



Ethiopia, France, EU ink grant agreements

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA –Ethiopia signed yesterday a 32- million- euro grant agreement with the government of France and European Union (EU) that is meant to supplement the former’s service sector.

Following the peace agreement between the government and TPLF, many countries have shown a growing desire to support Ethiopia’s development projects, Finance State Minister Semrita Sewasew said at the signing ceremony.

The two financing agreements are allocated to support the reconstruction process in three conflict-affected states of Amhara, Afar and Tigray with a total amount of 32 million euro, out of which 28 million euro is

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Photo - Eyob Tefert



Photo - Tsehay Nigusie

Ethiopia to bolster holistic diplomacy: MoFA

• Global actors demonstrate support to truce

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia would strengthen its holistic approach in foreign relations using cultural, sport, economic, and political diplomacy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

See Ethiopia to ... Page 3

Israel keen on deepening all-weather ties with Ethiopia

• Ready to support peace building efforts

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

ADDIS ABABA- Israel is desirous of elevating ties in all spheres with Ethiopia, so said Ambassador of the State of Israel to Ethiopia, Burundi, Chad, and the African Union.

In an exclusive interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Israeli Ambassador Alelign Admasu also pointed out that his government is ready to extend unreserved support for swift and full implementation of Ethiopia’s truce signed in Pretoria, South Africa.

“The people of Ethiopia deserve peace. The government and people of the nation should focus, from now onwards, on nation’s development,” he added.

Talking about the dividend of the peace deal, the ambassador said that it will pave a way for many investors to come to Ethiopia



Photo: Hadush Abreha

Amb. Alelign Admasu

and invest. Many international companies will be settled here as well.

As to him, Ethiopians are peace-loving people and they are the one that pulled

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Debre Berhan aims to capitalize int'l expo to lure investors

- Avails 2,000 hectare land to new businesses

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-Debere Berhan has been hosting an international Trade, Investment and Finance Expo since last Thursday, which witnessed the participation of over 1,000 local and foreign investors, and the city administration envisioned to utilize the

See Debre Berhan ... Page 3

News

Ethiopia, Canada working on cementing relations: Amb. Fitsum

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia and Canada have been working on cementing the two countries' ties in all fields of cooperation, Ethiopian Ambassador to Canada said.

The Ethiopian Ambassador to Canada Fitsum Arega told the local media that Ethiopia and Canada have been enjoying long time strong diplomatic relationships in various arenas particularly in trade, technology transfer, education, aviation, mining and others.

He also stated that Canada has been reflecting its reasonable and positive stance during hardship times of Ethiopia specifically in United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This is a firm showcase for countries' deep-rooted long time strong ties. Furthermore, Canada has played its decisive role in supplying humanitarian

assurances for conflict affected people in northern Ethiopia.

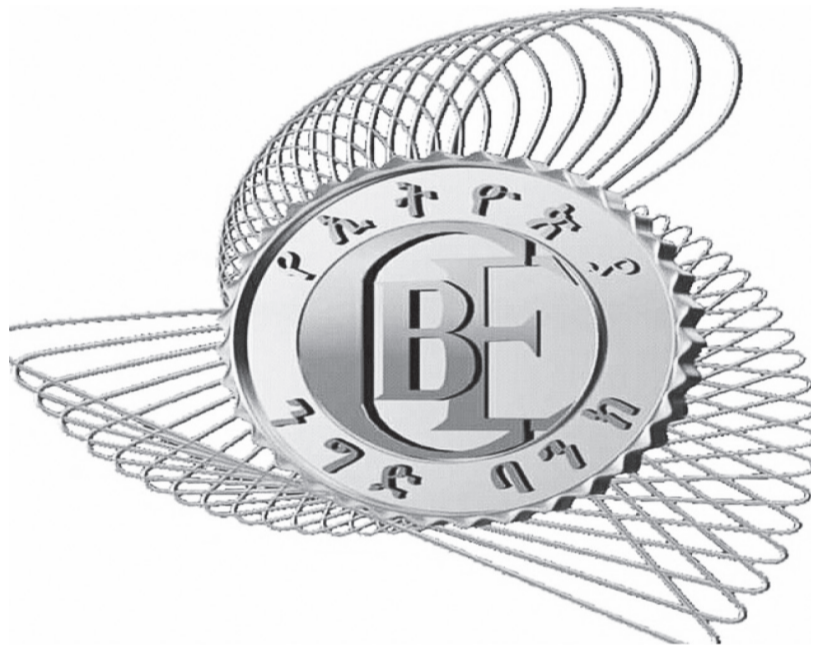
Efforts are underway to transform the existing relationship into the highest level of diplomatic relationship. The conversations between Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his counter-part Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau are indicators of both countries' strong diplomatic ties.

He noted that Canada has welcomed and supported the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) between the Ethiopian government and TPLF.

The two countries' relationship counted half a century. The short term 1959's visit of Emperor Haileselesie laid a foundation for the beginning of relationship. Both countries' relationship is based on principles of brotherhood and mutual benefit, it was learnt.



Amb. Fitsum Arega



SeregeleGebeya PLC agrees to use CBE- Birr

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA– The Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) and Seregele Gebeya PLC signed yesterday a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that enables the company's customers to make payments through the *CBE-Birr* e-commerce platform.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, CBE Retail Branch Banking Executive Vice President Fikerselassie Zewudu said the bank has been hugely working to avail modern payment alternatives that will best fit with the needs of the society. In last fiscal year alone, the firm managed to transact two trillion Birr in the digital market whilst its customer base in the CBE Birr platform has reached to 17 million.

As to him, the bank has been implementing different modern paying alternatives including mobile banking, e-commerce, internet banking and others with a view to enhancing customer's experience and providing seamless services. "The agreement we concluded today enables

SeregeleGebeya customers to utilize our e-commerce platforms to make payments and make their trip convenient."

SeregeleGebeya PLC Founder and CEO Elias Negash, who recalled the company's launching of ride service three years ago mainly using female drivers, claimed that the firm has greatly contributed in employing young women and supporting the transport service availability.

The company recently launched a digital payment alternative dubbed SeregeleGebeya.com in a bid to enable its customers to make service payments in digital banking platforms thereby bolstering competitiveness in the thriving business. "Our agreement with CBE is critical in our mission of providing convenient services to customers and to deep-penetrate the blossoming market," Elias emphasized.

The CBE is the principal bank in Ethiopia and its largest customer base and robust technological adaptation is believed to make it preferable by both public and privately-owned companies.

Amb. Welch expresses UK's desire to support Ethiopia's economic growth

ADDIS ABABA /ENA/- The newly appointed UK Ambassador to Ethiopia, Darren Welch expressed that his country is desirous of supporting Ethiopia's aspiration of economic growth and poverty reduction efforts.

Ambassador Welch handed over his letter of credentials to President Sahle-work Zewde yesterday.

He discussed with President Sahle-work about ways of strengthening bilateral partnership based on mutual respect and trust.

UK's government will continue helping Ethiopia in its effort to fight poverty, the ambassador said.

"Building our long history of diplomatic relations and helping, take together really important agenda, particularly around peace, economic development and growth, hoping the UK can accompany Ethiopia on its journey back to strong level of growth and poverty reduction and being that strong regional anchor for regional stability," Ambassador Welch emphasized.

Rights of women and girls should be respected, he said, adding ensuring them access to education will contribute to the economy, and went on as saying: "I look forward to make a real difference."

"The progress is positive so far and needs to obviously be continued. These things can be difficult to implement but with goodwill and determination and a positive attitude on both sides, I see no reason why shouldn't continue in a positive trajectory. We very much hope that will be the case. Ethiopia needs peace across the whole country and



Amb. Darren Welch

then this land of enormous opportunity and potential and we will begin to see benefits of that," Ambassador Welch said.

He further said that they all have the role of supporting Ethiopians own efforts and this has to be Ethiopian-led processes, he said, and stressed "we will be there as a partner. We are plugging to all of the key international financial institutions if the conditions allow and alright we will be supportive of Ethiopia's efforts."

The UK has been a long standing development partner to Ethiopia for many years, the ambassador stated, and added "I can't see why it shouldn't continue to be the same and in fact grow in the future."

News

Ministry praises Addis based diplomats, ambassadors for visiting Lalibela

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA—Ministry of Tourism announced that various foreign ambassadors and diplomats' visit of the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela last week is highly appreciated and would be of instrumental in increasing tourists flow to the nation.

Ambassadors and diplomats visited Lalibela for Christmas celebration and they became an eyewitness and expressed commitment to introduce it to other fellow citizens of them to visit Ethiopia as nation's peace is restored.

Tourism State Minister Selamawit Dawit told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that nearly 2 million local and foreign tourists attended the Christmas holiday at Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela last week in a peaceful manner than ever. This helps tourists stay more days in the historical

places.

"The festivals have many benefits as they serve as an instrument to revive the tourism sector and economy every year, as there is better service for tourists, we expect more local and foreign tourists at Epiphany celebration in Gondar and Addis Ababa. The office has been doing various promotions in holidays of Christmas and Epiphany across the country with a view to attracting tourists. Hotels are prepared to serve the tourists and all things are fine," she added.

As to her, getting placed toured should not depend on making money but it can also create social interaction, understanding, support each other creating favorable environment and workable politics.

Apart from attracting a number of tourists to the country, the peace agreement would help the nation introduce itself very well to the international community and Diaspora



Selamawit Dawit

community; this may also enable the country to peacefully celebrate Epiphany, she said.

Moreover, she noted that hotel services

such as meals, accommodations and transportation are prepared well to provide visitors with services at a reasonable fee.

Ethiopia, France,...

from French Development Agency.

The state minister further stated that the agreements also aimed at supporting the economy in the three conflict-impacted states and to rehabilitate the agricultural sector. The second grant agreement amounts 10 million euro out of which the six million is new support while the remaining 4 million euro is aimed at extending the loan meant to the restoration of electricity in those conflict-affected areas.

Expressing gratitude for the French government and EU for their continued support, Semrita indicated that the peace agreement paves the way for high-level officials' visits to Ethiopia and demonstrate solidarity and support.

France's Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Catherine Collona and Semrita signed the grant agreement.

Israel keen...

African nations together in order to establish the African Union and so Ethiopia is seen a beacon of freedom and independence.

Commenting on the two sisterly countries' economic cooperation, he noted that both sides have been holding continuous discussions on how to enhance partnerships in various fields.

"Israeli companies and NGOs are working in the country. At this moment, Israel is mainly working on agriculture, health, technology and innovation with the people and government of Ethiopia."

Israel believes that Ethiopia's young human power would bring economic change in the near future as it is blessed with natural resources particularly water, but it needs the technology to get the best out of it, Amb. Alelign said adding that his country is eager to strengthen technology transfer in this end.

Ethiopia to bolster holistic...

In his weekly press briefing yesterday, MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador Meles Alem stated that plan also set to engage the diaspora, youth, scholars as well as think-tanks in different diplomatic frontiers.

Due to government's meticulous diplomatic activities following the beginning of 2023 New Year, several countries from Africa, Asia and Europe expressed optimism that the Pretoria Agreement transforms the country to lasting peace and stability.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson indicated Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen held a fruitful deliberation with the newly-appointed Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang, calling the latter's visit as the manifestation of the two countries ever-thriving relations.

"As part of the official visit, political consultation was conducted while agreement was signed

for partial loan termination that is worth of 30million Yuan. The signed agreement also cements the Ethio-China historic relationship."

The Chinese FM reportedly emphasized the need to consolidate the two countries time-tested relations whereby China demonstrated its unwavering commitment to support Ethiopia in times of need. Gang also expressed his country's keenness to further strengthen the bilateral, regional as well as international cooperation with Ethiopia.

The Deputy Premier called on Chinese investors to make meaningful engagement in Ethiopia's market whilst he pledged his government's full support in their operation here.

Speaking about the official visit of Germany's Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs Annalena Baerbock and France's Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Catherine Collona, Meles highlighted the visit came with the

view to comprehend and commend on the actual implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement. Ethiopia's relation with both countries builds on trust and a win-win approach where they are able to advance their trade and investment relations.

Demeke reportedly applauded the unreserved developmental support the two countries have extended during the two years conflict in north Ethiopia.

Emphasizing the full commitment of the government to implement the peace deal, he urged the continuation of the support for the rehabilitation and rebuilding activities.

The foreign ministers held similar in-depth and fruitful discussions with President Sahlework Zewde as well as Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and pledged support for the post-conflict recovery, the spokesperson remarked.

Debre Berhan aims to capitalize...

event to attract more businesses.

Speaking to local media, Debre Berhan Investment and Trade Bureau Head Birhan Gebrehiwot said the ten-day expo is part of the government's "Ethiopia Produces" initiative that was introduced to reenergize the manufacturing industry nationwide. The expo aims to promote the area's untapped trade and investment opportunities among domestic and international investors.

The head further indicated that the participating companies were briefed about the conducive business climate set by the government including attractive incentive packages and availability of trained and disciplined labor force. "About 2,000 hectares of land has been availed to investors who wish to do business here and we encourage them to establish heavy industries in particular cement factories that will have pivotal importance in the national economy."



"To assist incoming investors and startups, we will not only provide plot of lands, but also project plans," Birhan noted, adding that discussion was held with various companies to learn what challenges they had encountered thereby easing the business entry.

"Opportunities and challenges have been identified and we aim to boost opportunities

and to address the prevailing challenges."

It was learned that some 24 manufacturing industries with an aggregate capacity of generating more than 25,000 jobs are near to completion in Debre Berhan. Also, the city is a home to more than 500 manufacturing industries and becoming among the largest foreign direct investment (FDI) destinations in Ethiopia.

Opinion

Ethiopia, China bolstering bilateral cooperation

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

As of last Tuesday, China's Foreign Minister, Qin Gang, has been undertaking an official visit to Ethiopia with a vision of strengthening the bilateral ties and cooperation between the two friendly countries. This is the first visit for him since taking office fully demonstrates the profound friendship between the two countries and the importance of bilateral relations.

Accordingly, the FM of China meets top government officials of Ethiopia including the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). The two parties have deliberated on a range of political, economic and social issues and discussed the way to further deepen cooperation in the aforesaid fields apart from strengthening the existing bilateral and multilateral partnership.

Indeed, the relationship established between the two countries is a historic and longstanding one that enables them to cross the road of intricacy based on mutual respect and shared interest. If we take the COVID 19 pandemic, the two countries have shown their cooperation so as to secure the world from the pandemic transporting medical equipment to the rest of the world. The coalition created between the two countries had minimized the death of the people affected by the pandemic. On her part, Ethiopia has shifted its passengers' airplanes to cargo and transported the medical equipment including vaccines to the rest of the world and doing so, it contributed its share. As a result, lives of many people throughout the world could be rescued.

The economic cooperation between the two countries is also increasing day by day. Here it is imperative to mention that China has canceled all interest-free loans it had advanced to Ethiopia as at the end of year 2018 following the visit Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed paid to the country. During the time, Ethiopia has borrowed over 12 billion USD from China – including funding for the Addis Ababa – Djibouti electric railway line linking the country with Djibouti, its main import / export route.

Ethiopia is a central hub for China's Belt and Road Initiative, an evolving program to expand Chinese influence by financing and building infrastructure throughout the developing world. Political Analysis indicated that last year, there were about 400 Chinese construction and manufacturing projects in Ethiopia, valued at over 4 billion USD. Much of Ethiopia's air, road and rail infrastructure is financed and built by the Chinese.

Since November of 2020, Ethiopia has engaged and suffered from a deadly internal conflict that has claimed the lives of many, destroyed enormous amount of property and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. During those difficult days, China has remained mainly on the sidelines of peace building efforts. Throughout the time of war, China called



on the international community to fully respect the sovereignty and ownership of Ethiopia on the Tigray issue.

China has shown its unwavering stance speaking loudly to the international platforms that Tigray issue is the internal affairs of Ethiopia. China reflects its belief that the Ethiopian people have the wisdom and capability to properly solve this issue. When offering help, the international community must fully respect the sovereignty and ownership of Ethiopia, and jointly help Ethiopia tide over the difficulty.

To help address humanitarian challenges among IDPs, the Government of China donated 2,160 tons of food to the Government of Ethiopia, demonstrating the deep friendship between the two countries and their peoples.

Now, the government and TPLF forces have signed an agreement on the cessations of hostilities in Pretoria, South Africa that borne fruit somehow for the china's effort in favor of peace.

As part of the visit, leaders of the two countries have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for political consultation. The implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding will enable Ethiopia and China to strengthen their bilateral ties and expand cooperation.

The recent visit of Foreign Minister Qin Gang has given a great opportunity to Ethiopia so as to express gratitude to China for its principled stance in support of Ethiopia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The implementation of the peace agreement for lasting peace through a permanent cessation of hostilities signed on November 2, 2022 and the measures the government of Ethiopia has been taking thus far.

Furthermore, the two sides have also reviewed encouraging peace and security development initiatives in the Horn of Africa and Africa at large. The two parties have agreed to cooperate in the face of unprecedented global challenges such as climate change. Ethiopia is always ready to retain and sustain close collaboration with China.

The long standing cooperation that is tested at times of difficulties should further be strengthened based on mutual respect and equality. The two sides should support each other in pursuing a development path that suits their respective national conditions and on issues involving their core interest and major concern.

Thanks to the solid political foundation of the economic and trade and investment relations between the two countries, they have grown rapidly over the recent years and produced fruitful results. Ethiopia is actively participating in the Belt and Road Initiative and China has remained the biggest source of foreign direct investment for Ethiopia and its largest trading partner.

Ethiopia looks forward to strengthening exchanges of experience in governance with China so as to unite and lead all Ethiopian people to adhere to independence and accelerate the development and revitalization of the country.

Ethiopia's cooperation with China in such areas as infrastructure, green economy, agriculture and industrial park construction has been exemplary and produced remarkable results, helping Ethiopia to rank among the fastest-growing economies in Africa. Thus, Ethiopia always welcomes more Chinese enterprises to invest and do business.

China will also press ahead with its modernization with Chinese characteristics on all fronts, unswervingly follow the path

of peaceful development, firmly adhere to the fundamental state policy of opening-up featuring mutual benefit and win-win outcomes, thereby adding certainty, stability and positive energy to a world in the midst of changes and turbulence, and bringing new opportunities for the development of all countries.

Since China and Ethiopia established diplomatic ties more than half a century ago, the two countries have always helped each other and moved forward side by side no matter how the international situation changed, serving as a paragon of solidarity and cooperation among developing countries.

Anyone can witness that China supports Ethiopia in pursuing a development path suited to its own national conditions. Leaders of the two countries have further maintained close exchanges in recent years, charting the course for the development of bilateral relations under the new circumstances. As major developing countries sharing visions and joining hands in the pursuit of modernization, China and Ethiopia need to be partners that firmly support each other, pursue common development and uphold international fairness and justice.

Ethiopia will provide a sound business environment and take effective measures to protect the security and safety as well as the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese personnel and institutions. It is high time for the two countries to further bolster their relationship so as to intensify their cooperation in all sectors.

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

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Editorial

Diplomatic ties improving historic relations

Ethiopia is one of the EU's important partners on the African continent, active in regional peace and security as well as on thematic international debates such as climate change. Recently, the EU and Ethiopia decided to enhance the level of the partnership. Implicating the long lasted bilateral relations, both parties have worked rigorously to create a strong bond for development and cooperation.

In addition to its remarkable ties with the EU, Ethiopia has good relations with its member countries. Among these are France and Germany. Up on arrival to Addis to visit Ethiopia, France's Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Catherine Collonna and Germany's Minister of Foreign Affairs Annalena Barebock reiterated their respective countries' commitment to support Ethiopia's post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction activities.

Ethiopia upholds equal treatment in any bilateral relations. Though Ethiopia has been ready to accept genuine support from its friendly countries especially those are in the western world in due course of poverty reduction and attaining the development aspired, it has remained intact on the issue of sovereignty. Be it is, the country is working with the European countries in every aspect prioritizing mutual benefits. The European countries as well have shown keen interest to work with Ethiopia in the political, economic and social arenas.

For instance, the European Union supports the efforts of Ethiopia to eradicate poverty, foster inclusive and sustainable economic, social and environmental development while promoting human rights, democracy, and other elements of good governance. Development aid further contributes to increased cooperation and dialogue in the main areas of mutual interest, as identified in the EU-Ethiopia strategic engagement. Furthermore, European solidarity is being effectively and visibly ensured through rapid help and relief assistance to Ethiopian populations affected by crises.

Advantageously, relations between France and Ethiopia have grown closer over the past five years. In 2018, bilateral trade between the two countries was €655 million. Ethiopia is now France's fifth-largest export market and its second-largest trade surplus in sub-Saharan African.

Ethiopian Airlines is a customer of Airbus, from which it purchased A350 aircraft, and in July 2019, a new Marseille-Addis Ababa route was opened. In line with this, France is among the main European investors, after the United Kingdom, Italy and the Netherlands. At the beginning of 2019, 57 French companies were present in Ethiopia, employing almost 4,900 people.

The visit of Ethiopia's Prime Minister to France in October 2018 and the French President to Ethiopia in 2019 considerably strengthened the bilateral relationship. By the same token the visit paid by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France will boost bilateral relations of the two countries.

Equally, relations between Germany and Ethiopia, which have been in place since 1905, have traditionally been good and are fostered by reciprocal high-level visits.

Ethiopia is an important bilateral partner for German development cooperation, with a focus on vocational training, nutrition and agricultural as well as the protection of natural resources. A central objective is to increase the level of investment and to create jobs.

Moreover, Germany is one of the most important buyers of Ethiopian goods, primarily coffee and textiles. The main German exports to Ethiopia are finished products such as machinery, engines, motor vehicles, chemicals and machines.

Thus, the recent visit paid by the two Foreign Ministers to Ethiopia, with no doubt, will help boost relations it has with their respective countries. The efforts underway so far to boost the relations should be toughened with the central theme of mutual benefit.

Opinion

'What did I reap from Sputnik?'

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Without taking the miscellaneous professional means to come up with a good journalistic child into account, many are heard of saying that it is an open avenue for everyone to join and enjoy reporting. How on earth could it happen as journalism does have its own well-defined pattern, system and professional trajectory to be entertained?

Framing an angle in due course of producing a news item for instance does have undoubtedly its own technique and style as it could hardly be shaped haphazardly as some inexperienced reporters or editors do. Though choosing an angle to bring about a piece of news is not new for me as an editor, the fundamental points raised in the webinar meeting organized by Sputnik International Media House based in Russia, a foreign influential media Agency, has added value to what I have had along that line.

The utterance of Oleg Dimitriev, the presenter from Moscow, about angle choosing, reminded me something which I have never forgotten in the history of my life; the appreciation with which I was provided from my reputed editor, Abraham Tedla, ten years ago as I chose a unique angle, untouched by other media outlets,

while I was producing a certain news item.

Particularly, 'Telling the Untold' was a golden expression that caught my attention while I was attending the webinar meeting. How to frame a news angle, analyze the terms, dig out facts and figures and others do have a direct bearing to angle choosing and producing the best news. These and other concepts incorporated in the webinar discussion were really appealing and telling. I am not jotting down this idea out of the blue since I approached most of the participants to solicit important contemplations.

In the era of 'fake news,' 'partisan style' and 'ambiguous fashion to forcefully pull people to the direction the media house would love' following an attempt to convince audiences or confuse them if the former is out of reach, sharing experiences with experienced media outlets and learn from one another is an incomparable approach to well exercises journalism and serve respective citizenry.

Yes, audience trust is crucial for the success of media outlets and the industry itself. Hence, properly framing angle, comprehending the topic of story, eyeing at the human interest/value of the news item, checking any information carefully before releasing it especially if it revolves around a controversial issue are the best

approaches almost all media outlets have been entertaining as inaccuracies, ill-framed news concepts, uninviting presentations and erroneously cited facts and figures would appealingly undermine the reputation, acceptance, reliability and preference of the media house or newsroom.

Without exaggerating, I have personally drawn indispensable lessons from SPUTNIK webinar meeting though I missed the chance to forward my concerns.

Since I have solely heard of the news Agency before that time out side of the door, the occasion created ample opportunity for us to have fundamental concept about news production centering angle choosing and all invaluable elements that have been incorporated in it.

True, the best chosen angle having the untold side is highly preferable than telling the obvious, which would be quite better to be substituted by telling the untold since news is an approach that helps come up with 'new things' as far as my definition is concerned since 'if something which is expounded several times by several media outlets could by no means be a news.'

Needless to state, the webinar provided us all with very good techniques to simplify questions and avoid long words and

abstract nouns, especially for those of us who have failed to come out of the box of being verbosity, framing questions using long sentences and vague expressions.

Simplicity matters as either respondents or the interviewers themselves can easily comprehend the concept they have been asked and handle questions to forward to have relevant responses respectively.

In a nut shell, the experience sharing with the SPUTNIK media Agency was a remarkable one and has to be recurrently conducted concerning a range of issues being dealt with in the media houses. Such a mesmerizing, telling and productive relation has to be well consolidated so long as there are numerous issues not yet touched upon regarding all what have been run in the media industry and journalism profession. I think, the way SPUTNIK has commenced to establish a productive rapport with the media professionals of the Ethiopian Press Agency should be well reinvigorated and sustained since I personally in particular and EPA, The Ethiopian Herald, have drawn important lessons from the former.

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

Art & Culture

Springy working hours in effecting efficiency, rendering work-life balance beneficial

BY NAOL GIRMA

Innovative working time arrangements, such as those introduced during the COVID-19 crisis, can bring benefits for economies, businesses and workers, including greater productivity and improved work-life balance.

According to the press release sent to The Ethiopian Herald by ILO, the Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World look at the two main aspects of working time; working hours and working time arrangements (also called work schedules) and the effects of both on business performance and workers' work-life balance. It includes a range of new statistics covering hours of work, both before and during the COVID-19 crisis.

Even in the absence of a pandemic, flexible work arrangements can improve recruitment and retention efforts, augment organizational diversity efforts, encourage ethical behavior, and help the organization's efforts to be socially responsible. Employers can experience cost savings, improved attendance and productivity, and an increase in employee engagement.

The study, which is the first to focus on work-life balance, found that a substantial portion of the global workforce are working either long or short hours when compared to a standard eight-hour day/40 hour working week. More than one-third of all workers are regularly working more than 48 hours per week, while a fifth of the global workforce is working short (part-time) hours of less than 35 per week. Informal economy workers are more likely to have long or short hours. The report analyses different working-time arrangements and their effects on work-life balance, including shift work, on-call work, compressed hours and hours-averaging schemes. It cautions that the benefits of some of these flexible arrangements, such as better family life, may be accompanied by costs including greater gender imbalances



and health risks.

“There is a substantial amount of evidence that work-life balance policies provide significant benefits to enterprises, supporting the argument that such policies are a ‘win-win’ for both employers and employees,” the report states.

It also looks at the crisis response measures governments and businesses used during the COVID-19 pandemic to help keep organizations functioning and workers employed. It found that the increased proportion of workers on reduced hours helped to prevent job losses. Long-term changes are also highlighted: “The large-scale implementation of telework nearly everywhere in the world that it was feasible to do so, change... the nature of employment, most likely for the foreseeable future,” the report says. The COVID-19 crisis measures also yielded powerful new evidence that giving workers more flexibility in how, where and when they work can be positive both for them and for business, for example

by improving productivity. Conversely, restricting flexibility brings substantial costs, including increased staff turnover. “The so-called ‘Great Resignation’ phenomenon has placed work-life balance at the forefront of social and labour market issues in the post-pandemic world,” said Jon Messenger, the lead author of the report. “This report shows that if we apply some of the lessons of the COVID-19 crisis and look very carefully at the way working hours are structured, as well as their overall length, we can create a win-win, improving both business performance and work-life balance.” The study includes a number of conclusions and recommendations, including:

- Working-time laws and regulations on maximum daily hours of work and statutory rest periods are achievements that contribute to the long-term health and well-being of a society and must not be put at risk.
- Longer hours of work are generally associated with lower unit labour

productivity, while shorter hours of work are linked with higher productivity.

- Countries should make use of the experiences they developed with working-time reduction and flexibility during the COVID-19 crisis. Inclusive short-time work schemes with the highest possible allowances not only maintain employment but also sustain purchasing power and create the possibility of cushioning the effects of economic crises.
- Public policy responses are needed to promote reductions in hours of work in many countries, to promote both a healthy work-life balance and improved productivity.
- Teleworking helps maintain employment and creates new scope for employee autonomy. However, these and other types of flexible working arrangements need regulating, to contain their potential negative effects, through policies such as what is often called a “right to disconnect” from work.



Is it helpful to think positively all the time?

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

It is impossible for anyone to be positive all the time because different thoughts come to our mind but we can be peaceful in the midst of all that by seeing it as a natural process that occurs all the time... Do you question why it becomes night and day? Or why the seasons change? That is not right as is the question why am I having these kinds of thought. I have tried the methods of forcing myself to think positive thoughts all the time but what it does is perpetuate more negative thoughts. For example when you say I am positive person then you will be conditioned to avoid the negative moments which will not make them nonexistent but more painful. What works best is just being an observant of all the thoughts that come and go without judgment. Negative thoughts don't mean I am bad and positive ones don't mean I am good ... because I am not the one who chooses to think or let go of the thoughts in my mind... I may choose what actions I take but not what thoughts I think. Dis-identifying yourself from the thoughts that come by being the observer you can save yourself from a lot of suffering. As we are humans we are bound to experience both positive and negative thoughts and feelings.

Law & Politics

Pretoria peace deal on firm foundation

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

As part of the Pretoria peace agreement, Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) has embarked on handing over heavy weapons to the federal government. And, with TPLF set to hand over its all weaponries, the fact in black and white shows the firm stance of both parties to make peace and materialize the peace implementation with flying colors, for the most part, devoid of the involvement of a third party.

Given the current circumstances, the constructive steps being taken by the federal government and TPLF, the wider international community, and the population as a whole have been speaking highly of them on the grounds that it signals the positive developments of peace implementation. There appear several indications that the peace deal has been developing in the right direction and yielding results.

Some wet blankets that did not imagine the cessation of hostilities agreement would set in motion bearing fruits ended up commending the positive developments. At this particular moment, the successful journey of the peace accord has metamorphosed into stealing their attention in a little while. On the basis thereof, they have begun witnessing the positive signals of the peace deal.

Similarly, the prevailing situation of the nation in connection with the peace deal has been leapfrogging bringing about peace and tranquility in the northern part of the country more than ever before. As the federal government and TPLF have been acting in accordance with the Pretoria Peace deal, the country is returning back to normal conditions.

As the federal government is hell-bent on effectuating the peace agreement the peace deal is coming into being almost immediately. Since the signing of the accord, the restoration of social infrastructure and delivery of humanitarian assistance have been going well in war-affected areas.

And, this week, the federal government has received a wide spectrum of heavy weapons positioned around Agula such as rockets, armored tanks, and other things of similar kinds. As both parties have been putting the whole thing as stipulated in the peace agreement into action, everybody has been making progress in the right direction.

In good truth, the handing over of heavy weapons demonstrates the commitment of the federal government and TPLF to not only live up to the terms of the pact but to also ensure lasting cessation of hostilities.

Following the peace agreement signed in South Africa and Kenya, TPLF has handed over the first round of heavy weapons to the federal government of Ethiopia, according to information obtained from Ethiopian News Agency.

Military observers from different countries attended the handing over that took place in Agula camp, 36 kilometers from the regional capital, Mekelle.

Official of the Ethiopian National Defense



Force, Lieutenant colonel Aleme Tadele confirmed of receiving different heavy weapons located around Agula, in accordance to the agreement signed between the federal government and TPLF.

The National Defense Force has commenced receiving heavy weapons from TPLF including armored tanks, various artilleries, rockets, mortars among others, Lieutenant colonel Aleme said.

“As per the peace deal, we have reached to disarmament; we have counted and received the heavy weapons in Agula where the weapons were accumulated.”

African Union observer who witnessed the handing over, Brigadier General Adwa Peter said the handing over of the weapons being underway is a crucial move to help sustain the peace agreement.

The handing over of weapons being carried out as per the peace agreement provides insurance for sustainable peace by maintaining constitutionalism, the Brigadier General added.

TPLF’s representative Mulugeta Gebrekristos announced that the handing over of the weapons has been officially commenced in accordance with the agreement.

Similarly, the handing over of the weapons will continue in areas where weapons are gathered, he added.

“As per the peace agreement signed in Pretoria and Nairobi, the handing over of weapons has officially begun in Agula. The heavy weapons accumulated in Agula have been handed over in the presence of pertinent actors.

“The handing over was peaceful, demonstrating sense of collaboration and cooperation. There are also other centers where weapons are accumulated. We will conduct the handing over with similar manner.” “We are working with confidence that from now on there should be no chance to open doors for conflict other than peaceful mechanisms. Therefore, peace is vital for our people. We will work with all our capacity to realize this.”

Besides, the handing over of the heavy weaponries, there have also been positive gesture the same week that can strengthen trust between the signatories of the peace deal. Strengthening people-to-people ties have been started on the grounds that

Ethiopian Airlines resumed flight to Mekelle and other parts of the Tigray state. In what could be said a symbolic gesture, recently a delegation led by Assistant Commissioner Derartu Tulu, President of the Ethiopian Athletics Federation, headed to Mekelle intending to connect Ethiopian athletes who hail from the Tigray State with their families.

Speaking to the *Ethiopian Press Agency*, the legendary athlete Derartu Tulu said apart from the family reunion, a discussion is going to take place on ways to support the reoperation of the Tigray Athletics Federation. Accordingly, the Ethiopian Athletics Federation will provide legal, financial, and professional support to its Tigray branch.

“Now, we are going to have discussions with officials and committee members of the Tigray Athletics Federation on ways to restore the athletics sport and to support the athletes. “The peace deal allows athletes and the Federation’s Executive Committee members to make themselves ready for further victories and all sides should play a constructive role for lasting peace, Derartu pleaded.

She continued: “Our athletes, whose family members are in Tigray, were disconnected from their parents and siblings, and during that hard time, we were miserably depressed. Due to the peace accord, now the athletes will be reunited with their loved ones and an event will be held to celebrate the reunion.”

In the same way, on the subject of hospitals and health centers, a considerable amount of activities has been carried out in some parts of the northern part of the country.

Speaking to local media, Health Minister Lia Tadesse (Ph.D.) noted that hospitals and health centers are becoming fully operational in some areas. Other than that quite a lot of health facilities are under maintenance and will go fully functional in the near future. In Alamata and Shire corridors, 12 hospitals, and 28 health centers 95 percent of workers are back to their work and over 12 million Birr has been distributed to facilitate all activities.

In a similar vein, medicines worth more than Birr 19 million have been delivered from Gondar pharmaceuticals supplies service branch to Shire to be dispatched to nearby towns. Shire pharmaceuticals supplies branch has received 29 solar refrigerators and restarted providing services like

immunization. The oxygen plant in Axum hospital has been maintained and is ready to provide service while 200 units of blood were sent from the Central blood bank to the Axum blood bank branch. Three ambulances donated by UNFPA were also given to three hospitals in the state, she said.

On the other hand, the agreement is also paving the way for the reconstruction of roads.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Bridge and Structures Management Director with the Administration, Getnet Zeleke said that two highway bridges have been restored since the truce. A total of six highway bridges, which were damaged during the conflict have been reconstructed.

The government has allotted 175 million Birr for the reconstruction conflict-affected highway bridges following the peace deal.

“The 54.86 meter-long Alwuha Bridge, located at Woldia –Kobo highway, was damaged more than twice at the time of war Following the truce, we have fixed the bridge and opened it to traffic” the director added.

By the same token, the restoration of the 109.72 meter-long Chereti Bridge, which located in Woldia-Chifra road, and the 48.86 meter Gobu Bridge, which connects Kobo town with rural areas have been accomplished.

While the reconstruction of two bridges on Tekeze River and Tsilarie Bridge located between Korem and Sekota towns have been accomplished, the restoration of a bridge on Sekota-Maychew highway is in pipeline.

Due to the restoration activities, the 27.43 meter- long Tekeze River Bridges which connect Humera with Shire and the 48.86 meter- long Amdework and Ebinat Bridge are now open to traffic.

“The administration is always alert to reconstruct war-damaged bridges and our district offices are working on reports coming from Central Tigray, North Gondar, North Wollo and Afar State,” Getnet remarked.

After the Pretoria Agreement, the government of Ethiopia has pledged to intensify infrastructure reconstruction in war-hit states and has pleaded Ethiopians and international donors for financial and technical support.

The peace deal is a step forward for the people to live together

Ambassador Aleli Admassu

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Today's Herald Guest is the Ambassador of the State of Israel to Ethiopia, Burundi, Chad, and the African Union, Aleli Admasu (Aleli Admasu). Aleli was born and raised in Dar-Azezo, the out skirt of Gondar town in Ethiopia. He attended primary education at Darazezo, and continued his secondary education at Fasiledes Secondary School in Gondar Town.

During his childhood, Aleli did various jobs in order to help his family. In 1983, Aleli moved to Israel. Then, he studied his first and second degree in one of the Israel Universities. He has also served his country Israel as a soldier. He served in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) as Major (Reserve), Education and Youth Corps, training post, Officers' School lecturer, IDF Personnel Command Advisor and participated in "Operation Solomon".

He has also changed his route to politics and started involving in various political activities. In this course, he rallied for a seat in Israel Parliament (Knesset) and won. Besides, he worked as an advisor for Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for three consecutive years. At the moment, he is working as Israel Ambassador to three African nations and the African Union.

During his interview with The Ethiopian Herald, the Ambassador highlighted the deep-rooted economic, political and people-to-people partnership between Israel and Ethiopia. Have a nice read!

How do you see the current bilateral relations between Israel and Ethiopia?

Like any other great and deep-rooted relations in the world, the relation between Israel and Ethiopia has continued for more than three thousand years. The nations' history is inscribed in history and in various books. From the time when our father Moses was in Egypt to bring back the children of Israel to their promised land (Canaan), his companion was an Ethiopian lady.

In addition, even in the time of King Solomon, the two peoples had various interactions in trade and knowledge transformation. History teaches us that the king had even a son with the Ethiopian Queen of Sheba.

When the Romans destroyed the second temple of Israel, Jews scattered to various parts of the world. Asia, Africa and Europe were their destinations. Following the longest river, Blue Nile (Abay), the people of Israel arrived to Ethiopia. We, Ethiopian Jews, have been here due to this reason.

During our stay here in Ethiopia in the past two millennia, we, Ethiopian Jews, have



Photo: Hadush Abreha

preserved our culture and religion and lived together with other religions like Christianity and Islam. In 1948, Jews have decided to come together and build their own nation so that the scattered people around the world had returned to build Israel.

Regarding the two nations' bilateral partnership, due to the history of long connection with the Ethiopian Jews, Ethiopia has different properties in Israel. Ethiopia is one of the nations that accepted Christianity early, so the country has its own churches like Golgotha in Israel. The people and the government of the two nations are intermingled in culture, history, and economy for the past many years. This time, we are working to strengthen our partnership further.

What are the major areas of cooperation between the two countries?

Though Israel is only 75 years old, the nation is filled with skilled and knowledgeable human resource. To this end, the nation is eager to share its knowledge and skilled to friendly nations. Therefore, Israel is mainly working with Ethiopia in agriculture, health, technology and innovation sectors, among others.

The agriculture sector is one of the main

sectors that the two nations are working on. One of the achievements in this part is the avocado production. Four million avocado seedlings have been distributed to Ethiopian farmers. Avocado is very important agricultural product in Europe, Asia, and even in the USA. Due to its climate and its natural resources, Ethiopia is an ideal place for avocado production.

It is better for the government to give due attention to avocado production so that it will bring more foreign currency income for the nation. It can contribute even more than coffee.

Regarding the health sector, Israelis are working in collaboration with Tikur Anbessa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, Gondar, and Jigjiga hospitals. Israel delegations of doctors have arrived in different occasions to work together and help their counterparts in Ethiopia. They have been sharing their skills and knowledge.

A textbook example could be the movement 'Save A child's Heart' where two of Ethiopian Doctors were trained in Israel to cure Ethiopian children with heart diseases. Besides, two more nurses were trained, too. Due to excessive expenses to get the service in Israel, we even plan to establish a center here in Ethiopia and expand our

skill transformation. Not only Ethiopia, but other African countries and nations around the world come to Israel to acquire the knowledge.

The other working section is the technology and innovation sector. We have recently had a conference with government stakeholders on promoting technology and innovation. We are operating to bring in high-tech innovations in Ethiopia like solar energy.

In this regard, the Ethiopian Airlines coupled with Israel Aerospace Industry are working on changing Ethiopian passenger planes to cargo airplanes. One is already finished and operational, and the other is in the pipeline. In the near future, more cargos will come. It will also help the nation to freight its local products easily.

In the future, we plan to teach and train Ethiopian students, engineers, and technicians by opening a center in Ethiopia and give services to the rest of Africa. Talks were held with government stakeholders such as Ministry of Skill and Labor and Ministry of Innovation.

Regarding cultural and religious ties between the nations, how does the government of Israel protect Ethiopian cultural heritages found in Israel?

Needless to say, Israel is a democratic state where all religions and beliefs are equally treated. A believer of any religion has the right to come to Israel and visit the holy places. The Israel government is also responsible to preserve those heritages.

In relation to Ethiopian heritages in Israel, it is obvious that there is a friction between the Egyptian Coptic Churches and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church regarding the ownership of Deir El Sultan. Ethiopia and Egypt are the only African countries with a property in Israel along with some other countries around the world.

The Government of Ethiopia is responsible to preserve and protect its heritages in Israel. It is true that Deir El Sultan is the property of Ethiopia. Accordingly, both governments should also sit around the table and resolve the issue.

Israel's position, in this regard, is that any country that possesses a heritage should protect and keep the status quo of the place.

Recently, the federal government and the TPLF signed a peace agreement at Pretoria, South Africa. Likewise, Israel had signed agreements dubbed 'Abraham Accords'. To this end, how do you suggest the implementation of such accords in full terms? What is Israel's experience in this regard that Ethiopia can draw a lesson?

Israel is a peace-loving country. We always need to live peacefully. Though some

Herald Guest

countries still do not want Israel to exist as a nation, but we still have unwavering interest to live together with every country in the world in peace. This time, Israel has become the source of electric power and water for neighboring states. This shows how Israel wants to live in peace.

In Ethiopian context, the recent war in Ethiopia was a conflict between brothers. It is very sad. The peace deal is very important and a step forward for the people of Ethiopia to live together and bring back the peace.

The peace accord will also pave a way for many investors to come to Ethiopia and invest. Many international companies will be settled here, too.

Israel believes that the world is enough for all of us. We need to share what we have and support one another to live together. Israel has been involved in many wars in different times including the six days war, Sinai war, and Lebanon war. All those wars that we got involved in caused loss of lives from each side. We lost many things because of those wars.

Therefore, Israel supports the Ethiopian peace deal in all means because we experienced the worst situation due to wars. Also, Ethiopia is known for its peace-loving stand. The nation is the one that pulled African nations together in order to establish the African Union. The nation is also seen as the beacon of freedom and independence. Ethiopia has been working, in various occasions, as a mediator to resolve disputes in other countries. The people of Ethiopia deserve peace, and the government and the people should focus on nation's development.

Are there any investments or projects Israel lost due to the war? If so, how do you plan to restore them?

It is true that Israel companies and NGOs have been working in Ethiopia. Regarding investment, there was a company called 'Netafi' that planned to plant a factory worth 120 million birr. The project was found in Wolkaite and Tegede Town. It was planned to use the Tekeze River for irrigation and produce sugarcane.

The project was a joint venture with a Chinese company for the construction of the factory. 70 percent of the project was completed. However, due to the war, it was destroyed. The owners of the company have not returned, so we will see how to deal with this with the government.

Regarding the agricultural sector, Israel is highly advanced in agricultural technologies. How can your country contribute to Ethiopia's agricultural development? How Ethiopia can learn? Is there any ongoing project with Ministry of Agriculture?

Regarding agriculture, Israel has been doing much on summer productions. We do not wait for rain; rather we purified the Mediterranean water and use it for drinking and agriculture. To this end, we have invited Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture to take part in a conference held in Israel. We have shared experience on the event.

This time, Israel companies have been working with the Ministry of Agriculture



on increasing agricultural production in Ethiopia. These Israel companies and volunteers are working mainly on avocado production and desert area development for agriculture. Accordingly, these companies and volunteers have trained more than 75 thousand Ethiopian farmers from different parts of the country.

We all know that avocado has plenty of advantages. There is also a high demand in Europe and other parts of the world. At this very moment, in collaboration with the government, we are helping Ethiopian farmers to be more effective on avocado production. We are dealing with how to implement packaging and how to select the best quality products. The avocado project was financed by the US-AID and the Israelis have come up with their skills.

In terms of investment, what does the embassy do to attract Israel investors to work in Ethiopia?

Three months ago, we have had Ethio-Israel Economic Conference. The event was the first of its kind. Ethiopian ministers, economic experts, representatives from Addis Ababa and national Chamber of Commerce have met with Israel counterparts and manufacturing companies. The conference created a room for both parties to discuss on investment opportunities. Accordingly, representatives from the two nations' chamber of commerce signed an agreement for working together in the future.

Notwithstanding this situation, the companies that are interested in investing in Ethiopia have been encountering numerous bureaucratic obstacles. It is important to remember that investors who invested in Ethiopia have got their finance from loan. When they produce and get profit, they need to return the money but due to the current shortage of foreign currency in the country, they are unable to draw their money back to their country. This has been a bottleneck for the investment. These companies are

creating job opportunities for citizens.

We are deeply concerned about the tax system and custom services of the country coupled with bureaucratic hurdles in various sections. At some point, the custom authority has forced us to pay tax for item imported for humanitarian assistance from Israel people to Ethiopians.

I recommend that the government of Ethiopia should give due attention to those challenges as the nation could lose investment opportunities. Hence, responsible stakeholders must solve such system problems. The government should also keep its promises.

How do you evaluate the military cooperation between the two nations; and how does Israel support Ethiopia's military institutions?

From the time of Emperor Hailesilassie I and Derg regimes, Ethiopia's military has been the strongest in East Africa. From that point of time, Ethiopia and Israel have cemented strong partnership in relation to security. The two nations' security institutions are working in parallel.

Israel has learnt a lot from the worst war experiences. Due to this, Israel has become one of the leading countries in military technologies. The modern drones and iron dome technologies are firstly produced by Israelis. Even this time, Israel has advanced its power to create radiation weapons.

Ethiopia and Israel have been jointing acting on counter terrorism. Like the people-to-people bond of the two nations, there are a lot of technology and knowledge sharing between the countries.

In order to promote and strengthen the historic relationship between the two nations, what major actions does Israel take in relation to people-to-people relation?

As I said it before, all the partnerships we have with Ethiopia is based on our

long-rooted people-to-people bond. Like the Government of Israel, the Ethiopian Government should also be responsible to take part to strengthen the partnership.

We have continuous discussions with the Ethiopian government officials to make the partnerships even better. We have a very good connection. The two nations have been dealing together on the bureaucratic bottlenecks seen in the country.

We believe that Ethiopia has a resource of young population that can bring economic change. The nation is also blessed with natural resources especially water, but it needs the technology to get the best out of it. Therefore, we are still eager to strengthen our bilateral partnership with Ethiopia.

This time, Ethiopia is striving to be regional powerhouse by planning major projects, what is Israel's position to support Ethiopia's mega projects?

Such mega projects are owned by the Government of Ethiopia so that it needs a proper agreement between the governments to work together. In relation to hydropower, there are big Israel companies who are functioning on the field, and they want to work in Ethiopia, but it is all about the two nations' agreement. If the Government of Ethiopia is willing to work with Israeli companies, we can bring them here. In addition, we are still working on various sectors.

I have finished my questions. If there is anything you would like to say, the stage is yours.

I would like to thank the Ethiopian Herald Newspaper reporters to show their interest to take this interview.

The time is a week of Christmas celebrations, so I wish all Ethiopians to have a blessed *Genna* Holiday. May the year bring peace to all Ethiopians!

Thank you for your time!
You're most welcome!

Society

Irreplaceable role of Diasporas in supporting rehabilitation activities

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Following the conflict occurred in the northern part of the country, several public and private infrastructures were damaged and hundreds and thousands of people have been exposed to in need of humanitarian assistance.

Especially, in areas where the war took place: in the Afar, Amhara, and Tigray states, the damages were too severe which led the rehabilitation and restoration operations more demanding.

Fortunately, these days subsequent to the agreement signed between the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) to resolve the problems in peaceful manner and the commitment of the former, the rehabilitation and restoration activities of basic services and delivery of humanitarian assistance at war torn areas are carried out in more organized and sustained manner. Basic services, such as electricity, telecom and water services have been restored in most of the areas including Tigray State. Likewise, the Ethiopian Airlines has also resumed daily flights to the Tigray State.

The participation and cooperation of Ethiopians in rehabilitating is increasing significantly.

Recently, the Ministry of Health has announced that the reconstruction activity of damaged health facilities and delivery of humanitarian support in the areas where the conflicts took place have been strengthened.

At a press conference held at her Office regarding to activities carried out to restore damaged health facilities, access humanitarian support and works done to deliver healthcare services in war torn areas of Amhara, Afar and Tigray states, Health Minister Dr. Lia Tadesse said that over the last two years owing to the conflicts that took place in various parts of the country, healthcare service providing institutions, medical supply storages, and other facilities were damaged. Following this, the Ministry joining hands with various institutions and international partner organizations, is working to deliver basic services and humanitarian aid to various areas.

Mentioning that activities are carried out to access humanitarian aid, life-saving treatment as well as the reconstruction of facilities and access to health services for the communities where the conflict had occurred, Minister Dr. Lia said that particularly, since the peace agreement was signed, delivery of humanitarian support has been strengthened in coordinated manner.

As to the Minister, after the peace agreement, excluding partner organizations, merely the government has delivered close to 243 million Birr worth essential medicines and other medical supplies to the Tigray State.

After the peace agreement, further activities



Representative of Northern California Diaspora community and Health Professionals handing over medical equipment & supplies to Ministry of Health



Woldia Comprehensive Specialized Hospital receiving medical equipment donation from Human Bridge Humanitarian Organization

have been ongoing to provide humanitarian aid and restore the health system into its former state in Tigray State joining hands with concerned stakeholders, she added.

Meanwhile, recently, the Diaspora community residing in the Northern California; and Medical care professionals have donated over 27 million Birr worth medical supplies to Health Minister Dr. Lia Tadesse through their representative, Dr. Kidist Kidane, the Ministry of Health reported.

The medical equipment contributed by the Ethiopian Health Care Professionals and member of the Ethiopian community living in the Northern California will be provided to four health centers located in Wag Hemra and North Wollo, Amhara State.

Receiving the donation, Health Minister Dr. Lia Tadesse said that the donation is much helpful to resume the healthcare system in war affected areas.

Over the past few years, in various areas of the country several health institutions had been damaged due to the conflict. For this reason, various efforts have been made in to restore and rehabilitated the health centers in partnership with states' health bureaus and pertinent bodies so as to resume services.

Extending her heartfelt gratitude to those Ethiopians who have donated the equipment, Dr. Lia called on all Ethiopians at home and abroad to support the efforts being carried out to restore the health centers in various parts of the country in every possible way.

The representative of Northern California Health Professionals and members of the Ethiopian community, Dr. Kidist Kidane, on her part said that due to the conflicts came to happen in the northern part of the country, a number of health centers were destroyed.

"Our team has worked very hard to raise the

funds to accomplish this promised task. We collaborated with Med share, a nonprofit US based organization, that collects and donates medical equipment and supplies worldwide to sponsor and donate medical supplies and equipment's, transported in two 40ft ocean containers worth to 27 million Birr," she elaborated.

In the same development, Human Bridge Humanitarian Organization donated medical equipment worth over 30 million Birr to Woldia Comprehensive Specialized Hospital.

"The Health sector is one of the sectors affected by the conflict. Thus, the donation offered can support the efforts of the Hospital and enables it to carry out effective in areas of surgery, medical examination and child health services with a full capacity," said Health State Minister Dr. Ayele Teshome.

He also extended his appreciation on behalf of the Ministry of Health, the Hospital and those people who are receiving the service from the institute.

On his part, Deputy Head of Amhara State Health Bureau, Abdulkarim Mengistu has appreciated the commitments shown by Human Bridge Humanitarian Organization that donated the equipment to Woldia Comprehensive Specialized Hospital and; Woldia University and Abenezer Wongelawit Church of California that covered the transport cost of the medical equipment.

Organization's Country Director, Adamu Anely, on the event said that Human Bridge has also performed similar services to other institutions damaged by the conflict and a package of additional five more medical equipment containers are prepared to be donated.

The handing over ceremony was attended by Woldia Comprehensive Specialized Hospital President, leaderships of North Wollo Zone, and Hospital's administrators.

Opinion

From deadliest hostility to normalcy: Northern Ethiopia's promising shift

BY EYUEL KIFLU

After two years of deadly war that ravaged the northern part of the county, things have begun taking a U-turn on the heels of the landmark Pretoria peace pact penned between the Ethiopian government and Tigray People's Liberation Front. The toll of the devastating conflict was incalculable that it sparked a dire humanitarian crisis; the full magnitude of the cost is yet to be unveiled though.

Also, the war has had biting economic, and political ramifications, triggering national instability and beyond. Accordingly, many innocent people were massacred and raped including women, and children. The conflict also displaced millions of people.

With various internal and external actors throwing their full weight behind the war to impose their interests, the misinformation campaign was intense that it besmirched the image of the country. The barrage of misinformation also triggered unwarranted pressure against the country. Some countries even slapped the country with sanctions including the suspension of the African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA). So, it is apparently clear that the war cost the country dearly.

However, owing to the resolve of the incumbent, on Nov. 2, 2022, the federal government and TPLF inked an AU-brokered peace deal in Pretoria, South Africa.

The accord silenced the guns and turned hostilities to relative normalcy as the ceasefire holds.

The peace accord has in fact drawn worldwide acclamation with increased optimism for it would help pave the way to lasting peace and stability in this Horn Africa's anchor state. Yet, the stake has been high and a cloud of uncertainty has been surrounding the deal.

The Ethiopian government has been living up to the terms of the deal since its signing. On the heels of the agreement, the incumbent continues providing much-needed aid and securing unfettered access to humanitarian agencies and donors. The incumbent remains resolute and steadfast to effectuate the hailed peace deal with TPLF doing its part in increasing optimism on the full implementation of the agreement.

Contrary to mere scepticism and propaganda of naysayers, both signatories have been walking their talks and living up to the terms of the peace accord.

The federal government is restoring the

basic services in Tigray. Humanitarian aid is again arriving without restrictions. Several war-ravaged places have been reconnected to the national power grid. Telecommunication and flight services have also been resumed in many parts of Tigray.

Almost all modes of transportation are becoming operational to ship humanitarian assistance. Basic services are being restored. In short, the federal government is walking its talks! This circumstance in turn creates a watershed moment for the full realization of the terms of the deal.

According to some, Tigray residents who gave their opinion to AP, the resumption of telecom service has pleased the people of Tigray. However, the service has also brought painful news with people coming to terms with announcements of the deaths of their loved ones including families, relatives, friends, and neighbours.

Meanwhile, a resident from shire town who spoke to VOA Amharic said Commercial Bank of Ethiopia resumes its swift service of receiving money sent from local and foreign agents.

Also, a resident of Alamata town supported the idea that Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, Berhan, Wegagen, and Abyssinia bank start their services but it is limited, he said.

An anonymous banker said that the reasons behind the limited services are that those banks do not have enough money and they can only pay the money they have collected from others in the form of deposits.

"The banks get money from Addis Ababa and this will happen when banks in Mekele city become operational. Lack of internet service in the area is another challenge," the Banker added.

In addition to the improvement of the delivery of humanitarian aid and restoration of amenities, there have been grand events that also smoothed the effectuation of the peace accord.

Lately, a delegation of federal government officials led by the speaker of the House of Representatives Tadesse Chafo paid a visit to Mekele. There have been strings of positive development since that serves as add-up to cement trust between the two sides of the peace pact.

The incumbent's crucial decision to send a senior delegation has also expiated the implementation of the deal. Here we are now TPLF has begun handing over heavy weaponry.

As the parties to the agreement continue taking measures and living up to the terms

of the agreement, the northern part of the country is enjoying relative peace and stability.

It should be borne in mind that the Ethiopian government has been consistent in its position to the protection of the rights of the Tigray people and delivery of aid before and after the peace deal. The incumbent is well aware that the people of Tigray deserve peace and tranquillity and should receive the required support to overcome the mayhems they face due to the consequential war, yet the peace accord serves as an add-up in securing uninterrupted aid delivery.

The realization of a peace agreement cannot be without its twists, but if all parties to the agreement live up to their

words, it will end up bringing the much-needed and noble goals at the earliest time possible. In this regard, the Ethiopian government has remained resolute in honoring the deal and discharging its governorship role without hesitations. If TPLF squarely reciprocates in good faith and continues in its resolve, the peace deal is destined to be a success for all the people of Ethiopia.

History has it that those countries that were battlefields have been able to turn calamities into opportunities. If Ethiopians remain committed to resolving their internal challenges independently and atmosphere of calm, they would be able to rectify the past and build a better and peaceful!

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Lot No.	Description	Amount of Bid security in ETB equivalent EURO or USD
Lot 1	Supply, Design, Installation, Testing, Commissioning and implementation of Network Infrastructure and Video Surveillance	500,000.00

1. A complete set of bidding documents in English shall be purchased by interested bidders upon payment of non-refundable fee of birr 500.00 (five hundred) birr starting from Saturday, Jartuary,14 /2023G.C. from 8:30 Am (2:30 local time) to 5:30 Pm (11:30 local tone) at Addis Ababa City Administration Public Procurement and Property Disposal Service finance directorate office at 6th floor, room no. 606.
2. Documents will be floated for 45 consecutive days starting from Saturday. January, 14/2023G.C.
3. Bids will be closed at 11:00 Am (5:00 local time) and opened at 11:30 Am (5:30 local time) on Tuesday, February 28/2023G.C. at 9th floor Assembly hall
4. AAPPDS reserves the right to reject the bid partially or in full,
5. Address: Mexico Sengatera, behind St. Mary University College, at 5th floor which is located at Yobek Commercial Center.

For further information please call +251- 11-557-31-70/40

Addis Ababa City Administration Public Procurement and Property Disposal Service

Verbatim and Caption

Ethiopia, China reaffirms commitment to heighten diplomatic relationship

• Addis Ababa warmly welcomes Chinese FM

Just 10 days following his official appointment as China's new Foreign Minister Position on 30 December 2022, Qin Gang, had arrived in Addis Ababa on Monday 09 January 2023 to start his official visit to Africa. He made Ethiopia his first African destination since taking office. During his visit to Ethiopia, the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, Qin

Gang, held discussions with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen. In addition he also attended the inauguration of the phase one Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) headquarters building in Addis Ababa.

PM Abiy welcomed Chinese FM, Qin Gang, at his office



I welcome to Ethiopia Mr. Qin Gang, the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China. The relations between Ethiopia and China remains steadfast. We discussed to strengthen our bilateral relations and to work together for our shared strategic development goals and commitment to continental and global cooperation.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said after he discussed with China's FM

"Situational changes will never change longstanding Ethio-China relations" Qin Gang



The Government of China is committed to strengthening and maintaining its all-weather friendship with Ethiopia in the face of changing international circumstances. Ethiopia and China should strengthen their ties in development cooperation, meet global challenges together, and jointly defend international justice.

China is working to further strengthen its ties with Africa and the practice that Chinese Foreign Ministers visiting Africa for the past 33 years reflects China's determination to heighten its relation with Africa.

Qin Gang, Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China

Deputy PM, FM Demeke praises China's unwavering stance in favor of Ethiopia

China's consistent and principled stance in global fora in favor of Ethiopia's sovereignty and territorial integrity is appreciable, he said. "During our discussion with FM Qin Gang, I briefed him about the Pretoria Peace Agreement and its implementation status. I appreciate China's continued support for peace and stability in Ethiopia. We signed Memorandum of Understanding to further enhance our cooperation on political and economic issues."

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen said



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AHRI's commitment to eradicate TB

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

The government of Ethiopia in collaboration with development partners, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and community at large is jointly working to combat this deadly disease and achieve the set sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030 and END TB by 2035. The country is implementing the globally recommended TB control strategies and the services are provided in public and quite countable numbers of private health facilities nationwide. Since the implementation of the strategies, more than a million TB cases have been identified and treated successfully and many more lives were saved.

Ending the TB epidemic by 2035 requires concerted efforts of the government, developmental partners, academicians, civic society organizations, patient advocates, private sector and the community at large. There is huge effort by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the global arena for countries to increase political commitment and investment to attain this goal.

Off late AHRI along with stakeholders organized a platform by the Ministry of Health and AHRI in collaboration with USAID and JSI, the TB Commitment Grant project has officially been launched on January 10, 2022 in Adama with the presence of TB focal



personnel, researchers across health bureaus from all regions and city administrations of Ethiopia, and senior mentors selected from various higher institutions.

It was learnt that the project which has four phases aims to strengthen TB Operations Research Capacity and the Tuberculosis Research Advisory Council's (TRAC) Mechanism to Inform the National TB Elimination Response which aims to eliminate and eventually eradicate TB from Ethiopia by 2030.

Similarly, following the project launch, as part of the phase one roll out, a capacity building training session was kicked off which will stretch from January 10 to 13.

The training will primarily focus on 'Research Proposal Development' with an in-depth look on key components of research proposal (From Title to Work Plan and Budget) to Research Ethics.

The expected outcomes from the training and overall project are; to produce more than 40 well trained and mentored research fellows and TB program managers; completion of about 10 priority research projects to better inform the national TB elimination response; to beef TRAC with a high level digital resource center; driving more public attention & official engagement to spur the TB elimination agenda; and fostering timely uptake of TB Research findings into evidence-based actions, programs and policies.

The TRAC secretariat hosted by AHRI is in debt to USAID/JSI and TIFA (USAID's Global Accelerator to End TB) for the indelible support.

There has been a major decline on the incidence and TB associated death rates in the country. The TB incidence rate (TB+HIV) has dropped from 369 in 1990 to 164/100,000 population in 2017. The TB related mortality

rate (TB+HIV) has also declined from 89/100,000 in 1990 to 24/100,000 in 2017.

However, Ethiopia is among 30 high TB, TB/HIV and DR-TB Burden Countries. TB still predominates in the younger population. 70% of notified cases are within the age group of 15-54 years. People living with HIV are more likely than others to become sick with TB and worldwide it is also one of the leading causes of death among people living with HIV.

To overcome the challenges, the Ministry and Regional Health Bureaus in collaboration with Partners have identified and began implementing highly effective and high-impact initiatives. The initiatives are developed in line with the country's 2nd HSTP and the End TB Strategy.

At last, the key initiatives that are identified and being implemented include informing, educating and mobilizing the communities to maximize their involvement in the fight against TB. The expansion of community TB care and prevention through intensified health extension program and health development army strategies, quality assured TB diagnostics expansion and enhancement, health facility-based TB care and prevention packages, integrated TB/HIV services expansion, TB operational research and innovations and strengthening TB monitoring and evaluation system are also among the focal areas.