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Happy New year

Ethiopia enters new chapter as 2023 filled with peace:

Ambassadors

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- Ambassadors have expressed delight over the prevailing of a reign of peace in Ethiopia casting hopes that the country would unlock full development potentials in the New Year.

The ambassadors who published New Year's best wishes in today's *The Ethiopian Herald's* special issue reiterated their respective country's supports to Ethiopia's peace and development.

South Sudanese Ambassador James Pitia Morgan said any positive development in Ethiopia, an anchor of peace in the region, would have paramount importance for each and every country. Hence, the peace in Ethiopia would help to expedite the regional economic integration.

For his part, Russian Ambassador Evgeny Terekhin said the year 2022 marked the most important achievement for Ethiopia mentioning the signing of the Agreement which he described it as a step that has laid the foundation for a lasting peace and national accord in the country.

"I am sure it was a crucial and decisive step towards peace and prosperity."

Also, Japanese Amb. Ito Takako said the peace accord as well as the process ensued have put Ethiopia on the right track from conflict to peace and reconstruction.

"Japan continues to assist in the peace and stability of Ethiopia, with a focus on human security."

The swift positive development in Ethiopia's north following the peace agreement signed in Pretoria is garnering commendations from various state and non-state actors around the world.

(Please read ambassadors' messages on page 16)



Amb. Ito Takako



Amb. Evgeny Terekhin



Amb. James Pitia Morgan

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Diasporas shield Ethiopia from external interference: EDS

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Corporate media's tragedy obsession conceals post-conflict reports

• Fail in covering Ethiopia in 2022
BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Western media's insufficient coverage of post-conflict Ethiopia, the restoration of electric, telecom, and internet service as well as other positive developments emanate from their obsession with conflict and crises, a journalism expert said.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Journalism and Communication Assistant Professor at Hawassa University

See Corporate media's ... page 4



Looking back Ethiopia's 2022 diplomatic heights

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian ambassadors have done a great job in repelling the unwarranted pressure of some interest groups, informing the country's objective reality, and promoting its conducive business climate in the just concluded year, *The Ethiopian Herald* reported.

Among the ambassadors that Ethiopia

deployed in various countries, its representatives in the UK, U.S., Canada, EU, UN and France have been identified for their notable contribution in the aforesaid areas. Accordingly, the newspaper has given extensive coverage for Ambassador Teferi Melese, Ambassador Seleshi Bekele, Ambassador Fitsum Arega, Ambassador Hirut Zemene, Ambassador Taye Atskeselassie and Ambassador Henok Teferra for their distinguishable achievements in the

year 2022.

The ambassadors held frequent discussions with relevant institutions in their countries of deployment to inform Ethiopia's objective reality and promote the country's positive image. Also, the diplomatic missions participated in various events with a view to attracting anchor companies to Ethiopia's market.

See Looking back ... page 4

News

EDS plans to augment Diaspora's dev't funding this New Year

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) announced that it has planned to collect funds amounting to some 1.5 billion Birr from the Diaspora community this year via increasing the Diaspora participation in country's socio-economic and political activities.

EDS Communication Director Wondwosen Girma told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the Agency has been working to secure some 1.5 billion Birr for the reconstruction process, charitable activities, and Abay dam construction, sharing 1.1 billion Birr, 150 million Birr and 250 million Birr respectively. Besides, the Agency will be working on obtaining four billion USD through remittance and 7 million USD from the Diaspora account in the stated period.

According to the Communication Director, the Service has been carrying out various activities to motivate the Diaspora community for active engagement in their country's development such as helping enhance diplomatic role, involving in the reconstruction process, building the image of the country, ensuring the peace issues, and investing their capital and knowledge in the country.

He further stated that the participation of the Diaspora is increasing from year to year. For example, the Diaspora participation in various fields last year was much higher than that of the previous year. It means that over 550,000 Diasporas have been involved in the country's various issue and projects following the Service prepared well. The Service has also created over 200 Diasporas' structure and provided an investment land

for 1,889 Diaspora members to increase the Diaspora involvement.

“Among others, the Diaspora community has contributed significant role in reducing foreign exchange crunch and transferring knowledge, skills, and technology over the past one year. Due to this reason, Ethiopia has secured over 4 billion USD from the Diaspora community last year. Besides, it has also contributed 126 million Birr through purchased bond and gifted, some 109.8 million Birr allocated for law enforcement purpose, some 675.44 million Birr in cash and estimated to over 565 million Birr in kind for the damaged areas as well as 4.7 million birr for COVID-19 pandemic prevention,” he said.

By the same token, the Diaspora community has actively involved in unwavering diplomatic role, the #No More movement,



Wondwosen Girma, EDS Communication Director

against HR6600, and S 3199 drafts and so on. Therefore, the role of Diaspora indispensable in supporting fields such as diplomacy, socioeconomic development, and political activities of the country.

Ethio-telecom entry to South Sudan deepens regional integration: Ambassador

BY KFLEEYESUS ABEBE

ADDIS ABABA—The keen interest of ethio-telecom to invest in South Sudan is of significantly useful in further bolstering regional integration, South Sudan Ambassador to Ethiopia said.

Praising the significance of ethio-telecom delegation visit led by ethiotelecom CEO Frehiwot Tamru to South Sudan with a view to exploring ways the company could operate there in near future, the South Sudan ambassador James Pitia Morgan (PhD) said that the move is instrumental in reinvigorating political and economic integration in the Horn in general and between the two nations in particular.

“That is what we call integration. Recently, Kenya launched the Safaricom here, and Ethiopia is launching ethiotelecom in Juba, South Sudan. That is what we call the economic integration. We have the commercial Bank of Ethiopia operating already in Juba since long time in South Sudan. This is what we call the economic integration. I do appreciate anything signifying the aim of bringing the region together.”

The ambassador went on illustrating the advantageous regional integration for both countries and other countries in the region.

“South Sudan produces a lot of oil; so we need this oil to be available for the Ethiopian market, for the Ethiopian consumers. Ethiopia has also the Abay Dam, which will provide citizens with electricity. South Sudan will also benefit out of this electricity. So it is just a way how we can be able to work together on various areas,” he added.

It was learnt that the team consequently have secured agreement with Tele Mobile South Sudan Limited Company on infrastructural expansion and telecom services provision as well as other related services.

Task force to assess heritage loss magnitude in conflict-affected areas

BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA - Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage announced that a task force has been formed to identify impact of Northern Ethiopian conflict on heritages.

Talking to local media, the authority's Communication Director with Nejat Jemal said that the authority has formed investigation task force to undertake research in a bid to identify the impact of the Northern Ethiopian conflict on heritages found in the conflict affected states of the country.



Previously the task force could not able to commence its job because of instability. However, after Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) between Federal government and TPLF, currently the task force has been undertaking its investigation

on heritages without any problems in Tigray, Amhara and Afar states of the country.

Northern Ethiopia was truly blessed with numerous and varied forms of tangible and intangible cultural patrimony including monumental architecture like the UNESCO world heritage site of Aksum, Rock-Hewn churches and remains of one of the earliest mosques in Africa (Al-Nejashi Mosque).

“In addition, there are less visible cultural treasures, including manuscripts, paintings, oral traditions and artifacts held by churches and monasteries scattered throughout rural areas of Tigray despite their undocumented nature,” he added.

Ethiopia launches nat'l council of community-based health insurance

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA-Ethiopia launched the National Council of Community-Based Health Insurance which is said to address health-related problems and ensure fair and clear health insurance services in the country.

Speaking at the launching program, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen said the government has been implementing various health policies and strategies to improve health service delivery and create a healthy society. “To provide fair, clear, quality health service and community-based insurance, it is crucial to stretch a reliable finance system in the country.”

The Deputy Premier emphasized the expansion of the insurance service throughout the country while particular emphasis is given to addressing the low-income and rural communities. “To build a prestigious society, a health insurance service is highly needed in a country like Ethiopia.”

Demeke continued: “Even if a large



population is getting the health insurance service in the nation, we have to move in a committed way.”

In her welcoming speech, Health Minister Lia Tadesse (MD) stated that Ethiopia's health service coverage reached 90 percent at this time while the nation's life expectancy has grown from 46 to 66 years.

The Minister, who recalled the Ethiopian Health Insurance Service was launched in 2011 as a pilot program in four states and 13 districts, highlighted that the scheme is now expanded into 894 districts across the country and reached over 45 million people. In the 2021/2022 fiscal year, over 4.8

billion Birr was collected from membership payments.

For Ethiopian Health Insurance Service Director General Frehiwot Abebe, the health insurance service is instrumental to the society to get medical treatment at health centers and nearby hospitals in a convenient and cost-effective manner. In the program, the society, mainly the low-income group, gets fast and fair primary health care service.

Ethiopian health insurance service marked its ten-year anniversary under theme “Health Insurance Membership for Together Prosperity.”

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Editorial

Better embracing rosy future than lamenting grisly past

War has a multitude of ugly faces which many abhor to behold. Because of confrontations, many cease to be cut in the flower of their earthly existence to the chagrin of their relatives and peace lovers. The flame of war never spares toddlers, senior citizens and even women with a bun in the oven. It as well creates traumas on those who witnessed such clashes firsthand.

Also, off their guard, countless are displaced internally or otherwise forced to seek humanitarian aid and shelter. Dislodged from their cozy home, they find life topsy-turvy. Circumscribed by inferno and cut out from bare necessities, numerous come in grip with the fact that hunger is worse than the sword to say nothing about thirst.

What is more, war creates communication barriers among estranged family members resulting in lacerating physiological pain. A seething inquietude reminds victims the real meaning of peace towards the regain of which they beseech the Almighty.

Especially if the clash is along ethnic or religious lines it could create mistrust among those on the opposite ends of the war. War leaves the economy of a nation in tatters and erects barriers along the nation's development path. Moreover, it strips a nation of a workforce that could spearhead development. A large number of people with disabilities are one of the aftermaths of war.

Like scarecrows to birds, unless addressed in good time, combats scare away tourists and investors, probably for good casting a shadow in a nation's growing ambition.

Tarnishing the image of a nation as a warmonger, clashes could deprive it a chance for loan and aid, for benefactors and donors could lean on information seen a scratch on the surface.

Internal conflicts could allow historic enemies and opportunists an entry point to meet evil ends—wrecking down a nation and reaping benefits that accrue thereof. Seeking solutions through confrontations also pours cold water on the effort towards embracing a genuine democracy through brainstorming.

It is in light of the aforementioned facts and in tangible cognizance of the grotesqueness of war, Ethiopia decided to wring down the curtain on the

clashes that simmered for two years in the northern part of the country leaning on African solution to African problems.

Following the cessation of hostility agreements signed between the federal government and Tigray People's Liberation front (TPLF) in Pretoria, South Africa, and subsequent meetings in Nairobi, Ethiopia is implementing the peace deal to ensure lasting stability.

Ethiopia is straightening the knotty delivery of humanitarian aids to victims residing in strife-torn areas. The resumption of social services like electricity, telephone and bank, among others, has proceeded ahead to the delight of the global community.

It is not hard to surmise that the disruption of education following the intentional or otherwise demolishing of schools, like health centers, deducts some productive years from the youth. Reconstructing war-demolished infrastructural facilities Ethiopia should get things back in shape.

It is to be recalled that Ethiopia had set foot on the paths of renaissance and affluence as exemplified by The Grand Ethiopia Renaissance Dam (GERD), the development of its touristic spots and the green legacy. Fast addressing current challenges, once more, Ethiopia has to pursue its avowed goal of rendering its future rosy by molding its own fate.

In the just ensued New Year 2023 redressing missteps, the country must throw its full weight behind translating into action its avowed goal of rooting out poverty, its arch enemy.

Hopefully therefore, cruising out of troubled waters tranquil Ethiopia will materialize a socioeconomic take off. This unique nation was exemplary in many regards. It will press ahead proving so emerging out of the doldrums of war it found itself in.

A new year is an occasion to recapitulate past events. Instead of lamenting spilt milk it sure is better scouring opportunities up for grabs. Success will consummate efforts if well attended by unity and considerateness, virtues Ethiopians have been long characterized by. It would be failing in one's duty not recording a word of praise to those who have been working for the return of normalcy in Ethiopia.

Ambassador's New Year Message

On the right track to peace, reconstruction

BY ITO TAKAKO

AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO ETHIOPIA

At the outset of the year 2023, I would like to share the achievements in 2022 and the expectations for 2023 concerning Japan-Ethiopia relations.

Regarding the situation in Northern Ethiopia, the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA), the Nairobi Declaration and TOR for the Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mechanism have put Ethiopia on the right track from conflict to peace and reconstruction. The Government of Japan welcomes such developments and sincerely hopes that these agreements to be faithfully implemented.

Japan continues to assist in the peace and stability of Ethiopia, with a focus on human security. For instance, in January 2022, Japan's humanitarian assistance of USD 26 million for Northern Ethiopia and other regions was provided through international organizations, and in July, another USD 3.3 million in emergency food aid was provided to the Somali Region through the WFP. In December, Japan decided to provide approximately USD 25 million through international organizations for conflict and drought affected areas in Ethiopia.

In consultation with the Ethiopian Ministry of Health, Japan announced in September the provision of mobile clinic vehicles and equipment to hospitals in five regions of the country where the maternity mortality rate is high and the health coverage is low. Provision



of additional school buildings vocational training centers and small bridges for local communities are some of the examples of projects that were completed and handed over last year after fruitful cooperation between Japan and Ethiopian local NGOs or municipal governments, or are now in the pipeline for this year's implementation.

I strongly hope that Ethiopia's national dialogue process, which is to begin in 2023, will be truly inclusive, transparent and meet its goals. To assist in its activities, Japan will provide buses for the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission so that Commissioners as well as other participants who might have difficulties accessing the venue for the national dialogue can have a mode of transportation.

At the 8th Tokyo International Conference

on African Development (TICAD 8) held in August 2022, the Japanese Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio announced the appointment of Japan's Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa. The newly appointed Special Envoy Ambassador SHIMIZU Shinsuke will soon be working with us to support Africa's efforts towards a peaceful and stable Africa, and of course Ethiopia is one of the most important countries to work with in that respect.

Japan's cooperation with Ethiopia in the field of PKO has been ongoing for 10 years now. The Japanese government continues to provide educational support to the FDRE International Peace Support Training Institute, Peacekeeping Centre, and high-level PKO officials from the two governments made mutual visits and discussed further PKO cooperation last year.

TICAD 8 was also an opportunity to draw attention of Japanese investors to start new business in Africa, especially with the announcement of an investment of USD 30 billion by the Japanese public and private sectors in Africa over the next three years. The number of Japanese business people visiting Ethiopia to seek business opportunities has increased compared to the last two years. Safaricom Ethiopia, which has a 27% investment from Japan's Sumitomo Corporation, officially launched its service in October last year. I hope the success of this FDI will become a good example and attract more FDI to Ethiopia in the near future.

The Embassy conducted a few public relations events, including an Ikebana workshop in May

and a public lecture on Japan's foreign policy at Bahir Dar University in November. The JICA Chair Program, which started at Addis Ababa University in 2021, held two lectures last year to share Japan's experience of a non-western country becoming truly democratic and economically advanced, while maintaining its own traditions and culture. Now that the risk of COVID-19 is being reduced, the Embassy plans to organize various Japanese cultural events in 2023, such as a Japanese food demonstration, Karate demonstration and a Japanese film festival. The Japanese government and Japanese volunteers are also planning to restore the Japanese Garden in the Presidential Palace. I hope that more Ethiopians have the chance to enjoy the beauty of the garden.

There were occasions to express our appreciation for those who contributed to Japan-Ethiopia relations. In May last year, the decoration of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star was conferred to the former State Minister for Science and Higher Education, Prof. Afework Kassu, for his achievements in promoting bilateral relations. In August, the Japanese Foreign Minister's commendations were announced for Dr. Firew Tegegne, the President of Bahir Dar University, for his contribution to inter-university collaborations and for The Ethiopia Karate Federation for its long years of effort to promote Karate in Ethiopia.

In the Chinese zodiac, the year 2023 is "The Year of the Rabbit", which is said to be a year in which our past efforts begin to blossom and bear fruit. I hope that 2023 will be a fruitful year for Ethiopia and for all of you.

News

Diasporas shield Ethiopia from external interference: EDS

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA –The Diaspora community has served as Ethiopia’s soft power in influencing the political decision-making of their country of residence for the benefit of the homeland in 2022, the Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) said.

EDS Communication Director Wondwosen Girma told *The Ethiopian Herald* that during the just concluded year, the participation of the Diaspora community in the national issues back home was so immense. The Diaspora played a unique role in making the voice of their home country be heard at the international level and serving it as a bridge with the outside world.

Most importantly, Ethiopians in the Diaspora have staged numerous demonstrations in major cities across the globe and denounced the undue pressure some interest groups exerted in their home country. Accordingly, over 70 public rallies were held in 40 global cities in which hundreds of thousands of



Ethiopian Diasporas participated.

The director further noted that the Diaspora launched the #NoMore movement to protest some interest groups’ unwarranted attempts to meddle in Ethiopia’s domestic affairs and to show solidarity with the government. Besides rallies, the Diaspora community has been aggressively participating in public diplomacy activities in their countries of residence.

“The Diaspora community from all walks of life demonstrated overwhelming participation in public rallies, discussion

with political representatives, sent petition letters and other forms of campaigns to fight the unfair pressure.”

Apart from informing the global community about Ethiopia’s sovereign right to solve internal problems on its own, the Diasporas have also done commendable jobs in refuting the coordinated media lies and disinformation campaign.

Commenting on the issue, Dejen Ras, a writer who published several articles in *The Ethiopian Herald*, stated that the disinformation against Ethiopia and its

people in 2022 mainly focused on breaking down the unity among the people, Diaspora, and leadership. It was optimized by the #NoMore Movement. The momentum created had much effect beyond the borders of the country and resonated across the African continent into the world.

“Hence, the country’s enemies designed a strategy to break the unity; we started to see a huge rift among the Diaspora even in the first quarter of 2022. By that time, the leadership had also followed a calculated move that they thought was crucial to bring an end to the country’s multiple, coupled, and intense problems. That too created division among the defenders of disinformation against the country.”

Also, notable achievement has been gained in unifying the Ethiopian Diaspora to stand with one accord amidst those engaged in disinformation being synchronized and focused. Robust systems that could synchronize the Diaspora were also put in a place to resist such forces of destruction, the writer emphasized.

Looking back Ethiopia’s...

The ambassadors held frequent discussions with relevant institutions in their countries of deployment to inform Ethiopia’s objective reality and promote the country’s positive image. Also, the diplomatic missions participated in various events to attract anchor companies to Ethiopia’s market.

“Those ambassadors discharged their responsibilities meticulously and persuaded Western policymakers that Ethiopia’s reality is far from what the corporate media portrayed during the two-year conflict.”

Considering the achievement of the Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK, Teferi Melese, he made numerous deliberations with British policymakers. Teferi’s discussion with the British Group of Interparliamentary Union on the current situation in Ethiopia in March 2022 is one instance. During the discussion, he explained the Ethiopian government’s commitment to ensuring lasting peace in the country, mentioning the release of high-profile public figures from prison, the proposed national dialogue, and the lifting of the State of Emergency.

Ambassador Teferi also briefed the parliamentarians about the green legacy initiative that Ethiopia has been undertaking for the last four years.

In the same manner, Ethiopian Ambassador to the U.S., Seleshi Bekele (PhD. Eng.) also met with Ambassador Michael Hammer, U.S. Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa in August 2022. Upon presenting his credentials to President Joe Biden, Ambassador Seleshi exchanged updates with the President on the current progress and challenges in Ethiopia concerning sustainable peace building, humanitarian delivery, accountability, democratization, national dialogue, and Abay Dam.

In his June 2022 interview with CNN,

Ambassador Fitsum Arega blamed the media for its biased and one-sided reports while covering Ethiopia. He added CNN has gone through its journalist’s picky reports which are unacceptable.

According to Ambassador Fitsum, CNN’s reports about Ethiopia were unbalanced and they are designed to inculcate negative public opinion towards the state and blame the Ethiopian government without evidence.

Ethiopian Ambassador to Benelux countries and EU institutions, Hirut Zemene met Stefano Sannino, Secretary-General of the European External Action Service whereby the two sides exchanged views on the current developments in Ethiopia and the EU-AU Summit, which was held from 17-18 of February 2022, in Brussels.

Ambassador Hirut also conferred with Hilde Vautmans, a member of the European Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee, and the Renew Europe Group. During the exchange, she briefed the policymakers on the humanitarian situation in Tigray, and regional security issues in the Horn of Africa.

In his August 2022 remark at the UN, Ethiopia’s Permanent Representative Taye Atskeselassie expressed Ethiopia’s strong desire for the consolidation of national security institutions and the need to run those institutions freely, in full sovereignty and complete freedom.

By the same token, Ethiopian Ambassador to France, Henok Teferra told France 24 that the government is willing to meet with TPLF leaders under the AU’s auspices. “It is up to Africans to solve this African problem. The AU has all the credibility needed to fulfill this mission and President Olusegun Obasanjo has all the expertise and knowledge to play his role. This is the way forward.”



Corporate media’s...

Melisew Dejene (PhD) stated that the corporate media’s low appetite for positive outcomes of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) manifests this.

The expert further noted that some big media misinform the international community by magnifying the humanitarian crises and blaming the Ethiopian government for human rights violations without evidence. Some big media’s coverage of the north Ethiopian conflict deviated from the principles of peace journalism and attested to the fact that the outlets are instruments of hidden interests.

Noting the post-conflict developments in Tigray State would have kept Ethiopia attractive to the international media, Melisew emphasized the need to exercise peace journalism to heal the wounds of both sides of the conflict. The consistent delivery of reliable and sufficient information to the corporate media is also something worth considering to ease biased reports.

Sharing the above rationale, Media and Communication Lecturer at Jimma University Getachew Tilahun (PhD) said the philosophy of Western media centers on conflict reporting. “They are providing coverage to the peace agreement though it is unsatisfactory when compared with their conflict reports. The outlets have served their interest and we could not expect anything different from them.”

As to him, the political interest some Western powers pursue in the Horn of Africa is also another factor to big media focus solely on

conflict reporting. The U.S., China, and some other global powers are struggling to take control of the Horn and the war in northern Ethiopia is no longer a domestic issue. “This competition to dominate the strategic region has impacted the way each media represents Ethiopia and I see no reason that could push them to cover the peace deal.”

The expert continued: “Bad news, by its nature, is faster and mind-catching though good news may not be likewise. So, these outlets prefer bad news to positive developments.”

Mentioning the value of peace is always denied during peaceful times, he recommended the media continuously remind the audience about peace. Promoting peace journalism should be a prior responsibility of the media this time.

The assessment made by The Ethiopian Herald about Western media’s coverage of the north Ethiopia conflict in the year 2022 revealed that most of the reports are largely reliant on anonymous international ‘experts’ and ‘diplomats’ and false assumptions.

Accordingly, many corporate media including CNN, Washington Post, Al Jazeera, BBC, and Reuters falsely accused the Ethiopian government of “putting six million people of Tigray under genocide threat” the outlets categorically snubbed its response on the issue. Those media also misinformed the international community by accusing the Ethiopian government of targeting civilians and blaming it on human rights violations which the people of Tigray asserted all as false.

Ambassadors' New Year Message

Somaliland- Ethiopia relations: ...

Somaliland, which is part and parcel of the larger Horn of Africa region, possesses hundreds of miles of coastline along the Gulf of Aden to the north, and its peripheries Ethiopia to the south and west and Djibouti to the northwest. In actual fact, Ethio-Somaliland relations are crucial to propel and cement the economic integration of the Horn of Africa because of their strategic location in the region. Somaliland is turning out to be an important center of trade entering agreements with its neighboring nations.

It is important to note that the bilateral relations of the Somaliland and Ethiopia time and time again have been making good progress and achieving better outcomes. It becomes apparent that Ethio-Somaliland relations in a number of instances have been making remarkable progress in the context of social, political, economic, diplomatic, and security issues.

Apart from bringing political instability, security cooperation, fostering people-to-people ties into being, Somaliland and Ethiopia have been playing a huge role in assisting the progress of regional and political harmony in the Horn of Africa. In the same manner, the two nations have been collaborating in combating human trafficking, exchanging intelligence information and fighting common threats in an effort to stabilize the volatile region.

In the aftermath of the commitment of the governments of the two nations, the trade relations be-

tween Somaliland and Ethiopia are on the way up more important than ever. In the current circumstances, Somaliland imports, potatoes, wheat, onion, coffee, fruits and other things of a similar kind from Ethiopia. A case in point, in the year 2021, Somaliland managed to import Fresh Vegetable/ Fruits amounting 63,490 Tons.

In the current circumstances, the Ethiopian Birr is circulating in the Somaliland shopping areas along bordering regions where the two nations have been working in close collaboration in furtherance of smoothing the path of business activities. In the general run of things, around 500 people cross the Wojaale Board. The Wojaale City which lies in the boarder of the two nations also hosts 17 Ethiopian and 4 Somaliland operational banks.

In light of the current situation, the Ethiopian Airlines has been playing a huge role in connecting together the people of the brotherly nations by delivering excellent customer service. By the way, the number of daily flights by Ethiopian Airlines is twice a day and 3 flights a day during peak season.

Apart from granting educational scholarships to Somaliland students, the number of our students in Ethiopian higher learning institutions has been many a time and oft on the rise. In good truth, four Ethiopian universities in the present climate have been giving service in Somaliland such as Admas, Alpha, Unity and New Generation. It is

worth mentioning that Ethiopia and Somaliland are mutually dependent on the issue of trade, people-to-people ties, culture, and other issues.

Following our commitment and hard work, the relations between the two nations have been showing improvement and pointing forward in the right direction. As Ethiopia is a strong ally of Somaliland in crucial aspects of growth, the two nations have been taking steps forward and our efforts have been coming to fruition.

It is an incontrovertible fact that the bilateral relationships between Somaliland and Ethiopia have been playing a huge role in expanding peace, security, regional economic and political cooperation in the Horn of Africa. The other thing is that aside from serving as a regional hub and main getaway for Ethiopia and other nations, the Berbera Port has been playing a massive role in breathing new life into the cross-border trade and transit goods between the two nations.

Somaliland has been busy over the past decade upgrading and enhancing its infrastructure, like ports, highways and corridors to serve landlocked countries. It has also been modernizing and updating the soft infrastructure, like striking transit agreement with Ethiopia, and other trade related agreements.

Recently, Somaliland government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ethiopia to buy electricity as the latter has huge hydro-power potential.

Sound, steady...

increases certainty in this world with turbulence and uncertainty. The Congress also reaffirmed China's independent foreign policy of peace. China will continue to uphold world peace, promote common development and provide great positive energy for the international community to tackle global challenges. Embarking on a new journey, China will bring more opportunities to the development of world and make even greater contributions to the progress of humanity.

Dear friends, China and Ethiopia are comprehensive strategic cooperative partners with mutual trust. The two countries have adopted development strategies that are highly compatible. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations over half a century ago, despite the evolving international landscape, our bilateral relations have always maintained sound and steady development. Mutual trust and support has kept deepening. Our pragmatic cooperation has been at the forefront of China-Africa cooperation. It is well noted that for the past few years, with the commitment and guidance of President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, China-Ethiopia comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership has gained solid progress, setting a shining example for China-Africa relations.

Over the past year, China-Ethiopia cooperation has yielded fruitful results. The Chinese government has donated 12.2 million doses of COVID vaccines and emergency food aid worth 30 million RMB yuan to Ethiopia. China-aided Addis Ababa Riverside Green Development Project Phase II and Municipal Road Project have been completed and delivered. The Science Museum has become a new city landmark for visitors, and the new headquarters of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia has created a beautiful skyline in the capital.

Also in the outgoing year, my colleagues and I visited nine regions of Ethiopia, including Afar, Amhara, Somali, Harar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, SNNP and so on. We received warm welcome from the local governments and people, and were deeply touched by the deep-rooted friendship between our two countries. We are keenly aware of the huge development potential of this wonderland and the people's yearning for a better life.

Dear friends, the world today is undergoing major changes unseen in a century. The combined impacts of the persistent COVID-19 pandemics, downward pressure of the world economy, geopolitical tensions, and food and energy crisis render developing countries the first to take the brunt. As two major developing countries, China and Ethiopia should therefore join hands in response.

In the New Year, as the Ambassador of China to Ethiopia, I am looking forward to working with the Ethiopian government and all friends in Ethiopia to constantly enrich the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, and bring our relations and cooperation in various sectors to new heights. China will work together with Ethiopia for our national industrialization and modernization, and bring more tangible benefits to the two countries and peoples. I am full of confidence that there will surely be an even brighter future for us!

May Ethiopia enjoy lasting peace and prosperity, its people happiness and tranquility. May China-Ethiopia friendship be ever-lasting!

Thriving relations with Ethiopian...

India and Ethiopia have strong relations, based on mutual understanding and respect and sense of genuine partnership. Our political relations have been strong. In June 2022, Indian External Affairs Minister visited Ethiopia. He called on the Ethiopian President and discussed bilateral cooperation including education, health and investment as also development partnership. He also exchanged pleasantries with the Prime Minister and also with Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister. Also, EAM met Ethiopian DPM & FM on the sidelines of UNGA in New York.

Secretary (Economic Relations) in the Ministry of External Affairs visited Ethiopia. He met AU Deputy Chairperson and held talks with State Minister for Foreign Affairs. Ethiopia and India also held Foreign Office Consultations in Addis Ababa, where both sides discussed and reviewed the entire spectrum of our bilateral relations.

From Ethiopia, Minister of Industry participated in the CII-Exim Bank Conclave on India - Africa Growth Partnership. Defence Minister attended the India-Africa Defence Dialogue and Minister of Peace attended the 3rd 'No Money for Terror' Ministerial Conference on Counter-Terrorism

Financing.

Minister for Women and Social Affairs Ergogie Tesfaye (Ph.D) was conferred ICCR Distinguished Alumni Award - 2021 in New Delhi. In fact, she was the only dignitary from Africa to be conferred this prestigious award for the year 2021.

Education is an important aspect of our relations. Thousands of Indian teachers had taught in schools in Ethiopia. Today, more than 1000 Indian faculty teach in various public universities in Ethiopia. Students from Ethiopia form one of the largest groups of students from Africa studying in India.

India has substantial business presence in Ethiopia. More than 650 Indian companies are registered with the Ethiopian Investment Commission, generating employment to about 75,000 Ethiopian nationals. During the past two years, I have visited more than 160 Indian factories in Ethiopia. Indian companies are favorably looking at investing in Ethiopia. Also, India is the second largest trading partner for Ethiopia. 47 Indian companies participated at the Ethio Health Exhibition & Congress (March). Then, 11 companies from India and 2 Indian companies based in Ethiopia participated at the Africa Sourcing Fashion Week

(Nov).

More than 100 years ago, it was estimated that there were about 150 Indian families in Dire Dawa and Addis Ababa. Today, we have about 50 families, mostly from Gujarat, that have lived in this beautiful country for the past 3-4 generations. During the last 10 years, many Indian investors have joined them in Ethiopia. Today, there are about 5000 Indian nationals. For all purposes, Ethiopia is their home.

Ethiopian Airlines has been connecting the people of India and Ethiopia & Africa for the last 50 years. As an African Airlines that operates in many destinations in Africa, thousands of Indian travelers have been patrons of Ethiopian Airlines. Ethiopian Airlines operates almost 6 daily flights to Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai. It is expected to operate flights to Hyderabad. This bodes well, is good for our two countries. It will connect the peoples of the two countries for tourism; will facilitate more trade and business ties between India and Ethiopia & Africa.

I would like to extend New Year greetings to all.

Also, a joyous Ethiopian Christmas.

We're committed to....

We are confident that the revival of peace and solidarity in Ethiopia will be an example of upholding to fruitful result of the principle of «African solutions to African problems».

In 2022 political relations between Kazakhstan and Ethiopia have significantly strengthened. During the official meetings, the Ethiopian side expressed solidarity with Kazakhstan at all levels after the January events, and also supported the political and economic reforms being carried out in our country. President of Ethiopia Sahle-Work Zewde officially congratulated Kassym-Jomart Tokayev on his re-election as President of Kazakhstan.

The main event in bilateral relations was the

first inter-parliamentary meeting of deputies of the friendship groups of Kazakhstan and Ethiopia, during which the parties agreed to promote parliamentary diplomacy between the two countries.

The Embassy actively worked to increase trade turnover with Ethiopia, which is one of the largest markets in Africa. Trade seminars and meetings with companies were held. As a result of this work, the bilateral trade turnover increased 3 times. But this is far from the limit of our trading and investment opportunities.

We have a lot in common in culture, traditions and customs. It is very important that our peoples know more about each other's culture

and traditions. That is why, in the year of the end of the UN Decade of Rapprochement of Cultures, we jointly with the UNESCO National Commission in Ethiopia held an international conference on the contribution of Kazakhstan and Ethiopia to the world cultural heritage of humanity.

Thus, we are committed to increase our cooperation in the coming year and bring it to a new level of political and economic interaction.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to wish all the friendly people of Ethiopia to achieve peace, prosperity and development for the benefit of the great Ethiopian renaissance.

Business & Economy

Lightening means of foreign currency earning

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

After internal struggle with in the previous EPRDF ruling party four years ago, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) became victorious but the reality he faced was not an easy one as he started a rocky road. In addition to a heavy foreign debt burden he inherited from the previous regime, he was coerced to face a conflict that displaced hundreds of thousands of civilian population and left a remarkable number dead.

Right after his power assumption, he introduced the reform program which has various dimension in terms of politics, economic and social aspects.

To that end, the Prime Minister took various measures and the first one was forwarding his appeal to the central committee of the ruling party to privatize the crucial public profit making institutions. Among the suggested public enterprises which were identified to be privatized partially and fully were the Ethiopian Airline, Ethio-telecom, huge sugar industries, industrial parks, railway enterprise and power generation plants. According to the home grown economic reform, the objectives of privatizing public enterprises were to increase the efficiency of service delivery, and transfer technology among others.

Among the implemented privatization program based on home grown economic reform is partial privatization of Ethio-telecom to foreign company can be mentioned here in which formerly was state monopoly. The first foreign private company which won the bid to engage in telecom service provision is the Kenyan based company, Safari-com. The company is operational by now. It paid 850 million Dollar to get license and currently it has more than one million subscribers.

Many intellectuals hesitantly perceive the viability of the home grown economic reform plan. However, multinational financial corporations such as IMF and the World Bank gave a positive response to the program. They also pledged to support the program financially.

Nevertheless, right after the beginning of the implementation of the home grown economic reform program two years ago, the outbreak of war in the northern part of the country hampered the program. The multi-national financial institutions which pledged to provide money in support of the program changed their mind and suspended the money.

While making an interview with the local media recently, the economic advisor of the Prime Minister, Teklewold Atnafu said that due to the outbreak of the war in the northern part of Ethiopia, IMF and the World Bank cancelled their pledges to provide the money. He further said that for instance, IMF pledged to provide 2.9 billion Dollar to support the home grown economic reform program but it only gave 300 million Dollar and it delayed the rest 2.6 billion Dollar making the conflict a pretext.



Ethiopia is supporting the Homegrown Economic Reform through proper budget allocation – Ethiopian News

Though the World Bank pledged to provide 3 billion Dollars, it totally halted it.

“Totally, it was expected to obtain 5 billion Dollars from the two financial institutions but it left in vein,” Teklewold Said.

The home grown economic reform also set a mechanism to prolong the nation’s debt repayment schedule by reaching to consensus with the mentioned financial institutions. To that end, it was planned to utilize money obtained from privatizing public enterprises for debt services.

Based on the (G20 Framework), the government’s negotiation program with the Paris Club loan provider countries debt payment reschedule was interrupted due to the outbreak of the war. The nation’s foreign debt is said to be the highest as compared to other developing countries and unless it is paid, obtaining additional loan from multinational financial institutions can be said hard. The nation’s revenue collecting capacity from tax, as compared to other African countries is the lowest and unable to cover its economic development endeavor. Hence, according to experts, unless the government fulfills its debt repayment duty and secure additional loan from the financial institutions, it is hard to meet its financial needs which support the development plan.

Thus, while celebrating their new year, loan provider states and the international financial institutions are expected to reconsider Ethiopia’s need to obtain more loan and extension of debt pay back taking the peace agreement and activities that followed as good measures.

According to the National Bank of Ethiopia, when the government was at war during the last two years, the nation had been paying two billion Dollars for debt annually. As per the report from Ministry of Finance, currently, the nation’s foreign debt is rose to 29 billion Dollars in which approximately more than 50 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Therefore, it is fair to say that due to the outbreak of the war in the northern part of the country, attaining the goals of the home grown economic reform program

is not fulfilled. Worse to these, billions of Birr, that would have been allocated for development endeavor was consumed by the war. Based on the international criterion, to close budget deficit the government is only allowed to borrow not more than 3 percent of the GDP. However, according to the Ministry of Finance, in 2021 budget year, the government borrowed 4 percent of the GDP.

Recently, when he reported plan accomplishment of the first quarter to the parliament Budget and Finance Standing Committee, Yinager Desie (PhD), the Governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia, said that in relation with the current national situation, it was unable to pursue strict finance and budget policy.

The war that was underway in the last two years in the northern part of the country heavily demolished infrastructure in addition to breaking social fabric.

While he briefed the diplomatic community members residing here in the capital a month ago, the National Security Advisor of Prime Minister, Redwan Husein, said that it is estimated that 20 billion Dollars is needed to repair the damage. The Pretoria agreement between the government and TPLF paved the way to settle the problem through peaceful means and this again created new opportunity to reinvigorate the home grown economic reform. The new additional bid to sell 40 percent of Ethio-telecom testified this.

On the other hand, campaign is underway to impose pressure against the international finance institutions to open their gets which were closed during the war. A month ago, the Ethiopian high government delegation led by Ahmed Shide, Minister of Finance, attended the annual joint meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

On the occasion, the Ethiopian delegate made negotiation to secure loan and to reschedule the debt payment. According to a member of the delegate, Teklewold Atnafu, an Economic Advisor of the Prime Minister, the discussion made with the two financial institutions was successful.

He further said that members of the delegation also informed the financial institutions’ officials that the government’s resoluteness to implement the peace deal agreed with TPLF and demand to obtain additional money to resume the interrupted development programs due to the war.

He also said that the new financial support demand is intended to continue the development projects in the coming three years and after studied in detail the amount of money needed is also explained. The type of loan submitted to the financial institutions also prepared based on the accomplishment level of the home grown economic reform program.

“Therefore, if things are improved, we discussed various economic issues and will make a three years plan and after negotiation we will implement it,” Teklewold said.

The negotiation with the Paris Club countries with regard to rescheduling debt payment has continued. It is supported by the IMF and the economic growth plan is prepared by considering the nation’s debt amount.

If the prepared plan gets acceptance by IMF board, the government appeal forwarded to the Paris Club countries will get positive response. In addition, it helps to lobby other financial institutions to open their get to provide loan.

The shortage of foreign currency aggravates the inflation witnessed day to day. Hence, if the foreign finance institutions begin providing loan to Ethiopia, it addresses the shortage of hard currency and will stabilize the economy.

The other direction which is taken as a mechanism to boost foreign currency reserve by home grown economic plan is increasing exports. In this regard manufacturing and agriculture sectors should play their respective parts. Crop such as coffee, oil seeds, Kchat, pulses and others are the major products and last year the nation could garner 1.2 billion Dollar from coffee export and the Coffee and Tea Authority is rigorously working to increase the volume of the export coffee product. In addition, boosting the fruit and vegetable products has been taken as additional means to obtain hard currency. The manufacturing sector also will continue to export leather and leather products, textile products, glove and shoes.

Obtaining foreign currency enables to manage inflation; one can easily import goods and stabilize the market. Importing inputs utilized for industry production also will be unhindered which again strengthen the economy. It also helps the National Bank of Ethiopia to scale up its foreign currency reserve. The negotiations conducted with the international financial institutions help to cover the government’s budget deficit. If the peace agreement reached in Pretoria is implemented as it is required, it will help continue the reconstruction and rehabilitation works which in turn enables to attract Foreign Direct Investment and to recover the economy in a short period of time, it was underscored.

Planet Earth

Ethiopia's environmental achievement in 2022

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

In 2022, Ethiopia has been working to mitigate climate change, ensure food security, windup the annual Green Legacy Initiative campaign, share the vision of the green legacy initiative with the international communities, provide tree seedlings to neighboring countries, launch "Yelemat Tirufat", and so on.

The Green Legacy Initiative that was launched in June 2019 has been clinched in 2022. The initiative was launched aiming to curb the negative effects of climate change and deforestation across the country. The tree seedlings planting campaign, which took place from 2019 to 2022 during the main rainy season, locally known as KIREMT, had a target to plant a total of 20 billion seedlings. Nevertheless, the country has been able to plant 25 billion tree seedlings in 2022 that surpassed the target of 20 billion.

"The completion of the Green Legacy initiative has demonstrated to us that we are a people that can ideate, plan and accomplish." "We planned to plant 20 billion tree seedlings from 2019 to 2022 and achieved 25 billion." "This has been an inspiration for many throughout the world to continue building green culture," Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

Since our lives are strongly intertwined with trees and forests, accomplishing the objectives of green legacy initiatives is very important. The initiative was also designed to prevent flooding, ensure food security, avoid environment-related conflicts, and other adverse effects in our hands, he added.

Another major achievement of the year 2022 is sharing the vision of the green legacy initiative with neighboring countries, other international institutions, and organizations. Considering climate change as a regional and global threat, East African countries follow Ethiopia's green legacy path in the fight against climate change challenges. Ethiopia also has prepared tree seedlings and provided them to Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Somaliland, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda.

The Mayor of Djibouti City Fatouma Awaleh Osman explained that the Initiative would enhance the efforts to create a climate change resilient environment in the region in addition to its positive impact to

improve the image of the city. The Mayor also expressed gratitude to the government of Ethiopia for providing seedlings noting that the two countries are desirous to further continue the implementation of the Green Legacy Initiative.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is an international organization that announced the importance of the initiative last September 2022. Taking the importance of the Initiative into account, UNDP wants to share the Initiative with 10 African Countries. The UNDP shares the experiences of the Initiative to make a Pan-African issue.

Alhaji Fall, speaking on behalf of Ahunna Eziakonwa, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Africa at the UNDP, described the initiative as a stepping stone to a better future for Ethiopia. Announcing UNDP's plan to share Ethiopia's experiences with about 10 other countries and make the Initiative Pan-African, he praised Ethiopia for setting the pace in combating climate change and for fostering community resilience.

South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) Governance Resources Program Head Alex Benkenstein noted that Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative is a good practice to combat the negative effects of climate change. Its lessons and experiences should not only be shared and expanded to the region but also to other parts of the continent.

Indeed, Summer Wheat Development is another milestone achievement of Ethiopia in 2022. Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture Crop Development Director Isaias Lemma elucidated that the country has identified top priorities that can increase the production and productivity of cereals through small and large-scale irrigation development, financing agricultural inputs, encouraging cluster farming, and reducing post-harvest loss.

More specifically, the country has set a goal to achieve the national wheat demand in three years. Hence, in the last three years, wheat production has shifted from rain feed farming to irrigated farming, which used to be produced by farmers.

As a result, Ethiopia not only achieves the demand for national wheat production but also plans to export wheat to East African countries including Djibouti, Kenya, and

South Sudan. All East African countries import wheat from other countries, especially Russia and Ukraine. So East African countries, especially neighboring countries such as Kenya, South Sudan and Djibouti have been considered market destinations for Ethiopia, he pointed out.

By drawing lessons from the best practices and experience of the Green Legacy Initiative and avocado development across the country, Ethiopia launched the "Yelemat Tirfat" development campaign that focuses on nutritional opulence this year.

The name "Lemat" is a traditional food container that denotes a relationship between farmers, pastoralists, and consumers. It is about getting adequate nutritional food. The main objective of the campaign is to accelerate efforts to achieve food self-sufficiency at the family and national levels in Ethiopia.

"Ye Lemat Tirufat" is a scheme that implements to improve milk, eggs, poultry, and honey production across the nation. Ethiopian Minister of Agriculture Umar Hussain said that the Yelemat tirufat will be implemented in the coming four years and high-yield outcomes will be expected.

The program aims to increase chicken meat from 90 thousand tons to 296 thousand tons, milk from 6.9 billion liters to 11.7 billion liters, eggs from 3.2 billion to 9.1 billion, and honey from 147 thousand tons to 296 thousand tons. This in turn ensures food security, creates job opportunities, increases dairy production, and exports as well as replaces imported animal products with domestic ones, he explained.

According to him, "Yelemat Tirufat" has now been started with milk, eggs, chicken meat, and honey, and will expand to other products after the evaluation of their results. It is not only about getting adequate nutritional food but also ensuring food self-sufficiency which is directly linked to national sovereignty and dignity.

Taking the growing concern of climate change, global warming, and conservation of energy into account, the country widely introduced electric vehicles and electric vehicle charging stations to the public in 2022. This helps to reduce carbon emissions that are ejected into the atmosphere which leaves the planet vulnerable to things like pollution and greenhouse gases

National Bank of Ethiopia Governor Dr. Yinager Dessie indicated that the country spends around 2 to 2.5 Billion US dollars annually on fuel/oil importation. The cost of fuel not only consumes national resources but also causes significant climate pollution. Therefore, it is necessary to decrease the number of petrol vehicles while developing a complete infrastructure for electric vehicles.

Minister of Transport and Logistics Minister Dagmawit Moges said that an electric transportation system is one of the key programs included in the 10-year master plan of the transportation sector. Hence, the expansion of the electric transportation system and electric vehicle charging stations will be realized in the country using the untapped potential of energy resources in the country.

The year 2022 is also the year that Ethiopia shows its full commitment to leading biodiversity conservation, fighting against climate change, and ensuring food security. The projects that have been launched throughout the country are environmentally friendly and have significant value to fight the effect of climate change. Particularly, beautifying Sheger increases the quality of life, reducing the effects of climate change and developing green spaces from Entoto to the Akaki wastewater treatment plant. Dine for Ethiopia projects will also improve livelihoods and environmental protection.

Considering the effort of Ethiopia for environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and the fight against climate change into account, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed received the Outstanding African Leadership Award presented by the American Academy of Achievement and the Global Hope Coalition in Washington DC for his initiative, called Green Legacy, to reforest the country.

These show that Ethiopia has made in 2022 countless benefits in terms of reducing air pollution which will have a severe impact on the health of citizens apart from ensuring economic benefit to the people at large. Therefore, the green legacy initiative, sharing the vision of the initiative to the international communities, Summer Wheat Development, and the "Yelemat Tirfat" effort should continue in 2023 until Ethiopia becomes a place where every citizen of the world prefers to live.

Age-old friendship ...

I am happy that Russian-Ethiopian relations are currently gaining momentum. I am pleased to record the intensification of political dialogue between our countries, which is reflected in regular contacts at high and the highest levels. Trade and economic ties are developing as well. I am convinced that they will gain new impetus from implementing the decisions of the recently held 8th Meeting of the Intergovernmental Russian-Ethiopian Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation and Trade.

Ethiopia has been and remains for us not only a close and time-tested friend, but also an important partner on the African continent. Russia has always been and will always be on the side of the countries of the continent in their struggle for independence, state sovereignty and territorial integrity.

I am glad to note with satisfaction that the year 2022 marked the most important achievement for Ethiopia: the signing of the Agreement, which has laid the foundation for a lasting peace and national accord in your country. I am sure it was a crucial and

decisive step towards peace and prosperity which will lead to the normalization of life throughout Ethiopia and return to peace that will open up new opportunities for the country in the economy, trade, tourism, and international cooperation,

I would like to emphasize that this year has been marked by the strengthening of the traditionally fruitful cooperation between our Embassy and the Ethiopian Herald newspaper and its creative team. In this regard, I would like to express my gratitude to the editorial staff of the newspaper and

wish further success in their activities for the benefit of the Motherland and bringing truth to the readers.

On the eve of the New Year 2023, I wish all citizens of Ethiopia a peaceful sky over their heads, prosperity, good luck, good health and spirit to overcome any difficulties and implement all the boldest plans and ideas. May the New Year bring joy and prosperity to every home and family.

Happy New Year 2023!

Art & Culture

Bracing for the new holiday season: Culture, business diplomacy all in one

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

The European New Year is celebrated in the midst of unprecedented cold and snow forcing millions of households to stay indoors hiding from the cold that sometimes hit as low as minus 45 degrees centigrade. Fortunately, millions of people are working from their homes, and this trend is increasingly becoming a work culture that started during the time of uncontrolled COVID pandemic and is refusing to away because working from the comfort of home has become the new trend as commuting is becoming less comfortable and more time consuming in Western societies.

On the contrary, in Africa and here in Ethiopia we are bracing for a new round of holidays in sunshine and warm weather. Ethiopian Christmas is knocking on the doors to be followed soon by the uniquely Ethiopian holiday of *Timket* or the feast of Baptism, an annual event directly based or inspired from Ethiopian the scriptures dating back to thousands of years. It is interesting to note that holidays both in the West and here in Africa have become a once in a year occasion for high intensity spending sprees, and consumer frenzy.

The situation in Africa and Ethiopia as well has drastically changed from what it used to be back in 1920 or 1922. The pandemic is abetting and peace is coming to Ethiopia following the recent agreement signed by the warring sides while tangible evidence of a return to normal life is emerging in places where war was, until recently a day to day reality. All conflicts are bound to end up in agreements sooner or later and give way to tangible hope of a better life.

The major economic winner from the end of the war in Tigray and Amhara regions is the tourism sector which is potentially the most formidable sector before the war in generating hard currency for local residents in the historic sites where foreign visitors are eager to see every year at this very time. The Christmas and New Year in the Western countries usually coincide with Christmas and *Timket* in Ethiopia that fall almost in the same months, January in the Western calendar and *Tahisas-Tir* in the Ethiopian calendar. Here culture and business are intertwined, the one impacting the other. While the cultural practices belong to the people, the business aspect of it is mainly reflected in the tourism activities that accompany these occasions.

What is attractive about Ethiopian ancient culture is that it is first dating back to

thousands of years when most countries did not even come into existence and people were living in a state of primitiveness. Second, Ethiopian culture is unique in the world in the sense that it is original and not mixed with other foreign cultures because the country has kept its independence for many centuries. In the past, Ethiopia witnessed foreign invasions and even a brief Italian occupation but these occupiers had no time to impose their cultures on the people and constantly faced resistance wherever they set foot. This is a unique characteristic of the Ethiopian people who always had the vision and determination to keep themselves free from colonial and other forms of invasions.

These characteristics are very interesting to the foreign tourists for many reasons. Visiting Ethiopian exotic and ancient cultures is like going to see movies that are classic in nature and cannot bore the audience even if they are seen repeatedly. To the foreign tourist, visiting Ethiopia is more going to a movie hall to see a celebrated film because the pictures in the movies are made up or are fictional portraits of reality while the historic sites are tangible and can be seen as they are now or as they were in the past.

Modern tourism developed in Ethiopia very recently compared to the centuries old existence and survival of the Ethiopian polity. Although tourism is a relatively recent phenomenon, it has proved potentially lucrative. Cultural tourism is relatively more interesting than other features or aspects of tourism because it is a living proof of the vibrancy of the nation that has managed to keep its unity despite its immense diversity. Ethiopia is not a country where one or two cultures can be seen or visited by tourists. It is rather a mosaic of cultures that are even baffling to Ethiopians themselves due to their richness, their depth of significance and complexity. Cultural tourism in Ethiopia is not well developed in a strategically clear and planned manner. The tourism authorities should produce a master plan for promoting cultural tourism by stating clear objectives as well as by mobilizing the necessary resources for its promotion such as training of personnel and opening up new cultural tourism centers across the nation. Annual cultural celebrations like *Timket* should provide an ideal occasion for the tourism authorities in reassessing their priorities and charting new courses of action for the more dynamic promotion of the cultural tourism sub-sector. It is good to get increased revenue from tourism but income from tourism can hardly rise in the long run unless the tourism sector is expanded and modernized so that it can attract

more visitors.

No wonder then that modern tourism in general and cultural tourism in particular has long become a huge business undertaking. Foreign tourists come to Ethiopia not only to see the ancient crafts and relics but to also buy cultural artifacts directly from those who produce them, that is to say from the craftsmen themselves. Modernizing tourism should therefore include providing opportunities for craftsmen to sell their artifacts or handicrafts. The tourism authorities should encourage and promote cultural tourism markets by providing supportive assistance to handicraftsmen who are particularly engaged in making cultural goods for tourist consumption. This may include opening up shops and market outlets in various tourist areas or sites or bringing isolated handicraftsmen into the mainstream market.

Cultural tourism expressed in the forms of traditional Ethiopian music and dances can also be used as major attractions during the holiday seasons when the flow foreign tourists is the highest. Thanks to great Ethiopian musicians like Mahletay Yared, the greatest church musician to Mulatu Astatke, the great modern Ethiopian composer, conductor and player, Ethiopian music has proved its potential for attracting international audiences.

This can be exploited by the tourism sector during the peak tourist season by organizing shows designed particularly to the festive seasons and offer it to the tourists who are eager to enjoy our music which is also part and parcel of the cultural wealth of humanity as a whole. There is indeed a great deal to be done in this area by establishing special departments entrusted with the task organizing shows particularly designed for tourists during the holiday seasons when the tourist flow reaches its peak.

Cultural tourism is not only a potentially high revenue earner. It is also a great tool of promoting Ethiopian diplomacy and building its image in the wider world. Cultural tourism has the potential for attracting foreigners so that they become interested in our food and drink and related cultures that have already earned the admiration of foreigners. What we need to do is built on this basis and modernize its forms if not its contents.

Most global conflicts emanate from the prevalence of a state of misunderstanding or ignorance among various cultures. Knowledge of peoples' cultures has the potential of promoting better understanding and appreciation of their lives and aspirations and this could in turn promote peace and stability in their

relations. Peace has obviously more value than money, gold or silver and as such cannot be estimated with material measurements.

Cultural tourism has also the potential for changing peoples' perceptions from hostility and hatred to friendship and tolerance. We can see this from the recently concluded World cup soccer tournament in Qatar where the tourism authorities have succeeded in changing the global perception about Arab people and countries in general and Qatar and the Qataris in particular. Before the tournament, some media outlets portrayed Qatar and its people as probably backward, or unable to organize such a big tournament in a flawless manner. Now the Qataris have convinced the world that they are indeed talented people who can achieve what the Western world has not achieved in terms of civilian construction, technology and culture and they are duly proud of it. They have achieved a radical change of perceptions about their country and about their people through dedication and hard work.

Here in Ethiopia, we are sitting on an untouched wealth of cultural tourism attractions that we have hardly managed to use them to change the country's image simply we are not working hard enough to achieve to promote cultural tourism and turn it into a tool of diplomatic rapprochement and mutual understanding with peoples of different cultures. It is possible to build or organize replicas of the tourist sites right here in Addis Ababa and the major cities and create festivals where tourists and other visitors can enjoy themselves while knowing the country and its people at the same time. AS we have seen it during the Qatar world cup, modern tourism is about using technology to recreate new realities and give visitors the impression that they are visiting remote places without physically traveling to distant sites. There is a lot to be done to modernize the cultural and diplomatic tourism sectors with dedication, purpose and imagination and the time is not tomorrow to do these things but today and as soon as conditions are created for the realization of the ideals and objectives of modern tourism. The tourism officials should not only count the number of tourists who visit Ethiopia every year and the amount of money they collect from visitors which becoming a traditional way of measuring success in the sector. Nowadays growth should be measured with growth in infrastructure, modernization and diversification of the sector. Fortunately, this is achievable as other countries are doing it and what we have to do is learn from them and utilize the lesson in our specific contexts.

Society

Shared values, cemented partnership: Ethiopia, Argentina

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Addis Ababa is truly a hub of multicultural society and a place where several Ambassadors and diplomatic communities are leading their life peacefully. As a capital city of Ethiopia and diplomatic hub of Africa, the city has a unique way of rejuvenating the spirit of its residents and the diplomatic communities. No matter where they came from or what their status is, the beautiful City-Addis Ababa-has always a special place in their heart. For that reason, most diplomatic communities living in Ethiopia consider Addis Ababa as their second home. Gustavo Teodoro Grippio, who is Argentina Ambassador to Ethiopia is among those people who consider Addis his second home. Ambassador Gustavo has been working in Ethiopia for the last ten years representing his country-Argentina. Within those years, Ambassador Gustavo has played a significant diplomatic role between his country and Ethiopia. Using this as a ground *The Ethiopian Herald* had moments of togetherness with him.

According to Ambassador Gustavo, Ethiopia is one of the most important countries in Africa. "Ethiopia and Argentina have wonderful relations in political, economic and social areas. It is a chief diplomatic place in the continent that is why we find the Headquarter of the African Union and other regional and international institutions in Addis Ababa. The commercial relationship of the two countries is still in a good condition. This commercial relation is expressing itself in various ways. For instance, as a land where one of the best coffees is found, Argentina imports Ethiopian coffee and gold. Argentina also exports maize, rice and pharmaceutical tools to Ethiopia. As part of the *South-South Cooperation*, Argentina is also supporting the Ethiopian agricultural sector in various ways."

He also said, starting from the time Ethiopian Airlines launches flights to Argentina in 2018, the commercial relationship of the two countries is getting stronger. Beside the commercial part, the Ethiopian Airlines-pride of Africa- is promoting Ethiopia all over the world which should be taken as a model by other countries as well. In this regard, I can say that the good management in the airline deserves all the respect.

In the political sphere, Ethiopia is always by the side of Argentina in various issues. "Starting from the beginning, Ethiopia is supporting our causes in the United Nations. This is especially true regarding the sovereignty issues.

When asked how he express Ethiopia's stand in areas of Pan-Africanism in its modern

sense, Ambassador Gustavo said that he has a great respect for what Ethiopia is doing now against all forms of neocolonialism and the efforts of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) to bring about sustainable development all over the country and his effort to avoid conflict in a peaceful means is praiseworthy.

"I had a chance to meet Prime Minister Abiy in Argentina in 2014 when he was State Minister of Science and Technology. I admire his leadership skills. He has transferred Ethiopia into a better position. The various parks, museums and other projects that are being constructed all over the country are truly reflecting his dedication and leadership qualities. I always follow his speech and I am convinced from his measures that he is always after the betterment of Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular."

The ambassador also said that the economic progress the nation witnessed within the past years is encouraging. The cultural integration and tolerance which is being witnessed all over the country and the construction of various parks and market centers is a signpost that Ethiopia is driving towards prosperity and progress. The historical grounds of the nation together with the commitment of its people are taking the nation into the right destination.

The ambassador also commented that the effort of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to bring a sustainable peace to Ethiopia is an encouraging step not only to Ethiopia but also to the whole continent. Using "African problems that need African solutions" as a principle, Ethiopia is actively engaged to realize conflict free Africa. For this reason, Ethiopia is now serving as a house light for Africa as well as the world.

Regarding the peaceful negotiation between the Federal Government and the TPLF, the ambassador said, arriving on agreement to avoid conflict peacefully and accepting the federal government's authority is a one way towards a stable country. In this regard, my country is very happy for the peaceful negotiation and the positive result registered after that.

When asked how Argentinean people express Ethiopia, Ambassador Gustavo said, Argentinean people know best about Ethiopia. This is because of various reasons; Ethiopia is a great African nation that had never been colonized. This is a very important point to us. For Argentina, Ethiopia is a very good example of freedom and anti-colonialism struggle. Ethiopia's diplomatic relation with Argentina in this regard has an important significance for it values independence as a paramount issue. This is reflected in the issue of Malvinas



Amb. Gustavo Teodoro Grippio, Argentina Ambassador to Ethiopia

islands. For this very reason, Argentinian people know Ethiopia more than any other people and have a great respect for Ethiopia.

The strong Ethiopian and Argentinean people fraternity was also witnessed recently when Argentina beat France in the 2022 world cup final. After Argentina won the cup, people in Addis Ababa were expressing their feelings to me. I was witnessing Ethiopians expressing their support for the Argentina team on the streets of Addis and I even one time asked myself if I was in Buenos Aires or in Addis Ababa. Whenever we drive in the streets of Addis there are still people who warmly express

their support to us. There are two countries in the world that support the Argentinian team in an incredible way. Those countries were Ethiopia and Bangladesh. This truly expresses the strong friendship of the two countries."

Concerning how he is going to celebrate the New Year and Ethiopian Christmas-*Genna*, Ambassador Gustavo said, "Due to the strong attachment I developed with Ethiopians within the last ten years I enjoy marking Ethiopian holidays. For this reason, I am eagerly waiting to mark both the New Year and Ethiopian Christmas -*Genna*- with friends and families. And I wish all Ethiopians a colorful Christmas."

Law & Politics

Ethiopia's defining events in the year 2022

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Ethiopia saw defining moments in the year 2022 going through many peaks and troughs. As a new year begins, it is worth remembering that the country experienced dynamic situations and unforgettable events in 2022 on the backdrop of devastating war and other socioeconomic and political conundrums. These big occurrences are expected to continue in the new year and impact the overall situation of the country.

It is interesting to note that the year 2023 sets in holding promising futures and good perspectives in store bidding farewell to 2022. The just-ended year saw notable yet defining happenings amidst layers of setbacks. The situation

From the recent Pretoria peace deal to the third phase filling of the torchbearer project GERD along with the commencement of the first tribune power generation, from the finalization of preliminary preparation for National Dialogue to Ethiopia's successful participation of the U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit, the country went through series of events amidst myriads of socioeconomic and political upheavals.

Pretoria Cessation of Hostilities Agreement

The final months of 2022 became symbols of Ethiopian victory with the country striking a grand peace deal that ended a two-year deadly war.

Ethiopia 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 Tigray People's Liberation Front have reached a peace deal as per the AU-led negotiation after days of intense consultation in Pretoria, 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 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 the deal demonstrates the continental bloc's capacity to help resolve conflicts under the notion of African solutions for African problems. A stand very much echoed by the Ethiopian government and the peace-loving people of Ethiopia.

GERD's power generation and third-phase filling

On Feb. 20, 2022, Ethiopia successfully completed the third filling of the Grand



Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The country also started generating electricity for the first time from its Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) hydroelectric project.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed turned on the ninth unit of the GERD.

That means Ethiopia has harnessed 270 megawatts of power from the second turbine that goes operational. The dam's first turbine which started producing electricity on the 20th of February 2022, unit 10, has been delivering 270 Mega Watt of hydropower making the total power generated from GERD so far well over 540 megawatts.

The smear campaigns and the intrigues directed at Ethiopia's torchbearer project have come to no avail due to the concerted efforts of the Ethiopian people's unflinching commitment and unwavering stance of the incumbent.

The sabotages of the internal and external adversaries to twist Ethiopia's arm and impede fully the construction of the dam brought nothing but shame and humiliation to the saboteurs while turbocharging Ethiopia's stamina and enthusiasm.

Though the arch-foes of the country has gone to the end of the earth to impede the construction of the dam at all hours of the day and night by playing a part in a smear campaign against the colossal dam working in close collaboration with the media outlets and their henchmen, they failed to pursue their objective. And, the country has begun reaping the fruits of its hard work and genuine cause.

U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit

One of the major happenings that unfolded in the year 2022 was also the recently held U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit in which Ethiopia had once again entered the limelight of diplomacy.

President Biden invited leaders from across the African continent to Washington, DC on December 13-15, 2022 for the U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit. Delegations from all 49 invited African countries and the African Union, alongside members of civil society and the private sector, attended the summit.

During the Summit, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his delegation had productive discussions during the

Africa-US summit held in Washington DC.

The prime minister and his delegation had fruitful discussions with US leaders and officials held on the margins of the US-Africa Leaders Summit.

The steps taken by the Ethiopian government to bring peace to the northern part of the country were recognized during the discussions. In particular, the commitment of the government to implementing the peace agreement was appreciated.

The US and Ethiopia have also agreed to strengthen and continue with development and other many activities they carry out together.

Assistance was received from international organizations for the rehabilitation of war-affected areas and grounds were laid for further support in the future.

In general, the state minister pointed out that diplomatic success was registered and Ethiopia's diplomatic capacity heightened by the visit.

The 3-day summit showcased the US's desire to strengthen ties with African partners based on principles of mutual respect and shared interests and values. It also served as an opportunity to listen to and collaborate with African counterparts on key areas the United States and Africa define as critical for the future of the continent and our global community.

The summit built on shared values to better foster new economic engagement, reinforce the U.S.-Africa commitment to democracy and human rights, mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and of future pandemics, work collaboratively to strengthen regional and global health, promote food security, advance peace, and security, respond to the climate crisis; and amplify diaspora ties.

Preparation for staging national dialogue

The year 2022 also saw significant development in terms of finalizing preparation for the planned and big tasks of national dialogue.

As the country plans to redress backlogs of challenges and create a middle ground on basis of discussion, the need for holding an inclusive and transparent national dialogue has been high.

In this regard, the year 2022 was a time when the Ethiopian National Dialogue

Commission strengthened its activities in discharging its duties and responsibilities with flying colors embracing the actual event.

As National Dialogue plays a tremendous role in getting to the bottom of a diverse range of socioeconomic and political impediments, the population as a whole has been pinning hope on the constructive measures and positive achievements of the National Dialogue Commission. For the sake of truth, as some predicaments hovering all over hell's half an acre need an immediate solution, the Commission has been paving the way for finding some common ground and reaching a common understanding.

In 2022 the Commission has carried out a wide spectrum of activities with a significant degree of bodies such as religious authorities, opposition political parties and other things of a similar kind as per the fact that national dialogue plays a huge role in establishing dependence, harmony, and common ground.

For the purpose of clarifying, as the National Dialogue plays a paramount role in resolving bottlenecks of quandaries, reinstating accord, achieving a consensus, and whatnot, all and sundry should work in close cooperation with the National Dialogue Commission for its realization. Taking note of the constructive steps surfacing on the topic of the National Dialogue, everyone should go to push their shoulder to the wheel to take the efforts of the commission to the next level of success.

Improved diplomatic ties

Ethiopia also improved strained relations with the international community improving its diplomatic engagement in 2022. The signing of the Pretoria peace deal and the extensive works carried out eased external pressure and its diplomatic engagement improved.

The conflict coupled with external challenges has never pulled back Ethiopia rather makes the country register huge diplomatic achievements including the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA), peaceful negotiation, negotiations on GERD, and others.

This is a statement by Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen that culminated it all regarding the diplomatic success of the country in 2022.

Praising the commitment and efforts made by the local community, diaspora, and ambassadors, Demeke highlighted that the diplomats did a great job in protecting Ethiopia's national interest. "They were more than effective in preserving Ethiopia's interests, living up to Ethiopians' aspirations and the country's rich heritage. Despite the dynamic and unpredictable nature of global diplomacy Ethiopian diplomats exerted their utmost effort and protected the country's national interest."

He urged the diplomats to do their level best to advance the national interest of the country by any means. Ethiopians in the Diaspora should also keep on standing by the side of the homeland and to further collaborate with the government to register better results.



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

Happy New Year!

How about cooling it down!

Yes, it's time to say Happy New year in the loudest of vices to all humanity. We need it, and desperately, too. I mean, 2022 hasn't come anything close to being a fairly good year let alone a happy one. And without quoting any quantum something sort of questions any man in the street with just a rough knowledge of the what's going on would paint you a not so optimistic 2023. That's not because this world is swarming with loonies. Yes, many of us act as if we're destined for some mental asylum any time soon. The largely tailor-made modern predictions, the ancient prophecies have not been any nicer to 2023.

Was the nasty and fearful weather condition in North America scaring even those of us who don't have the slightest idea of what a millimeter of ice means predicted? Search me. But one thing we're not short of is, what else, the 'causes!' Look if you think everybody thought of those horrific weather conditions as 'only a once in a generation' happening you've some surprise coming your way. At least not all in this part of the world are satisfied with such an explanation. I'll tell you why; they believe divine forces are in play; angry divine forces! How about that! Well who are we to judge anyone! I mean those people, most of them spiritually non-compromising, somewhat find some very smart line from the scripture to fit their arguments. And like it or not, they make some good work of those bit pieces; "See what we are saying! It is already in The Book!"

So, much of the 'predictions' and prophecies are that 2023 would be nowhere close to be a nice and dandy year!

I can tell you watching all those big-name, big-ego and big-snobbery western TV

channels you get lost which was the standup comedy which is the real news. Come on; how in the world some could work of nature be so politicized! That is what some are doing! It's as if those guys suddenly woke up to the fact that opposition to the government is not only about debating some spending bill or the border crisis but the weather condition too could be of use. "How could the guardian of the nation go on a vacation when so much of the country is carpeted by inches and inches of ice?" In some channels it was not about the mini-biblical disaster unfolding in buffalo, New York that was the issue of the day but The Man himself leaving the oval office probably for 'warmer' living rooms. By the way all the age-old myth of the fair, truth-seeking, no-string-attached Western media has been shattered beyond repair. At least in the part of the world that 'breed' is agenda-oriented (political, racial, financial etc.) and, for all practical purposes, the remote controls aren't even in their hands.

So, since we seem to be in an age of prophecies, with almost every one of us a Nostradamus in our own rights there is nothing more interesting than looking back at what the 'originals' said. Just curious, are you a Nostradamus fan? You know, that Nostradamus who made all those prophecies! Yes, that's him. So, if you are a fan of that guy from half a millennium back sorry to tell you but he has said 2023 is going to be a hell of a year in all the wrong ways.

I mean whatever we think of the Nostradamus guy many credit him for having predicted some of the most important events like the rise of Adolf Hitler, the assassination of John F Kennedy and even the 9/11 terrorist

attacks. All this almost half a millennium back! Among his predictions for the year that just started today some are a little heavy on the ears. Take the one about this cannibalism thing; "So high the price of wheat, that man is stirred, his fellow man to eat in his despair." The second half of the prophecy might sound somewhat outlandish in this modern age. But he hit it on the head or close-by speaking about the price of wheat which is ever rising.

Just for the fun of it there is this prophecy of his which rigs quite loud bells; he predicts, "Seven months great war, people dead through evil," Well, it doesn't have to be good old Nostradamus, anyone saying that would make sense. The Russia-Ukraine war if you really think about it is a great war in its own way. With so many countries sending arms and even boasting about it, with mercenaries of all kind all over the place, with the repercussions of that conflict being felt wide and far the bombs don't have to fall to call it a great war!

Ever heard of Baba Vanga who lost her sight at the age of 12 and they call the Nostradamus of the Balkans! There are many who say she predicted 9/11, tensions with North Korea, Brexit, Barack Obama's presidency, Princess Diana's death so it's written in the papers.

Well the woman had predicted the year 2023 to be a dark year. With all that's brewing around the world, Politian acting weird with much talk about aggression, hostility, hate-mongering etc. if you still see a rosy year ahead well you must be one of a kind. While writing this I'm seeing on the TV screen that according to a recent public opinion polls 67 percent of Americans think the country is headed in the wrong direction! What! Why

do I feel the rhetoric coming from the once untouchable, rich, muscle-flexing places sound more and more like they came from what they call 'third world countries?'

By the way she also says we might have uninvited guests...aliens! I can tell you that if it ever happens would be a big blow to the sci-fi film industry. But the aliens wouldn't be coming holding roses. No! So, anyone thinking of placing additional dishes on the dinner table might better think twice. She also predicted there would be nuclear explosions. Hmmm! Now aren't many of us thinking the dreaded nuke explosions are a matter of time and not of possibility!

In one of her predictions she talks about humans coming out of labs and not wombs in 2023! She believes that parents can decide the skin color and characteristics of their kids. Whoa! Does that sound familiar! Only a few days back we were hearing about human factory and about parents being able to choose what their offspring would look like. Say it a once-in-a-blue-moon coincidence or whatever that really pricks a nerve or two, doesn't it.

One good thing is she thinks the world will cease to exist in 5079. There's no rush. We just wish in 2023 none of all those scary things prophesized or predicted wouldn't happen. Look it doesn't matter whether we believe or not these prophesy things. But I can tell you they could be some good read when you have the time to waste!

Just curious, 5079 is not around the corner, is it? So, to those of us obsessed with prophecies and predictions local or whatever, how about cooling it down!

Leaving the Rambo Genes to Rambo!

There were times we used to look up at far richer societies thinking that they've all that anyone would wish for. The logic of the man-in-the-street was that those who have it all have no reason to trample on moral standards. Their seats in heaven are 'reserved!' I mean it is easy to generalize when you have few, if any, options left to explain certain things. But then that's no more the case; meaning being rich has nothing to do with being on the higher grounds of moral standards. From the point of view of most people in this ancient country these days there is much, too much, moral decadence in the richer countries than there is in the poorer ones. You know the rich who demand you lick their shoes for every Dollar, Euro or Pound they throw your way. "You want us to give you funds? Then do what we tell you to do. No free lunch!"

And many people believe this all-inclusive moral decadence is seeping into our society affecting rich and poor, young and old alike. The stories you hear about, the things you see for yourself etc. could sometimes be so out of place and sometimes out of the world you feel the current of shock down to your toes. This is happening in my own country! How

the hell did we slide so low and what the hell was everybody doing when we gilded deeper and deeper into this unending hole! Believe me we already have more than our share of those shocks. The days when only the young are condemned for all the wrongs in society are fewer and fewer. Not that those wrongs have been dealt with or disappeared by some miracle.

No! It means than the young aren't standing alone in the defendant's box. More and more the older members of the society are becoming regular presence.

Did I tell you of the very old man whom I saw and heard throw these four letter words at a visibly shaken teenage girl! Never found out the reason behind his diatribe. But whatever his reasons an octogenarian raining four letter words on a girl of not more than sixteen and seventeen couldn't be justified.

"You know the fellow was very angry and he isn't aware of what he is saying. No, this one I was telling you about was not only aware he used the words as weapons. Every word didn't come as if the vocal dams have collapsed. He in fact took his time to emphasize those

horribly vicious words which he probably took as his lethal ammunition.

These days we see aggressive behaviors in more places than we'd have been comfortable with. I recently saw an actual fist fight (well, an 'almost fist fight!'). At least it had all the makings of being actual while lacking when it comes to execution. You might say, "This guy saw a fist fight and he's giving it column space for such a trivial happening! What is wrong with these guys anyway? Why, we see scores of fist fights all over the place and he expects us to read through his nonsense!" Wait a minute I didn't yet rest my case. The 'combatants' of this fist fight were two grandfathers, probably past their mid-seventies. The cause of the bust up was a traffic dispute where the two almost crashed into each other!

Of course the crash never happened. But both accused the other of being responsible for a dangerous situation which if it had happened the story would have been different down to every comma and semi colon. Of course, some blows were thrown from each side, but not one of them reached anyone's chin or jaw. Wasted blows, wouldn't you say! But it would have been the miracle of the decade if

any of those blows had connected with flesh and bone! I'll tell you why. A couple of Good Samaritans were already between them and there is a humble five or six meter gap between them. It might be the safest way out for both for settling the issue and prevent "Did you see those cowards!" bar talk.

"If I had found his chin with this fist of mine he would have been in a hospital bed for the better half of the year!"

"So, why isn't he already in a hospital bed?"

"Well, I never hit him."

"But why?"

"He was five or six meters away."

"And you still threw punches at that distance!"

"What do you think I should have done; put my tail between my legs and run!"

Any ways those two elderly men acting the way they did with scores and scores of onlookers watching is not about being tough or claiming some Rambo genes. It is one manifestation of the crudest form of moral decadence!

Your honor, the defense calls for a recess.

It's better to leave the Rambo Genes to Rambo himself, wouldn't you say!

Ethiopia's peace holds far-reaching impacts

Ambassador James Pitia Morgan (PhD)



I wish all a happy New Year. This 2023 is an auspicious one as Ethiopia is already regaining its peace. Of course the New Year is coming with a lot of joy and happiness. Nowadays, there is peace in the country. Unlike previous days, there is free movement of people across the length and breadth of the north. The flight to Mekele has resumed. Now everybody in Ethiopia is free to move the way they wanted. We have a great appreciation for the achievement. Ethiopia has comeback where it was before. We greet all the people of Ethiopia. We wish them all the best.

Somaliland- Ethiopia relations: A viable pathway to catapult Horn Africa's economic integration

BY MOHAMED AHMED (AWAD)



AMBASSADOR OF SOMALILAND TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

As a new year kicks off, Somaliland and Ethiopia are bracing for a new era of bilateral relations with both countries expected to push for enhanced cooperation in many frontiers. In fact, the countries have so much to cherish and lofty opportunities to seize in the year 2023. As we welcome the New Year, the peoples of both nations have already been tied by geographic, cultural, and economic values, are set to witness an elevated tie having ample alternatives of mutual benefits in store.

Sound, steady relations despite evolving Int'l landscape

BY ZHAO ZHIYUAN

AMBASSADOR OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO ETHIOPIA

First of all, on behalf of the government and people of China, I would like to extend my sincere New Year wishes to all Ethiopian friends for the coming 2023!

For both the development of China and the relations between our two countries, the outgoing 2022 has been an extraordinary year. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was successfully convened in October. At this congress for greater unity, democracy and progress, the most important achievement is the election of the new collective central leadership with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core. The Congress has drawn up a blueprint for China's future development, and

Age-old friendship gathering new momentum

BY EVGENY TEREKHIN

AMBASSADOR OF RUSSIA TO ETHIOPIA

Dear friends,

Please accept my warmest and most sincere greetings for the coming New Year 2023!

Russia and Ethiopia are linked by close historical ties. There are not many other examples of such interstate relations in the world, which over the centuries have been invariably marked by friendship, mutual trust and help. This year we will celebrate the 125th anniversary of our diplomatic relations.

Thriving relations with Ethiopian expediting it than ever

BY ROBERT SHETKINTONG

AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO ETHIOPIA

India got its independence in 1947. The following year, Ethiopia was one of the first countries from Africa to establish diplomatic relations with India. Therefore, we are celebrating 75 years of diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and India. Embassy of India has taken the lead in these celebrations by organizing various activities including cultural events in various cities and towns in Ethiopia. Embassy of India also sponsored the visit of a cultural group from Ethiopia to India.

We're committed to increase cooperation in 2023

BY BARLYBAY SADYKOV

AMBASSADOR OF KAZAKHSTAN TO ETHIOPIA

I am very grateful for this opportunity to address all subscribers of the Ethiopian Herald in connection with a New Year and upcoming Ethiopian Christmas as well.

We will remember this year with very important events for both Ethiopia and Kazakhstan. First of all, I would like to congratulate the leadership and people of Ethiopia on reaching a peace agreement on November 2, 2022 this year. Ethiopia was able to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity and open a new chapter in its great history.