiopians and Legal residents within the country to enhance efficient taxation.

The Ministry of Revenue announced on a fortnight before that it has signed an agreement to link the Tax Payer Identification Number (TIN Number) with the National Identification Number that will help prevent tax and income tax frauds and crimes.

Regarding the agreement, the State Minister of the tax operations department of the Ministry of Revenue, Meseret Meskele, said; "The agreement replaces fingerprinting to provide taxpayer identification."

In the past, only fingerprints were used for the identification of the taxpayer, but all the fingerprints needed for the national identification were taken and an agreement was made to give to a taxpayer a secret identification number.

According to Meseret, this will reduce the amount of foreign currency that the country used to spend for this service. It is also an efficient digital system enables to control tax evasion, and economic fraud in the country.

Eyob Alemu, Technical Director for the National Id, on his part, said that the country has been incurring staggering amount of money for individuals possessed multiple identity which in turn possession of different TIN. In the course of history and fundamental changes of circumstances Ethiopians have passed through temptations for reasons it were not researched well. As time passes, some responsible citizens began to realize the naked truth and adopt best practices of the world.

Most of all the transaction cost of time was not thought of for ages; citizens were in misery to have services especially in banks custom offices, immigration, and among



Digital transactions in Ethiopia to represent 39 percent GDP by 2025 – New Business Ethiopia

other service providing offices.

According to the experience of the world and taking into consideration the value of time wasted in the process of transaction, some institutes aspired to up line the countries transaction system to digitalization.

In resent discussion held in the capital the Addis Ababa, chamber of commerce told members of the press that the world is on the spring board from globalization to digitalization.

Financial technology (better known as Fintech) is used to describe new tech that seeks to improve and automate the delivery and use of financial services. At its core, fintech is utilized to help companies, business owners, and consumers better manage their financial operations, processes, and lives by utilizing specialized software and algorithms that are used on computers and, increasingly, smart phones. Fintech, the word, is a combination of "financial technology."

When fintech emerged in the 21st century, the term was initially applied to the technology employed at the back-end systems of established financial institutions. Since then, however, there has been a shift to more consumer-oriented services and therefore, a more consumer-oriented definition. Fintech now includes different sectors and industries such as education, retail banking, fundraising and nonprofit organizations, and investment management, to name a few.

Fintech also includes the development and use of crypto currencies, such as Bit coin. While that segment of fintech may see the most headlines, the big money still lies in the traditional global banking industry and its multi-trillion-dollar.

In Ethiopia, it is not uncommon to see queues to take a taxi, pay tax and to serve for vital registration

Yilikal Abate, business and technology expert and IT solution software engineer and guest speaker on the very day said that domestic institutions have to compete with the over sea business as the fittest will

survive.

Ethiopia has been incurring staggering amount of money for business transaction and as a result people are lamenting over the state for complaints resulted from business as usual.

The traditional routine of finance need to be rewind has to cope with the emerging world otherwise the fit will engulf unfits.

"So the finance sector; banking and other service sectors need to be digitalized and as we aspire to liberalize our economy the nation has to find a way to be more competent in the international business arena then it would be convenient Ethiopia is serving and updating itself to the world," the expert said.

Of course, the resent development demands there are initiatives in the banking and telecom sectors.

The business transaction and the banking sector which forced the citizenry to bow down for government's policy would never work and be functional again as the world is on the light gear and emancipated from mental slavery bureaucracy and aristocracy.

The initiatives undertaken by the Ethiopian Commercial bank and Ethio-telecom might be a smart move and a good stride, according to the expert.

Digitalizing the financial sector as it has been observed from the experience of many countries, it will reduce transaction cost.

Intermediaries and time will be at no cost and digitalization not demands the physical value of money man. Of course there are many challenges as the digital technology hardly addresses the amassed citizens in the agriculture construction and other sectors.

People in Ethiopia had very limited internet access. On one hand, the infrastructure is not widely organized or well-oiled; outages occur regularly. The cost of an internet package surpassing the actual income of a household is not uncommon in the country. Internet cafes, or hotspots where people can access the internet, are many Ethiopians' best hope for a fast and reliable access.

Hubs are typically located in Ethiopia's bustling urban regions.

On the other hand, barriers to access are not just structural, but also political. The Ethiopian government's monopoly on Ethio-telecom has made it difficult to manage access for the entire country.

The government's strict control over telecommunications in Ethiopia not only limits the possibilities of nationwide commerce, but also disconnects Ethiopia's economy from the rest of the world.

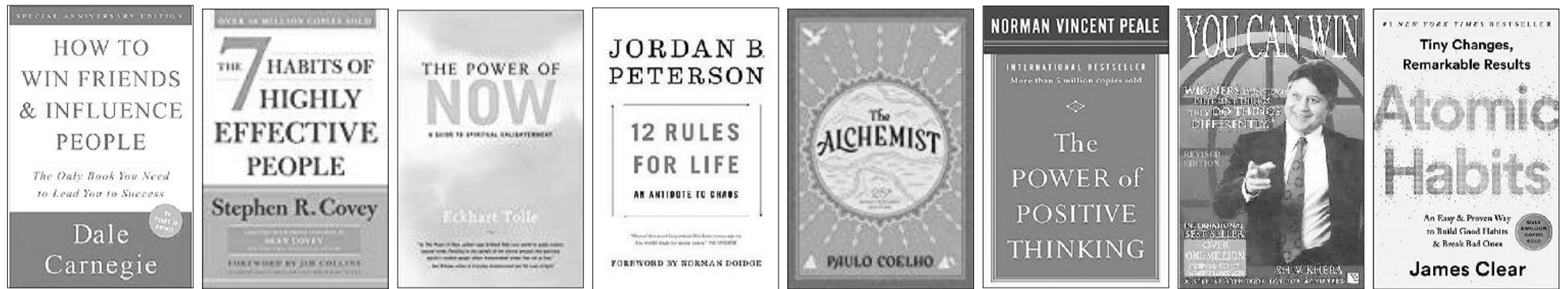
The goal of this new digitization strategy is to bring technology to the people of Ethiopia, as well as to its industries. Digital Ethiopia 2025 focuses on e-commerce and the ability to digitize services in traditionally non-digital industries, like agriculture and manufacturing. Utilizing modern technology to operate in these spaces will create room for investment in agriculture technology.

Digitization in the public sector, such as the implementation of a national ID database, would mean a boost in efficiency as Ethiopians all around the country connect to the internet through one streamlined system.

The other big push that Digital Ethiopia 2025 is championing is the privatization of the telecommunications sector. The government's explicit control over media and news, internet traffic, and trade via telecommunication not only pose threats to privacy but also limits competition. The original plans to sell a large stake of government-held Ethio-telecom ended up on hold in May 2020, largely due to economic shifts as a result of COVID-19. However, moving forward with plans will likely be the key to advancing the market capacity of Ethiopia's telecommunications sector and the economy as a whole.

Digital Ethiopia 2025 is Ethiopia's first major step towards a more connected and efficient economy, as well as towards more protections for Ethiopians and their access to information. These efforts are critical to modernizing the economy and creating a self-sustaining digital sector.

# Art & Culture



## Self-help books: do they really help?

BY KFLEEYESUS ABEBE

Reading regardless of genres or types is what I have been focused on since literature class. I was taught that I should be all-rounded to be good in literature. Indeed, reading anything is essential to widen one's knowledge horizon, understanding, or experience. With this understanding I was able to read a range of books from different genres of literature. I have also read some autobiographies, memoirs, history books and other kinds of books. But I haven't read any self-help books for long time. Not even books of Dale Carnegie- the most popular self-help book writer and widely read by Ethiopians.

The first book I read and which lately I knew to be on self-help category is *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. *The Alchemist* is a beautiful novel and also a self-help book encouraging readers to pursue their dreams. It extracts some parables and examples from the Bible to illustrate its points and to show that destiny awaits the reader if she/he pursues it with great zeal. It says: "When you want something, all the universe unites to help you achieve it." Also; "The secret of life, though, is to fall seven times and to get up eight times" mainly comprises the book's content. A blog by the name "four minutes books" summarizes the book as this: "a boy named Santiago embarks on a journey seeking treasure in the Egyptian pyramids after having a recurring dream about it and on the way meets mentors, falls in love, and most importantly, learns the true importance of who he is and how to improve himself and focus on what really matters in life."

Norman Vincent Peale (PhD) also got my attention with his book "The Power of Positive Thinking." He attempted people around the world to achieve fulfillment in their lives through faith and inspiration. While reading it, I was in such positive vibe feeling power, energy and optimism.

"You Can Win" by Shiv Khera is also a beautiful and impactful book I ever read. But the title is a cliché that may push

back readers who are dispirited by empty motivational speeches. If not for my friend's recommendation, I wouldn't have read it. "You can Win" illustrates its ideas through different stories from Aesop fables, the Bible, to real sport and business incidents. Through the conversation of Socrates and a young man who is curious to know the secret of success, the author invites the reader to entertain "have burning desire" in order to succeed in life.

I am currently reading the "The Power of Now" by Eckhart Tolle. The power of Now isn't just great. It is astounding! I was wondering how old he might be to have this wisdom, what teaching he got or what experiment he did to come with this unique understanding of life. Eckhart in this book shows how our obsession of thinking is inhibiting us from appreciating and living life to its fullest. Many people are prisoners of the past or the future. The present or the now however is not lived or given focus though it is what we have currently.

The author believes that we are used by our mind which is excessively thinking and draining our power and focus. "The mind is a superb instrument if used rightly. Used wrongly, however, it becomes very destructive. To put it more accurately, it is not so much that you use your mind wrongly - you usually don't use it at all. It uses you." You may ask how could we control or be in charge of our mind. As Eckhart, it begins from watching, observing what you are thinking. Be present as the watcher of your mind - of your thoughts and emotions as well as your reactions in various situations. Be at least as interested in your reactions as in the situation or person that causes you to react. Notice also how often your attention is in the past or future. Don't judge or analyze what you observe. Watch the thought, feel the emotion and observe the reaction. Don't make a personal problem out of them. You will then feel something more powerful than any of those things that you observe: the still, observing presence itself behind the content

of your mind, the silent watcher."

Eckhart has also put a timely advice in this book saying association of any kind is an illusion or egoic identification. "The most common ego identifications have to do with possessions, the work you do, social status and recognition, knowledge and education, physical appearance, special abilities, relationships, personal and family history, belief systems, and often also political, nationalistic, racial, religious, and other collective identifications. None of these is you."

Self-help books are in general beautiful in language, and provide experience and vital advices to their audience. I, as one reader of such books for sometime, confirm that they are interesting and valuable. Like writer of "You can Win" Shiv Khera said, "Motivation is like fire unless you keep adding fuel to it, it dies," reading similar books and applying the rules is essential to get ultimate benefits of them. Many of the self-help books have Christian influence. For instance, in order to build a can do mentality, Peale suggest to recite bible verse: "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

Some of the self-help books however may not be compatible or hard to practice in Ethiopia. These days self-help books in local languages are being published. Expecting their setting and context to be Ethiopian, they could solve this incompatibility issue of western self-help books.

Matt D'Avella claims that he had read 100 self-help books. He says he learned so much from these books, and the lessons might change the way readers look at self-help. "In the book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*" by Dale Carnegie, Dale quotes a British philosopher, Herbert Spencer, who said the great aim of education is not knowledge, but action. And this is an action book. And this lesson from over 100 years ago is one of the most important lessons I've learned from reading over 100 self-help books. Taking action no matter how small is the key

to making progress. You can devour all the self-help books in the world, but if you're not actually implementing the concepts you're learning, you may as well be reading fiction."

But there are opponents of self-books criticizing it for simplifying situations, being addictive and not culturally fitting to non-western readers. James Jani says authors with their excellent language skills, expertise in psychology and experience exploit vulnerability of the readers. "The self-help world can pull you under a massive illusion. The illusion of progress! After reading that book, you feel accomplished. After attending that seminar, you feel accomplished. After watching that self-help video, you feel the same. You feel like you've achieved something great and have done something really productive. That motivation lingers in your system urging you to buy the next book, attend the next seminar watch the next video. It is only when you take a second chance to pause and reflect when you realize nothing has changed." James also says the readers are being taken as consumers of products so different materials and programs are being designed to get their attention and get profit from them. He points out self-help books have become huge business generating means \$11.3 billion. Market data estimates that the U.S. self-improvement market was worth \$11.6 billion in 2019 and that it contracted by 10% to \$10.5 billion in 2020. Market data forecasts a 7.7% rebound in 2021, to \$11.6 billion, and forecasts 6.0% average annual growth to \$14.0 billion by 2025.

The addictive nature of the books also compels the reader to purchase and read more books instead of taking action on his life. Some readers say they have wasted their time and money. The bottom line is readers should read these kinds of books with caution. They shouldn't take everything for granted. They have to check applicability to their situation. When they find interesting ideas or rules, they should also strive to inculcate them into their lives. Otherwise, it would be nothing but a waste of time

## High standard

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

*Life is easy but i find it hard  
I set my self a high standard  
I become sad when i should smile  
I put myself in hurdles of desire  
A desire that may fill  
The emptiness that i feel*

*I work on being fulfilled  
But it's a never-ending road  
"See the glass half full rather than half empty"  
Is what I've been told  
But this expression is getting old  
My happiness doesn't last  
Because i have a traumatic past.*



# Global Affairs

## US-Africa summit: Four things African leaders should try to get out of it

US president Joe Biden will be hosting African leaders at this week's summit, as a group. This has its advantages. The 50 African leaders have the opportunity to articulate their common interests and adopt common positions at the gathering in Washington, DC. The priorities they should be focusing on are the following.

**African Union membership of the G20 group of the world's largest economies.** It is important for Africa to be represented in international conversations that concern the global economy, democracy and governance, climate change, health and security.

Secondly, African leaders must continue to press for **two permanent seats on the UN Security Council.** The transnational challenges of cross-border conflict, terrorism, transnational crime, poverty and pandemics necessitate transformation of the UN through the equitable distribution of decision-making power. The UN itself recommended this in 2005. So did the Ezulwini consensus, the official common African position on how to reform the Security Council, adopted in 2005.

Thirdly, they must press for **membership of the Indo-Pacific region** for African countries bordering the Indian Ocean. This is an issue for the summit because the US is a pivotal player in the region. It can help address Africa's exclusion from this important multilateral decision-making organ, an emerging locale of global economic growth.

Fourth, they need to extract **support for common African positions** already taken on climate change, energy transition, and asset recovery from illicit financial flows from the continent, and integration of gender equality in climate change action.

The leaders also need to build on the first summit, which was held under Barack Obama's presidency in 2014.

These are lofty priorities that can benefit Africa in the short and long term. But, for these to accrue from the summit, African leaders must have a common purpose and present a united

front. They must also be forthright in their commitment to good governance.

### What does the 2022 summit promise?

According to the US State Department, the summit will demonstrate the United States' enduring commitment to Africa, and will underscore the importance of US-Africa relations and increased cooperation on shared global priorities.

It is intended to build on US-Africa shared values to better:

- ◆ foster new economic engagement
- ◆ advance peace, security, and good governance
- ◆ reinforce commitment to democracy, human rights and civil society
- ◆ work collaboratively to strengthen regional and global health security
- ◆ promote food security
- ◆ respond to the climate crisis
- ◆ amplify diaspora ties
- ◆ promote education and youth leadership.

Seen in this light, this summit should be assessed as an ongoing engagement.

### What was achieved in 2014?

At the 2014 summit, President Obama proposed \$20 billion investments in electricity, US\$7 billion in government financing to encourage US exports and investments in Africa, and an annual expenditure of US\$110 million to help African countries develop peacekeeping forces.

A number of technical agreements were also signed. These include the Investment Framework Agreement with the Economic Community of West African States. It provides a coordination mechanism for trade and investment issues.

President Obama also called on the US Congress to extend and improve the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which provides duty-free access to goods of designated African countries into the US.

He also announced a new investment of US\$110 million a year for three to five years to train African soldiers to battle terrorism and insurgency through the Rapid Response Partnership programme.

Africa indeed benefited from a number of these initiatives, although many remain unfulfilled. For example, in energy generation and distribution, the "Power Africa" project became an enhanced platform for lighting up Africa. Its original mandate was to add 30,000 megawatts of cleaner and more reliable electricity generation to connect 590 million people in Africa. So far, 6,501 megawatts has been generated, providing power to 165.4 million people for the first time.

Prior to the first African summit in 2014, AGOA, which was meant to end in 2015, was extended to 2025. Since then, it has enabled African countries to export (duty free) non-oil products worth US\$33 billion between 2014 and 2021. Also, \$267 million was budgeted for 2015-2017 for capacity building support for African militaries.

### Looking ahead

The 2022 summit is expected to produce some concrete outcomes too.

For example, the US will continue to push the "infrastructure card" in Africa. This is generally believed to be a challenge to China's "Belt and Road" initiative, the massive infrastructure project intended to stretch from East Asia to Europe.

It includes the ambitious \$600 billion US-led G7 Partnership for Global Infrastructure Initiative. As indicated in its Africa strategy launched in August 2022, the US proposes to leverage and streamline financing and co-invest to deliver game-changing projects to strengthen economies, diversify supply chains, and advance US and African national security.

The initiative will also complement new and existing efforts, including Prosper Africa, Power Africa, Feed the Future, and a new initiative for digital transformation, to help close the global infrastructure gap in the

continent.

Most of the "model projects" are already in place. These include the solar energy project supported by the US in Angola and the vaccine production facility in Senegal. Another is the submarine telecommunications cables connecting Singapore and France, passing through Egypt and the Horn of Africa.

However, the continent needs to be ready to use these and other opportunities offered by superpower competition in Africa between the US, China and Russia. This is likely going to last for decades, given Africa's global geo-strategic value.

### What African leaders need to deliver?

African leaders also need to step up.

Firstly, they need to answer whether the state in Africa is still fit for purpose as it was designed to be extractive and exploitative. That also produced a notion of parasitic governance which continues. This partly explains why, decades after political independence, many African states struggle to fulfill the basic functions of a state – protecting citizens from internal and external aggression, good governance and service delivery.

They also need to explore and make more concrete the idea of providing cooperative regional leadership shared between sub-regional leaders in the continent such as Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Rwanda.

Last, Africa must invest in more research centers that study the superpowers and use the knowledge to develop both national and regional policies towards them. That way we will someday talk of Africa-US policy and Africa-China policy, instead of always the other way round.

These are ways to avoid Africa being cherry-picked by superpowers. Hopefully, in future, superpower leaders will visit Addis Ababa instead of 50-plus African leaders visiting one leader elsewhere.

*(Source: The Conversation)*

## The climate crisis disrupts the education of 40 million children every year

BY STAFF REPORTER

The Position Paper calls for continued support to 'strengthen Education Cannot Wait's role in ensuring continuity of education for all in the face of increasing extreme weather events and emergencies.

The United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) issued a ground-breaking Position Paper on December 8, 2022 that draws clear linkages between the climate crisis and global education crisis.

The Position Paper calls for continued support to "strengthen Education Cannot Wait's role in ensuring continuity of education for all in the face of increasing extreme weather events and emergencies."

Worldwide, the climate crisis is impacting the education of 40 million children every year. Globally, 222 million vulnerable girls and boys are impacted by conflict, climate-induced disasters, forced displacement and protracted crises and are in need of urgent education support according to Education Cannot Wait, the UN global fund for education

in emergencies and protracted crises.

Climate-induced disasters affect children's ability to go to or stay in school. And, even when children stay in school, climate and environmental changes – such as rising temperatures, droughts and floods – affect their ability to learn. These negative impacts on learning exacerbate cycles of poverty and inequality and drives conflict for increasingly scarce natural resources.

"Education is an assumed, but hugely undervalued, component of responses to climate change impacts, and efforts to mitigate and adapt to them. It is essential for reducing vulnerability, improving communities' resilience and adaptive capacity, identifying innovations, and for empowering individuals to be part of the solution to climate and environmental change," according to the Position Paper.

Climate change and girls' education are two of the UK's primary international development objectives, aligning closely with ECW's focus on climate change, displacement and girls' education.

Nevertheless, "too often climate and environmental change is viewed in isolation from education," according to the paper. "If we want to effectively tackle these priority issues, we must better understand how they are linked and find integrated solutions."

"Education must be put front and center of the climate agenda. By investing in girls' education in places like Pakistan, the Horn of Africa and other countries on the frontlines of the climate crisis, we are investing in an end to hunger, and vicious cycles of displacement and violence. Education is also the single most powerful investment we can make to ensure a climate-resilient future for generations to come. As one of Education Cannot Wait's founders and top-contributors, I am deeply grateful to the United Kingdom for the continued and bold support," said Yasmine Sherif, Director of Education Cannot Wait.

The FCDO Position Paper calls for a paradigm shift in how education is viewed in relation to the climate crisis. Where education fosters positive cycles of improved resilience and ability to adapt to and mitigate the severe impacts of climate change.

The value of investing in girls' education is a key component of this paradigm shift. "Girls' education is a human right and a game changer for driving poverty reduction, and building prosperous, resilient economies and peaceful, stable societies. It has huge, undervalued, potential to contribute to tackling climate and environmental change. Girls' secondary education has been identified as the most important socioeconomic determinant in reducing vulnerability to climate change."

The United Kingdom is the second largest donor to Education Cannot Wait, with US\$159 million in funding to date. Supported through leading civil society organizations, the Send My Friend To School Campaign is calling on the UK Government to pledge £170 million in additional funding to Education Cannot Wait.

The Education Cannot Wait High-Level Financing Conference on 16-17 February 2023 in Geneva offers a key moment for donors, the private sector and high-net-worth individuals to make substantial pledges to Education Cannot Wait, and deliver on the promises outlined in both the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals.



# Law & Politics

## Reinstating AGOA needs no further criterion

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is public knowledge that shortly afterwards the war that broke out in the northern part of the country, Ethiopia managed to pass through many ups and downs, twists and turns, as well as highs and lows as a consequence of some foreign entities' groundless pressure on Ethiopia aimed at pursuing their hidden agenda going behind the scenes.

At that specific juncture, alien entities left no stone unturned to twist Ethiopia's arm and interfere in the internal affairs of the country under the veil of failure to give the green light to humanitarian access and come to the negotiating table as well as other related aspects. To everyone's dismay, they have been persistently coming up with a broad spectrum of imaginary stories in an attempt to perplex the wider international community.

In good truth, notwithstanding the fact that a maximum amount of efforts have been done to turn the screw on Ethiopia and put under their control the sovereignty of the country, all their efforts went for nothing on the basis of the firm stance of the incumbent and the people of Ethiopia. As Ethiopians have been working around the clock to fend off external pressure, some entities ended up failing to pursue their hidden motives going behind closed curtains.

In a similar vein, they attempted in several instances to pursue their hidden motives in close cooperation with the discredited and shamefaced international media outlets that do not stand for the truth and abide by journalism ethics and standards.

As their intended objective on the subject of the war was confounding the global community with bogus stories, they have been unceasingly preoccupied with a smear campaign against the positive moves of the country and drag through the mire the constructive measures surfacing throughout the national territory. Sadly, as opposed to making an effort to make conversant the self-evident truth with the existing reality on the ground, they were time and again orchestrating treacheries to put unwarranted pressure on Ethiopia.

In the aftermath of the tidal wave of cooked-up stories waged against the people of Ethiopia, the propaganda campaign in the fullness of time metamorphosed into giving rise to unjustified pressure against Ethiopia.

It is an indisputable fact that Ethiopia managed to go to the ends of the earth to beat swords into plowshares effectuating a wide spectrum of effective solutions in the face of recurrent challenges. The sad thing is that regardless



of the fact that the federal government went to great lengths to bring about sustainable and everlasting peace, Washington at the end of the day removed Ethiopia from African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA).

It should not be forgotten that since the start of the war, the incumbent spared no effort to make peace happen in the northern part of the country, return everything to normalcy and smooth the path of humanitarian assistance in collaboration with a diverse range of aid organizations. Dejectedly, it was at this moment that Ethiopia was removed from AGOA.

It is important to remember that despite Ethiopia's unflinching stance to get to the bottom of the problem in an atmosphere of calm, the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) was constantly playing a role in raising the stakes, adding fuel to the flames and throwing the cold shoulder to the peace deal proposed by the federal government.

In actual fact, axing Ethiopia from AGOA without a doubt is an erroneous act on the grounds that quite a lot of Ethiopians in employment in the textile and garment industries were discharged from their job. It should be remembered that in spite of the fact that the incumbent has given the green light to unfettered access to humanitarian assistance in addition to proposing a peace talk, Ethiopia turned out to be the victim of AGOA.

In the recent past on the subject of the issue, Sen. Jim Inhofe in his Twitter page stated that the Biden administration should take real steps to undo the sanctions against the democratically elected government of Ethiopia and roll back the termination of AGOA benefits.

In the present circumstances, as the federal government of Ethiopia and Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) ended up signing the

cessation of hostilities agreement in Pretoria, South Africa, the United States of America should re-enlist Ethiopia into the African Growth and Opportunity Act at the earliest possible juncture by reconsidering its decision.

After the signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement, the smooth flow of humanitarian assistance has been stealing the attention of the wider international community.

In recent times, in an interview the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) Commissioner Shiferaw Teklemariam (Ph.D.) gave to the Ethiopian Press Agency said that more than 70,000 metric tons of humanitarian aid in the form of grain and nutritious food has been transferred to Tigray since the conclusion of the truce.

"The contribution of humanitarian organizations working under the leadership of the government is extremely encouraging and while the government has provided 13.6 thousand metric tons of grain and nutritious food in the reported period, the rest is covered by partner institutions, he added.

It is public knowledge that in the present climate the whole thing in the northern part of the country has been returning to normalcy and making progress in the right direction and receiving a pat on the back. Taking into account the positive moves, Washington should return Ethiopia to AGOA without batting an eye. The restoration of social infrastructure and resumption of electricity in conflict-impacted areas in the Tigray state has been moving in the right direction. Reasoning from this fact, the desired goal is being achieved in the shortest possible time.

Recently, EEP Communication Director Moges Mekonnen told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that, the repair work is becoming accessible in all areas where

electricity has been cut. The maintenance experts at all areas are constantly participating and working on it with great diligence by withstanding the topographical problems of the area and other problems.

Mentioning the difficulty to get enough fuel for vehicles involving up to 200 employees, the director indicated the maintenance work forced to use up the spare parts that were in stock. "The government's commitment continues to be strengthened in all sectors, especially as an electricity provider, it is strengthening its ability to avail power in Tigray."

"When we say Mekelle's power line is connected to the national power grid, it means that a way to get electricity from the national power control center or the main grid has been created," he noted, adding that the task enables the city to receive power in the same line.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, American Ethiopia Public Affairs Committee (AEPAC) Executive Chairperson, Mesfin Tegenu said that the country has met all the four or five criteria required to be relisted in the trade pact.

As part of the efforts in this regard, AEPAC has submitted letter to the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR). Similarly, he said that they have had two congressmen who have submitted letters of support.

In his letter submitted to USTR, Donald S. Beyer Jr., he urged to consider initiating an out-of-cycle review regarding Ethiopia's eligibility for benefits under AGOA. He further emphasized that pushing the nation in to poverty by continuing to exclude them from AGOA could further destabilize the country and severely weaken the US-Ethiopia relationships.

Mentioning that AGOA has served in strengthening ties between the two countries, and accelerating Ethiopia's economic growth, he also expressed his hope that the recent truce brokered by the AU which allows unhindered humanitarian supplies to Tigray, will lead to Ethiopia's swift reinstatement in to AGOA.

Besides, two businesses in Ethiopia also submitted their letters in support of Ethiopian rejoining of AGOA. "We believed that the only matter that was hanging was the peace situation in the northern part of Ethiopia. Now that the problem is solved, humanitarian access and services are restored, there is no reason that hinders Ethiopia to be reinstated in to AGOA," Mesfin underscored.

## Awarding the initiative as an African success...

flourishing national green culture, tripling the number of seedling nurseries to more than 121,000; creating more than 750,000 jobs mostly for women and youth; and generating 1.3 billion Ethiopian Birr in income. Ethiopia also accorded seedlings to neighboring countries to bolster regional cooperation for transboundary ecosystem management.

In fact, the Initiative contributes towards removing the equivalent of hundreds of millions of tons of carbon dioxide from the

atmosphere and reduces deforestation. "This implies Ethiopia's significant contribution to the global climate change mitigation efforts," he added.

Ethiopia's tangible contribution to the overall global afforestation and reforestation pledge is impressive by any standard, but even more so when it has been financed primarily by domestic resources and efforts. Building on this success, Ethiopia plans to restore an additional 22 million hectares of degraded land by 2030

he said, adding "we are also developing a green fund and will pursue carbon trading schemes to help raise additional financing."

"As a nation, we may and we do have differences in the way we interpret the past and the way we envision the future. nevertheless, we are united in the hope we have for our children and our planet. We aspire to reverse deforestation and build a green society in Ethiopia and Africa. We have no doubt that our Green Legacy story will motivate a global

mobilization toward reconciling our modern civilization with our planet and ecosystems," he underscored.

It is well acknowledged that setting plans to combat climate change, putting a vision for greenery, motivating the entire population to plant tree seedlings, and are the best way to fight climate change. Moreover, the award motives Ethiopia to complete 22 million hectares of degraded land by 2030 which could be taken as an African success story.

# Planet Earth

## Awarding the initiative as an African success story motivates to plant 22 million hectares of degraded land by 2030

BY EPHREM ANDAGRACHEW

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has launched Green Legacy Initiative in 2019. The Initiative targeted to see 20 billion trees planted across the nation by 2022. The initiative is vital to withstand the negative impact of climate change and environmental degradation that contributed to flooding, soil erosion, deforestation, and biodiversity loss. Additionally, it uses to combat drought and desertification.

Acquainted with the significance of green legacy activities, the Initiatives have been implemented not only in Ethiopia but also expanded in neighboring countries namely Kenya, South Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, and Sudan.

More interestingly, the initiative targeted planting 20 billion tree seedlings from 2019 to 2022. Nonetheless, the country has achieved this by planting 25 billion tree seedlings which increase the forest coverage of the country. The initiative, apart from combating the negative effects of climate change, encourages people to plant fruit trees which supports ensuring food security and nutrition.

Taking the achievement of the initiative into consideration, Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed was awarded the ‘Outstanding



African Leadership Award’ in recognition of the Green Legacy Initiative. The award has taken place on a special occasion under the theme of “Africa: The Urgency of a Global Mobilization” prepared by the American Academy of Achievement and the Global Hope Coalition in Washington DC.

During the occasion, Dr. Abiy expressed gratitude to the American Academy

of Achievement and the Global Hope Coalition for extending a hand of friendship to the African continent and for recognizing Ethiopia’s Green Legacy initiative as an African success story.

“Indeed, the continent is filled with many success stories not only in the past, but present, and future. The perspective that African countries are net producers of

problems that always require external assistance is an outdated one. Hence, it is a great appreciation to the coordinators for lighting a torch on the continent’s net production of solutions” he stated.

“In the course of these 3 months, the Green Legacy initiative invites the people to come out of their homes and places of work, walk out in unison to a field with a seedling in hand, dig a little hole in the ground and place the seedling.” Accordingly, four years into the implementation of the Initiative, the county has mobilized 25 million Ethiopians across the nation to plant 25 billion tree seedlings which are equivalent to 250 seedlings per citizen. Therefore, the impact of the initiative could be equated to removing 64 million gasoline-powered cars from the roads for a whole year, Prime Minister noted.

Nowadays, the Initiative is the most extensive afforestation and reforestation program next to the Amazon. Furthermore, with the efforts of afforestation and reforestation campaigns, Ethiopia has put over 700,000 hectares of existing biodiversity and carbon-rich natural forests under a sustainable participatory forest management scheme, Abiy indicated.

By 2022, the initiative has fostered a

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## Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

### HU’s free legal service benefits 59,488 people in need

BY DIRRIBA TESHOME

Beneficiaries of the Haramaya University (HU) free legal service provided by College of Law have statements to say regarding out comes of the service.

HU established a Supervision Team to identify the beneficiaries’ satisfaction and views on the legal service it provides by the University. The team visited the activities of the independent legal service centers located in different districts of East Hararghe Zone.

The beneficiaries of the free service in Babile, Gursum, Kombolcha, Jarso, Fadis and Midega Tola districts have stated that the lawyers from HU are providing legal advice to the community, writing applications and advocating for free up to the Federal High Courts.

HU stood in their favor and argued all the way to the Supreme Court gathering information at its own expense and protected their rights, the beneficiaries elucidated.

The information collected from the service offices indicated that women are the ones



Photo: Fuad Ahmed

Beneficiaries of the free legal service

who are assisted the most from the legal advice, writing of charges and responses to courts, and other free legal support services provided by the law College.

HU Free Legal Consulting Service Coordinator Ramadan Shame, says that the College of Law opened more than 46 Free Legal Aid Centers in all courts and prison administrations found in Harari Regional State, East Hararghe Zone and West Hararghe Zone employed 46 legal professionals to each center to provide free legal aid.

The centers are giving free legal aid to economically and physically vulnerable

groups of community, poor and people with disabilities to ensure and realize access to their justice rights, he noted adding: “The main objective and purpose of these free legal aid services is to ensure access to justice right which is a basic and pillar for protection, realization and fulfillment of all other rights, among others.”

To ensure the successfulness, efficiency, accessibility and effectively provide services to the community and make Free Legal Service Center (FLSC) workers discharge their duties properly with full competency and responsibility, strengthening coordination and link

between stake holders is very necessary, he noted.

In different words, HU is working cooperatively in partnership with the Courts, Attorney General Offices, Police Departments, prison administrations, Women and Children affairs Offices at all levels besides Harari Regional State Justice organs including Supreme Court and Attorney and Security Office, he detailed.

By providing these free legal community service, HU is able to assist 353,163 people that enhanced them to avoid 33,800,050 Birr expenses in 2014 EC fiscal year alone.

As well, in the first four months of 2015 E.C (from July to October), in West Hararghe alone this free legal service was provided to 22,984 people and helped them to save 5,508,000 Birr. Totally, it provided the service to 36,692 females and 22,796 males which add up to 59,488 persons in the above stated months enabling them to save 14,256,000 Birr.

At last, the supervision team has disclosed that a similar field observation of the free legal service will be continued and necessary improvement will be made.