



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## Keita campaigning for making Amharic AU working language

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA-** A noted Nigerien journalist Rahmatou Keita appealed for Ethiopians and other Africans to support her quest of making Amharic among the official languages of the African Union (AU).

In a press briefing she gave here yesterday, Keita, who is also a film director, noted that she has waged a struggle for seven years to make Ethiopia's working language be used by the continental body. "Now I need due support from all corners to list Amharic as one of the official languages of the Union. Africans should protect their treasures, among which Amharic is the one."

Explaining her motive to pursue such a campaign, she indicated that Amharic is Ethiopia's indigenous language and is widely spoken in other African countries including Eritrea, Djibouti, and Northern Kenya. Besides, Ethiopia is the seat of the AU and has a special place in African independence movements.

In a letter submitted to the Rwandan President, Keita pleaded with the latter to help the campaign to make Amharic on

See Keita campaigning ... page 3



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## Ministry embraces more actors to attract global tourists

- AU Summit gives impetus for tourism business

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA-** The Ministry of Tourism stated that it employed relevant agencies including Ethiopian Airlines and diplomatic missions as critically essential vehicles for the flow of international tourists.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, Tourism State Minister Selamawit Dawit said the ministry has partnered with pertinent stakeholders to enable Ethiopia to become the tourism hub of East Africa. Consolidated efforts are also underway to promote Ethiopia's tourism potential and to build the country's positive image among

See Ministry embraces ... page 3



## Secretary asks for single African air transport full implementation

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

**ADDIS ABABA—**The Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), a flagship project of the African Union's Agenda 2063 needs to be fully implemented to accelerate the Africa Continental Free Trade Area, so said the African Civil Aviation Commission Secretary General.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald* the secretary general Adefunke Adeyemi said the AU is specializing in civil aviation industry

across 54 countries of the continent. "We have an initiative called the single Africa market that was adopted by the African Heads of State in 2015 based on the Yamasukuru decision in 1999 with a view to liberalizing the air transport market in Africa."

Stating that Air transport is proven to be one of the key catalysts of development and social enablement across the globe, SAATM General Secretary said that

See Secretary asks ... page 3



Photo: Hadush Abreha

## Addis to host first continental inter-religious summit

Page 3

**Agriculture:**  
foreign currency earning means amid challenges

Page 6

**Ministry expanding biogas technology in rural areas**

Page 7

**Bringing Ethiopian female heads to the limelight via art**

(A versatile Ethio-Italia artist staging songs in 7 local languages too)

Page 12

# News



## Commission secures 2 bln. USD FDI in half-year

BY MESERET BEHIALU

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Ethiopian Investment Commission announced that it has secured 2 billion USD Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) over the past six months of this Ethiopian fiscal year.

Investment Commissioner, Lelissie Nemi told local media that the commission has been doing the online and page- to- page promotion so that foreign investors can use the convenient and wide investment options in Ethiopia.

It has also attracted many FDI and reinstated this stagnant sector following the Cessation of Hostility Agreement (CoHA).

According to the Commissioner, South Korea, Japan, India, UAE, China, and Italy are the countries where the Commission has moved to attract investors. Therefore, the Commission has secured 2 billion USD of FDI despite many changes in the above stated period. In this regard, the Commission has planned to achieve 2.95 billion USD of FDI in the six month of this Ethiopian fiscal year.

She further stated that the first six months of this Ethiopian fiscal year, 72 of the 115 investors who were granted investment permits were foreign investors. Manufacturing, service, and agriculture have shared 84, 28, and 3 percent respectively.

“Indian investors have the largest share of investment in Ethiopia next to China. Among the investors who were obtained investment permit (certified), 73 projects have moved from pre-implementation to implementation and 76 have moved to production,” she added.

Compared with the past similar year of six month performance, the Commissioner said this fiscal year of six month performance has an additional value by 22.5 percent while CoHA has played a pivotal role in this regard. She added that number of investors who request to invest in Ethiopia in various sectors is increasing following the peace accord.

For instance, the Commission has obtained over 100 million USD FDI merely in the past one month of this Ethiopian fiscal year.

It was learnt that Ethiopia has one window service center, which is adequate infrastructure, power supply, committed government, and efficient supervision and inspection mechanisms then it is preferable to attract investors from four directions across the globe.

## Ethiopia, UAE to enhance cooperation in defense industry dev’t

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have agreed to cooperate in defense industry development and investment sectors.

A delegation led by Defense Minister Abraham Belay (PhD) and Ethiopia National Defense Force (ENDF) Deputy Chief of Staff General Abebaw Tadesse headed to Abu Dhabi to participate in International Defense Exhibition and Conference (IDEX) 2023.

The delegation, alongside the IDEX 2023 meeting, discussed with UAE’s Deputy Prime Minister Sheik Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Defense Affairs State Minister Mahamed Ahmed Albadawi, Chief of Staff General Issa Seife Mohamed Almezuri and others on the further strengthening and expanding of army forces cooperation between the two countries.

Both parties said that Ethiopia and the UAE have long friendship and cooperation in



various fields. They discussed the need of strengthening existing relationships to be continued.

They agreed on details of sharing best practices and on further expanding

ways of cooperation in defense industry development and investment sectors.

Over 1,350 military technologies manufacturing companies took part in IDEX 2023, it was learnt.



## Stakeholders underline supporting SMEs to achieve economic transformation

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA**—Medium and Small Enterprises (SMEs) play great role in transforming the national economy apart from improving youths’ life, so remarked Addis Ababa City Administration, the Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) and Ministry of Labor and Skills.

Speaking at the launching of the training for SMEs operators organized by the Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE), Addis Ababa Mayor Adanech Abiebie said that: “SMEs help us to ensure food security engaging in agriculture sector to

alleviate the cost of living we are facing today substituting import food products producing in the nation. We are ready to support SMEs to bring change.”

SMEs play a great role in reducing unemployment, ensuring food security and improving the life of the youths and their families, she noted.

DBE President Yohaness Ayalew (PhD) said training of SMEs helps improve the youth’s life and achieve the country’s prosperity and the fourth round training would be provided in 57 towns and 95 centers of the nation.

“This training is unique from the previous one as remote areas of nation are included and the youths from Tigray state are taking part in this training as well.”

Labor and Skills Minister Muferiat Kamil on her part said recruiting and creating jobs to the youth at national level needs great efforts of the leaders to achieve the mission of the nation to alleviate unemployment.

She called on other institutions to follow the footsteps of DBE to play their role in bolstering the effort geared towards ensuring development in the country.

# News

## Gov't pursues new approach in dairy industry

BY HAILE DEMEKE

**ADDIS ABABA** – Trade and Regional Integration State Minister Endalew Mekonnen said the government has designed policy for the dairy sector's development and enhanced the private sector's involvement in the area.

The state minister made the above in a consultation forum organized by Addis Ababa University College of Natural Sciences, Food Science and Nutrition Center on research conducted on the distribution of food-borne pathogens and undesirable substances in dairy products.

The concrete engagement of all concerned bodies is important during the production, transportation, retailing, and other processes to ensure the safety and quality of dairy products. Accordingly, the government is undertaking different measures to boost national dairy production and supplement the overall economic progress, Endalew added.

In his opening remark at the forum, Center's Director Paulos Getachew (PhD) noted that the center conducted a four-year study through a project called ENSURE. The study pointed out that Ethiopia's dairy sector has complex problems in milk production, processing and marketing and requires a lot of attention and policy action.

Financially supported by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and UK aid with one



Photo: Gebaba Gebre

million USD, the project has undertaken a four-year research project in collaboration with local and international partners. The study aimed at improving the quality and safety of Ethiopia's dairy products.

The project focuses on the prevalence of food-borne pathogens and undesirable substances in dairy products.

According to the director, a country-wide and extensive research undertaking has provided reliable and scientific outcomes useful to improve the state of food-borne pathogens and other contaminants in milk and dairy products.

The project was launched in 2018 with the primary objective of identifying problems related to the milk and dairy sector and increasing food safety, Project Principal Investigator and Associate Professor in the Center, Ashagrie Zewdu (PhD) said. "The finding has revealed that the safety of dairy products in Ethiopia is a great concern

leading the society to several problems."

Accordingly, the scientific research conducted in the past four years has provided reliable and tangible information for the problem that seeks a solution. Addressing the issues related to production, processing, transportation, supply, and others will advance the dairy industry thereby contributing to its development.

For Dairy Research Project Coordinator Dawit Abate (PhD), ensuring the safety and quality of dairy products needs serious attention and policy engagement. "The primary goal of the project is to identify and educate the public about the different types and sources of milk quality and safety issues along the dairy value chain."

The project highlighted the participation of all stakeholders, notably the government to improve Ethiopia's dairy sector quality and exploit its potential for the overall economic growth, the researcher remarked.

## Keita campaigning ...

the list of the AU's official languages. She reminded the president how Africans innocently failed to pay due attention to the issue of utilizing their languages in arenas where they regularly get together for common agenda.

She brought to the attention of her addressees an incident that occurred some six decades back. "At the time of the creation of the African Union Organization in 1963, presided by Emperor Haileselassie, Amharic was put aside in regard to the fact that it was spoken in a restricted amount and only in Ethiopia."

During the media briefing, a Historian Taye Bogale stated that supporting the journalist's campaign and going hand in hand with her would make Amharic one of the official languages of the AU. Amharic is not merely attached to the Amhara community; it is the language of all Ethiopians.

Keita is also doing her best to put Amharic in the limelight. In 2016, one of her seminal works, "The Wedding Ring," movie was released and she used Amharic writing post-credit (closing credits).

Available sources indicated that Amharic was widely spoken in Ethiopia from the 9th century onwards and became a state language in the 14th century. Serving as the official working language of the Ethiopian Federal Government, Amharic, one of the ancient languages in the world, is spoken by over 100 million people.

## Ministry embraces...

international visitors.

Accordingly, the ministry, in partnership with Ethiopian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and the airliner, hosted a colorful cultural and tourism promotion event on February 17 to introduce the country's tourist attraction sites to potential visitors.

"We are also working in unison with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ethiopian diplomatic missions in various countries to promote the immense tourism potential to the outside world. Such promotion would continue in different parts of the world to boost the forex earnings from the tourism business."

The state minister further noted that the recently-concluded AU Summit was instrumental in giving impetus for Ethiopia's tourism and hospitality industry. The seamless provision of services and amenities including electricity, telecom, and security is the main factor for this.

"Addis hotels are more ready to offer quality service to the summit participants and the former is quite successful in serving their guest's desires. Moreover, the national committee, which was established to facilitate the hotel service to the summit participants, successfully discharged its responsibility."

Similarly, the ministry prepared tour packages for the guests to visit Addis Ababa's famous tourist attraction sites including Entoto and Unity parks as well as the National Museum and traditional restaurants. "In a bid to promote Ethiopia's tourist destinations, we displayed video clips and other promotions in the AU Headquarters."

She added: "We also prepared a Smart Card with CBE for the guests to pay in hard currency for their visits to the tourist destinations and for other personal expenditures."

## Addis to host first continental inter-religious summit

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA** - African religious leaders will discuss contemporary issues and the role of religious communities in the first continental summit set to be held here on 28 February, the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia disclosed.

In a press briefing he gave yesterday, the Council Secretary General Kesis Tagay Tadele said that the summit also aims to strengthen interreligious harmony, discuss contemporary natural and man-made issues of the continent, and create a direct link between Africa and the G20.

"All religions pursue peace and stability. Therefore, the issue of human rights, peace, and stability across the continent will be the major point of discussion," he added.

Religious institutions wish absolute welfare for all human beings and for other creatures too. In this regard, the discussion among African and global religious institutions is expected to contribute extremely important recommendations. To this end, the interfaith summit will discuss economic, social, political, and environmental issues.

The secretary-general further highlighted that the summit will be held under the patronage of President Sahlework Zewde

and she will be attended as the guest of honor along with the United Nations and African Union officials.

Over 300 participants who represent religious institutions, international organizations, and think-tank groups are also expected to take part in the forthcoming summit which will be held in connection with the United Nations' World Interfaith Harmony Week.

The United Religions Initiative-Africa, G20 Interfaith Forum, AU Citizens and Diaspora Directorate, AU-Economic Social and Cultural Council, and AU Interfaith Dialogue Forum are supporters of the summit, it was learned.

## Secretary asks...

Africa is a huge continent in terms of land mass. Thus, it is imperative to properly connect the continent for integration in tune with AU's vision and objectives for creating an integrated, prosperous and united Africa.

The General Secretary said, "The implementation of the single African air transport market will help the continent accelerate Africa Continental Free Trade Area as air transport service is of quite importance in facilitating goods, people and services trading as promptly as possible across the continent of Africa.

"As the Single Africa Air Transport Market, the Africa Continental Free Trade Area and the Free Movement Protocol of people and goods are instrumental in connecting and

integrating Africa better, we are expected to fully support the theme of AU head of state summit. Accelerating the African free trade area has to be the thematic issue to foster the single Africa air transport market thereby bolstering Africa's social, economic and even political amalgamation."

Asked about the challenge the initiatives would potentially face, Adeyemi said that the main challenge is making sure to actually implement these candid merits. Hence, in the first place, all leaders have to walk the talk and translate promises into practical actions.

As learnt from the general secretary, the second important point that needs to be underlined partners are expected to move in unison and solidify their coordination in a

bid to make real difference.

Thirdly, they have to prefer solidarity to solitary movement and harmonize efforts to benefit the entire continent. In simple terms, it is quite important to come together for the implementation of both the single Africa trade market and the continental free trade area, she stated.

SAATM was officially launched on 28th January 2018 by Heads of African States and it is expected to bring about enhanced connectivity across the continent leading to sustainable development of the aviation and tourism industry with significant contribution to economic growth, inclusive job creation, poverty reduction, prosperity and integration across Africa.

# Opinion

## Skewed philosophical twist

BY SOLOMON ABEDOM (PHD)

Many have claimed the 3.3 percent results of the 2014 school leaving national exam of the 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students. Many have claimed it showed a broader social problem, including the country's education system. They raise several factors underlying the decline of the country's Quality of Education (QoE). The author of this piece wants to raise a severe discourse on one of the fundamental problems that go beyond the country's education system and asks the following general question: what is (are) the governing (dominating) philosophical thought for the education system in Ethiopia? Even broader, what is (are) the dominant philosophical thought that shapes different aspects of life in our nation? These are difficult questions, and getting answers in one piece might not be possible. But the author desires to ignite discourse on it.

Those who have engaged themselves in the Anthropological theory of didactics (ATD) claim that there is a dominant practice in a given system at a given time in a given institution (whether it is at a societal level or at the school level, or subject level, or even particular topic like teaching algebra in a mathematical classroom for example). In line with this, the author asked the following question with respect to the philosophy of *mathematics* education: which grand school of philosophy is shaping mathematics education in the country? While trying to get an answer to this question, he came to ask further, even beyond mathematics, a broader question: which philosophical view is dominating the whole education system? As we know, that will, in turn, affect how society behaves and functions in the long run. You cannot reap what you did not sow, the simple equation of life! As said above, there might not be a single answer; however, let us start with a reflection that might contribute to the answer to such a philosophical question.

### Everyone has a philosophical view in life

Pope John Paul II once said, "Every person is, in a certain sense, a philosopher and has philosophical conceptions with which he or she orients his or her life." Whether it is coherent or not, consistent or not, robust or not, fair or not, every person has some kind of philosophical assumptions about life, including education. Way before the ancient Greek philosophy, people were used to making sense of the world using reason. As we know, the current western dominated philosophy has its roots in Greek and Hellenistic philosophy. The positions pioneered by philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle have influenced generations for centuries, and there are still many philosophers and philosophical positions in our existing world. These views highly influence society, particularly nations' education systems, curriculums, political discourse, and economic models

governed by the dominating philosophical views in life.

What about Ethiopia? Did we have such philosophers and philosophical views in the past? What about today? If the assumption "everyone has a philosophical view in life" is accurate, we should also have philosophical positions and philosophers in every generation and every season. In fact, Ethiopia had several philosophers and philosophical positions through different times. Among the significant ones are Dekike Estifanos, Zera Yacob, and Walda Heywat. Most Ethiopian philosophy is preserved via oral tradition and *Ge'ez* manuscripts. Partially, that is why the Orthodox Church, which still uses the Geez language in its church service, is positioned at the center of Ethiopian philosophy. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the religious beliefs of Ethiopians were challenged by King Suseynos. He tried to challenge that dominant philosophical position shaped by the Orthodox Church with a new one by adopting Catholicism. It fired back at him. That is why the palace moved from Gorgora to Gondar. In general, in Ethiopia, in every generation and place, some people have views of life and pass them on to the next generation. For example, go to the Afar region, and you will get another local dominating philosophical view of life that passed through generations. Their "Dagu system" was recently highlighted during the war since modern social media propaganda did not break their centuries-old communication system. We highlighted these few examples, but we can have several throughout the country.

### Recent dominant philosophical views

Research done by David Chalmers and David Bourget, asking around 3,000 philosophers in 2013, concluded that there are several philosophical views in the world today. Concerning ethics views like realism, cognitivism, internalism (about moral motivation), deontologists; when it comes to aesthetics, objectivism (about aesthetic value); about political views like egalitarianism; in relation to epistemology, externalism, contextualism, and empiricism; while when it comes to metaphysics, we get realism, compatibilism (about free will), and atheism. I do not intend to write about these "isms" here. I will leave it to the experts in the field. I just listed a few of these so that the novice is aware of the existence of such positions. Rather, let us focus on the recent dominant philosophical views in the country.

Before the time of the Derg, the emperors, and the clergies shaped the dominant philosophical view of Ethiopians. The emperors and the church clergies defined and shaped the culture, education, and view of life in general. What is valued most was determined by these elites of the society. While visiting Fasiledes castle with my daughter in 2018, the guide took us to

Empress Mintiwab's building. It used to be the public library where I spent much of my time when I was younger. The guide explained something that I have never given deeper thought to. He said that it was the empress who thought the people "ብልጥና" - food science. He claimed she thought the people made 12 parts when cooking the famous Ethiopian Doro Wet (Chicken Sous). The number 12 has roots in Christianity: 12 tribes of Israel, 12 disciples, and even 12 gates of Fasiledes Castel. He goes on to explain that she taught people how to make "Shiro," "Misir," and "Kik" wet (Souce). The complete history has to be verified by respected professionals in the field. But we learn from this oral tradition that the elites shape the philosophical views that determine the country's way of life in their time and beyond.

### Ethnocentrism-the dominant philosophical view in Ethiopia

During the Derg regime, many youths were infested with Marxist and Leninist political views. They were convinced that their philosophical standpoint would bring change in the country, and they used their view to shape every part of the life of the people in the country. Building on that, the EPDRF regime led by TPLF added another philosophical view that has shaped the country's way of life for the past 30 years until the present. By now, everyone will agree with me that this dominant philosophical view is this philosophical position created in these three decades. It is called an "ethnocentrism" view. Everything in the country is viewed from an ethnocentric standpoint. The constitution, the political positions, ministerial positions, the director of this and that agency, and most importantly, the economy, budget, language, education, religion, and so on are viewed from this ethnocentric standpoint. I am not saying that the previous multiple philosophical views are not existing. But, I am claiming that they are undermined by **Ethnocentrism**.

This view has dominated everything in the country: ethics, aesthetics, epistemology, and metaphysics. If one person from one tribe is found corrupted and he/she should be accountable for what he/she did, but if the person claims that he/she is persecuted because he/she is from this and that tribe, then the case will be viewed totally from "ethnocentrism," and it will not get true justice. If students cheat in exams and get the most results, then the region represented by that group will boast as if they did the best job in the country just because they are from that ethnic group. The 2014 E.C exposed the influence of such a philosophical view in the practices of the education system. Even the root cause of the past two-year conflict is this political viewpoint that dominated every aspect of life. After the conflict, issues are handled through the lens of this philosophical view.

People have exaggerated, self-obsessed, and self-centered ethnocentric views. This ethnic consciousness highly dominates their moral gauge and value. It is also a methodology to gain power, money, and dominance. The sad thing is that this ethnocentric viewpoint highly corrupts education. Educators and scholars are subjected to this low-level form of philosophical view. I said low level since it undermines the very existence of human life. Here on earth, human beings are the centers of life. Of course, for those of us who believe God created the earth, God placed humans to dominate it, and God dominates the universe, including the planet and within it. And those who do not believe in God, mostly atheists, place humans at the center and adore human life. But this ethnocentric dominated view of life undermines that precious human life and kills thousands if someone is from another ethnicity.

### The way forward- Take away Ethnocentrism

Every human being from every ethnicity is equal. The human being should be the starting point. Every unit of counting should be a single human being, not a single ethnicity. Since an ethnic group contains several human beings, every ethnic group's rights will be respected if we can respect every human being's rights. Whether it is speaking one's own language and learning with mother tongues or getting justice administered in a court of law in one's own language, as far as the economy and capacity of that community allow, it should be given for everyone. Every uniqueness and difference should be celebrated and should get appropriate space in every aspect of life. But, in the name of representation, acting and doing everything with an ethnocentric viewpoint will lead the whole generation to destruction. **It does not provide a sustainable way of life.** This skewed philosophical twist has to be challenged. Let us not expect QoE or other higher virtues and values while this wicked philosophical view dominates our value and education system. A responsible anti-ethnocentrism movement should start and galvanize in every way of our life before our doomsday comes due to ethnocentric dominated lifestyle. Everyone should take away the ethnocentric lens for a while before it is too late, like many ethnocentric-driven nations and groups of people experienced in the past. There are plenty of such examples to mention. Education is at the center of doing that! The elites are responsible for leading the discourse in this direction. This piece should only be viewed from this angle: one must always try to constructively contribute to the ongoing discourse!

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

# Editorial

## Ethiopia's unwavering stance to strengthen Pan-Africanism

During the period of African colonial rule, Ethiopia played a unique role and initiated fellow Africans and African descents to put pressure on colonizing powers. The aim was to stand for solidarity and fight for freedom that ignited African decolonization movements around the world.

Ethiopia, being one of the leading countries that promoted the idea of Pan-Africanism, played an important contribution in elevating the morale of all black peoples across the continent for the formation of African independence movements.

Emperor Haile Selassie I, who ruled Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974, is always remembered in Africa and around the world for his commitment to promote unity and solidarity amongst African States; and for his strong proponents for Pan-Africanism movements. Surely, his ambition was to see a united, prosperous and strong Africa.

During his reign, he did what he could to bloom Pan-Africanism by supporting the struggles for independence and strengthening cooperation between all people of African descent.

He was also one of the leaders who facilitated the formation of the continental body, the former Organization of the African Unity (OAU), the current African Union (AU)

Surely, Ethiopian leaders who came to power at different times were also keen to promote solidarity and unity among African countries and their people under the spirit of Pan-Africanism.

It was in the reign of the former Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, the South African legendary hero Nelson Mandela took military training to prepare for the fight against apartheid. Mandela, aside from taking military training from Ethiopian forces, received an Ethiopian passport which enabled him to move freely and sustain his struggle; while many of the countries turned their back on him.

Even these days, the leadership of Ethiopia is committed to further reviving the idea of Pan-Africanism, heightening it to the highest level and realizing an integrated, prosperous, strong and peaceful Africa.

To this effect, the country is undertaking many-sided activities that pave ways to ensure its social, political and economic development as they are critical to create the desired Africa.

More importantly, Ethiopia is currently working to establish closer ties among countries of the region and heighten regional integration.

Among others, it is endeavoring to promote possible social, economic and political ties with countries of the Horn and beyond through stimulating trade, building an efficient road connectivity, communication systems and infrastructure that create a better ground for integration and crucial for Africa's unification.

The power purchase agreements signed between Ethiopia with Kenya and Sudan—the former to sell power to the later— as well as the largest Inter-regional Highways infrastructure project (the LAPSET Corridor Program), designed to bring together Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan among others are exemplary instances of in this regard.

No doubt, the initiations are encouraging steps in terms of further reinforcing partnership among countries and advancing Africa's regional integration ambition.

However, much more effort and commitments should be applied to realize the desired aspirations because without the dedication of other states, the aspiration cannot be accomplished. Thus, all states should put an extraordinary energy to turn the aspiration into reality.



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# Opinion

## Paradox into paradise...!

BY MENGESHA AMARE

No one would argue with the idea that Africa is labeled as the continent of paradox since long back as it is poor despite abundant resources and fallow wealth. However, time has to come to make Africa the continent of paradise compatible with its resource taking it out of the box of paradox.

Is it possible to overcome the decisive factors lagging Africa's growth and change behind? When Africa's problems are eternally reined? What should Africa do to make history? These are the fundamental inquiries the generation has to ask to takeover an affluent, sovereign, independent and influential global partner—Africa.

The answer for the first question is an outright YES! as the continent has firmly had capacity to solve all the problems, especially these days, and to quench all its thirst within its own reach since countries have now preferred solidarity to solitary drive.

No doubt, one is tired of listing what Africa does possess, indeed! Surprisingly, as stated earlier, the continent camps two contradictory scenarios: endowed with indescribable natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable energies, a number of tangible and intangible heritages; dissimilarly it is branded as the poorest continent in the universe. What a paradox it is!

True, the continent is the richest, but the poorest. What does it mean? Frankly speaking, history is in the making in Africa. Their commission is becoming a lion with functional teeth to bite its predator.

The leaders of the era are well aware of the conspiracy and ways of twisting hands to remain Africa aid dependent and submissive to others all the time. They are heard of saying 'enough is enough'; it is our weakness and sense of recklessness that has made Africa a negatively labeled continent.

Obviously, resources are here, fresh and abundant human labor is here, Africa lacks nothing; if this is so, what makes the continent sluggish in attaining radical change?

The leaders have now determined enough to connect Africa using single African Air Transport Market, a flagship project of the African Union's Agenda 2063 with a view to accelerating Africa Free Trade. Besides, AU is specializing in civil aviation industry across 54 countries of the continent.

Yes, Africans are these days leapfrogging into the future at a fast-tracking rate in a bid to create new Africa with complete freedom. The continent has encountered

many achievements and pitfalls on its past journey in due course of navigating the realm. They are also capitalizing on the youth and women as these are segments of the society potentially fueling transformation.

It is imperative for African leaders to map out to where they are heading and define the decade long trek reinvigorating pan Africanism thereby helping the continent enjoy attaining far-reaching change.

African leaders have to collectively step up and think out of the box to be new brand frontrunners, agenda setters, creative thinkers and solution makers with a view to emancipating the continent from neocolonialism traps.

All Africans have to nurture development and growth oriented mindset holding a pan African orientation with the capacity to meet Africa's demands. They have to attach due emphasis to pan-Africanism, which is instrumental in safeguarding the continent fueling the fight against poverty via reinvigorating economic and social development.

If the leaders of the continent are committed enough to collaboratively work and entertain collective thought as they elucidated in the 36th leaders' summit, change will be brought about within the shortest time possible. In so doing, the questions when Africa's problems are eternally reined can be well addressed. Soon!

Fundamentally, it would be possible to come up with livable, safe and luring Africa, which can be an influential global partner if leaders are able to walk the talk. The thematic issues incorporated in deliberations, close talks, bilateral or trilateral relations, agreements and decisive treaties have to be bulleted towards actions to accelerate Africa's renaissance.

As it is vividly clear that change could hardly be brought about out of the blue, countries of the continent should be committed enough to sustainably implement programs and projects as such a bold move helps bolster capacity to discharge respective responsibilities of which Africa is in charge hitting.

As part of their effort to come up with remarkable outcomes in the years to come, leaders have to draw important lessons via properly monitoring and evaluating the undertakings carried out over the past ten years to pave avenues for the next task, to be conquered in the next decades out of the 2063 journey.

By and large, there is no time much more convenient that this one to make history in Africa and convert its nomenclature, the continent of paradox into the continent of paradise.

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

# Business & Economy

## Agriculture: foreign currency earning means amid challenges

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

It has been many years since Ethiopia has strived to meet its goal regarding boosting agriculture production and make it more productive so that the nation can meet its domestic food demand. The government has taken a number of actions to improve the sector through utilizing various inputs such as fertilizer, pest and herbicide. Even in the past few years, the government took decisive measures to register better results in the sector.

It is also important to remember the challenges that the world and Ethiopia have encountered. The war in the northern part of the country ignited two years ago coupled with the global pandemic, COVID-19, made the country unable to achieve what was planned. Major economic sectors have been seriously affected by the aforementioned challenges.

In this regard, the government took various measures to tackle those challenges and to bring long lasting solution. The best example might be the summer wheat production in irrigated farm that was initiated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD).

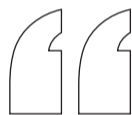
Accordingly, the nation has begun what it has been striving to achieve which is exporting wheat. The government has been working closely with stakeholders including farmers and the witnessed achievements attributes to this cooperation.

Ethiopia is blessed with multiple natural resources that can be used to generate income and to change the economic landscape in to the higher level. Especially in the agriculture sector which has a potential to bring tangible results for the nation economic growth and ensuring food security.

The nation has untapped resource to increase its income generating from agriculture sector if modern mechanisms and up to date ideas are taken as input and implemented.

Regarding nation's income generation, products from the agriculture sector take the top ranks. To this end, from agricultural products, coffee is one of the leading income generators to the nation. Accordingly, just last years, Ethiopia got over a billion USD from coffee export which is the highest record of the recent history of the country. Besides, the nation has started generating better income from other sectors including meat products.

Recently, the Ministry of Agriculture conducted a meeting and on the occasion its first half-a-year report on the current fiscal year was presented. According to the report, in the past six months of the fiscal year, the country has got more than one billion USD from exporting agricultural products to the international markets. It is proved that similar to the past; coffee is still the main foreign currency earner commodity among other export products. On the event, different department heads presented their



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six month performance report.

The Ministry's Strategic Issues CEO Zenawu Habtewold stated that the major achievements which has been registered in different sub-sectors of agriculture. He said that from coffee, tea, and species export, the nation has obtained 664 million USD. The country has also gained 140 million USD from flowers, vegetables, and fruits. Besides, the meat and dairy sector generated an income worth of 52 million USD.

According to the report, for the last decade the country has started generating higher income from exporting cut flowers after anchor companies in the business started

participating in the sector and due to strong global demands. However, it was unable to achieve the planned garnering foreign currency from fruit and vegetables and the registered achievement is below the average. It is because the country was engaged in the two years long war ignited in the northern part of the country. The soaring transportation cost also brought a negative consequence.

Zenawu further explained about the positive result obtained by the ministry. As to him, the ministry has achieved good results in organizing farmers in the cluster and enhancing production and productivity in farmlands. To this end, it has organized over

2.2 million farmers in 85,000 clusters and harvested 1.6 million hectares of land in six months.

In addition, regarding efforts to streamline the role and contribution of the agriculture sector in the overall economy, Zenawu noted that the ministry has also made praiseworthy activities in creating 521,000 new jobs in the reported period.

By the same token, the ministry has made concrete jobs to make farming more efficient and mechanized while enabling 725,000 farmers to get access to a variety of agricultural machinery and equipment, he remarked.

The Ministry of Agriculture also has done multiple tasks to maximize the utilization of its every resource feasibly and economically. The ministry lately announced that it is applying Blue Economy Strategy with the help of IGAD to bring significant change in fishery sector centering the Horn of Africa.

Having stayed with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Aquaculture Resource Development Desk Head Fasil Dawit (PhD) stated that IGAD is working with the ministry to bring better changes in fishery sector in the Horn of Africa. He said that IGAD is facilitating conditions to connect non-coastal nations with coastal nations of East Africa to help them work cooperatively, and develop together in fishery activities thereby ensuring the new Blue Economy Strategy in the region.

The head also said that over the last six months of the fiscal year, Ethiopia produced over 40,000 tons of fish from lakes and rivers. Over the last fiscal year, about 73,000 tons of fish was produced at national level. The achievement indicated that the country can produce more than this.

In its ten years perspective plan, the country planned to produce 247,000 tons annually.

Fasil said, "Some 2000 youths have got jobs over the last six months nationwide alongside "Yelemat Turufat" development initiative. This is why community's habit of consuming fish products changes and demand for it is highly increasing."

Moreover, there are around 200 fish species available in Ethiopia. Of which, 40 are endemic and six species out of this are commercially active; unfortunately, at this day, the majority of fish found in different lakes are depleted due to overfishing.

The head disclosed, "We are rehabilitating the vanished ones by hatching millions of fish establishing vast hatchery sites in Amhara, Sidama, Oromia and SNNP regional states and distributing more in lakes and rivers."

Fishing equipment is entering to the nation free of charge so as to encourage fishery in the nation. Clear fishery policy is prepared, sharing experience with other nations of experts and the main achievement helps seize the ladder of success, he said.

# Planet Earth

## Ministry expanding biogas technology in rural areas

BY SEMIRA BERHE

In various parts of the world biogas is being developed to realize various purposes including institutional, technical, economic and environmental protection.

However developing countries are still struggling to access sustainable energy to all community. For this end biogas is a reliable energy source in the transition to green, low carbon energy and electricity mix. It has its own contribution to carbon emission reduction.

It is available and generally sustainable energy resource due to the abundant supply of cheap feedstock. It is important to benefit the community in the off grid area that cannot access electricity. The technology also contributes for the environmental protection purpose as a reliable source of green and low carbon energy.

Access to modern energy service is a challenge for most developing countries, continents like Africa basically they are based on the agriculture sector.

A High numbers of people still live in rural areas with absence of many infrastructural services including modern energy or electricity that simplifies their life and ensures safety of their health.

In the same way Ethiopia also shares those circumstances as many Ethiopians still live in the rural areas leading life based agriculture. In this case it is advisable to use the new energy source biogas technology.

The bio gas technology is available and generally sustainable energy resource due to abundant supply of cheap feedstock. It known since 19<sup>th</sup> century and know in the other countries use as heavy – duty transport sector to become more sustainable.

The Ministry of Water and Energy working with specially attention on facilitating clean energy and enhancing those activities on environmental protection and fighting climate change.

Having stay with *The Ethiopian Herald* Temesgen Tefera, bio gas program manager with the ministry stated that the technology started in Ethiopia in 2009 G.C with the support of the Netherland government, then made feasibility study for one year on the capability of using the biogas technology to the community that cannot access electricity. Researches shows 5 million households can use the biogas technology.

**The technology requires a minimum of four cattle, adequate water access and the person because the technology is labor intensive. The person can operate it easily making biogas system more diversified and sustainable**

The program started its demonstration phase system in four Ethiopian regions: Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and south nations, nationalities and peoples region.

The manager says after observing the promising outcome of the project, it was replicated to the other regions of Ethiopia. The ministry is now able to address some 40 thousand households that cannot access electricity or people who live in the off grid areas.

The most common feedstock used to produce biogas is any organic wastes like animal waste, food wastes like vegetables and fruits left over, wastes from café and restaurant, biological wastes from industries having high moisture content and high degradability use for this technology.

The manager explained that mostly in Ethiopia inputs used for biogas production and widely available in many rural areas is animal waste.

The technology requires a minimum of four cattle, adequate water access and the person because the technology is labor intensive. The person can operate it easily making biogas system more diversified and sustainable.

After installed this technology in one house hold they collect animals waste, insert to the stage tanker prepared with bricks for this purpose, also water locked until it process combined heat and power.

By nature the cow dung produce methane gas and it is harmful to the environment four times than CO<sub>2</sub> thanks to this technology the animals waste, the cow dung collect immediately and insert to the storage tank.

The ministry gets advantage for the initiative of methane gas missionary reduction activity if they address the technology for 40,000 household get 9.5 million USD as reward.

The Program Manager says the Ministry provides the households for this technology with finance, technical and professional guidance. Accordingly the ministry covers 20,000 Ethiopian birr to install the technology for a household out of the 30,000 birr required to build a 6 m<sup>3</sup> bio digester.

The main point of this technology is addressing sustainable energy to the community as he stated now there are 40,000 bio digesters actively in use. The report says that it reduces the work load for some 25 thousand women and children as they can access clean energy.

The technology has also saved forest that rests over 96 thousand hectares of land from deforestation while supplying manure that can develop 240 thousand hectares of land.

Those families who use the bio methane technology are able to apply it for clean cooking and lighting purposes. This has enabled to decrease women's and children work load. Students can now go to school and participate effectively in the school thereby decreasing the number of students' school dropout. The family can also save their time taken for cooking as well as a monthly sum of money up to birr 640 if they were to use electricity for cooking and lighting purposes.

Comparing to the house holds use this technology the others don't use there is a difference in their quality of life. The technology can solve the hygiene and sewerage problems in the community, the program manager underlined.

It creates job opportunity in the process of installing the technology; trainers give orientation for house hold how to use it,

The manager also pointed out that the other advantage of biogas is that it is connected to agricultural activities. After producing the gas the final waste or bio-slurry can be consumed as organic fertilizer that can substitute chemical fertilizer.

Temesgen further noted that the procedure of installing the technology starts with signing of an agreement between three actors: the household confirms its interest to use the technology, the eligible professionals installs the bio digester, and the representative in the district approves the certified person or technician.

As he said the experts take the training by the ministry in all part of the country. The senior professionals work under the institution in different districts of the country while others work privately. In the recent data the ministry assigned 5 experts in each region who are capable to give training for the private sector and give technical support related with the technology.

Hand in hand the ministry works in coordination with international development organization through technical support, financial support from the European Union, which is 23 million for five years.

Beside this the ministry aims to reach out to 160,000 householders in this technology and achieving the clean energy to the community.

# Global Affairs

## Ethiopia- the core of Pan-Africanism

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

The pioneers of the Pan-Africanism movement emerged a century ago. These visionary leaders saw the seed of the international struggle for equality and freedom and a better life for all people of African descent. One of the most important points in the teachings of the pioneers of Pan-Africanism was that people of African descent share a common destiny and that the unity of Africans is essential to the realization of the aspirations of Pan-Africanism. The movement believes that unity is essential for economic, social, and political progress and promotes the integration of people of African descent.

It can be argued that Ethiopia is the leading player in promoting Pan-Africanism because of at least two facts. First, it is a black nation that serves as living proof of the theories put forth by Pan-Africanist visionaries in the early 20th century. Ethiopia has always been a free, sovereign black nation and has never submitted to colonialists. It has its own remarkable indigenous civilization. What is more, the Ethiopians' spectacular victory over European imperialism, the Adwa victory near the end of the 19 century, was the jewel in the crown that made Ethiopia the leading star for Pan-Africanism and thus contributed to the intensification of the black liberation movements around the globe.

The second point is Ethiopia played a pivotal and irreplaceable role in one of the major practical applications of the theories of Pan-Africanism. Scholars agree that the Pan-Africanism thoughts influenced the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity, the forerunner of the African Union, in 1963. Thus, Ethiopia is the nation that takes lion's share of the credit for the genesis of the African Union.

The international prestige of Emperor Haile-Selassie coupled with the astute qualities of the Ethiopian diplomats of that time, like Foreign Minister Ketema Yefru, enabled Ethiopia to successfully play the middle ground and be a bridge between the two Pan-Africanist factions, the Monrovia group, and the Casablanca group that had differing strategies on the common objective of realizing the African unity. Had it not been for the relentless efforts of the Ethiopian leaders, the African Union we are talking about would have remained an imaginary or futuristic regional institution until today.

Ethiopia was the main benefactor during the early years of the establishment of OAU. Even some historians claim that it has sponsored the travel and accommodation of many of the delegates of the founding conference of the OAU held in 1963 here in Addis. Being the first Chairperson of OAU and the first Secretary General of OAU, the Ethiopian leaders played a key role as Pan-Africanist to help the OAU successfully pass through the critical stage of its early formative period.

Likewise, the Ethiopian leadership

contributed more than their share in providing various supports for the realization paramount and immediate objective of the OAU, which was the liberation of all African states from colonialism. Despite its meager economic resources, Ethiopia provided various financial and training supports to liberation groups from various African countries fighting the colonial occupying powers.

South African legendary hero of the struggle against apartheid, Nelson Mandela, received his military in Ethiopia. The story does not end there. Ethiopia gave him an Ethiopian passport, enabling him to travel across nations to coordinate the global anti-apartheid struggle. The irony here is, when Ethiopia honor him and gave him citizenship, Mandela was on the blacklist of Americans, labeled as a terrorist, and banned from entering the US. Mandela's name remained on the U.S. terrorism watch list till 2008, long after he served as the first black president of South Africa.

Despite a series of drastic regime changes the nation saw over the last half-century, Ethiopia's commitment to the ideals of Pan-Africanism and its support for the realization of the visions and missions of the regional body has never waned. During the time of the Derg as well as the EPRDF regimes, Ethiopia continued to support the anti-colonialist struggle that culminated in the independence of the last remaining African states namely Zimbabwe[in 1980] and Namibia[in 1990] as well as the freedom of non-white South Africans from the shackles the racist apartheid system back in 1994.

Unfortunately, after the demise of colonialism and apartheid, Africa's troubles did not show any sign of abating. Africa continued to suffer from political instability fueled by the insatiable selfish desire of foreign powers for African resources. A series of coup d'etats, civil wars, terrorism waves, political extremism, and border disputes have made African people's lives miserable, forcing the continent to lag in economic progress and impeding it from fully utilizing its potential. Though there are lots of improvements and progress, the issue of peace and security remains a paramount challenge threatening to jeopardize the realization of AU's development agenda. Africa has remained the continent with the grimmest statistics of poverty, IDPS, food insecurity, foreign debt, and violent change of regimes.

Even though Ethiopia itself is a victim of above-mentioned Africa's misfortunes, the nation has contributed a lot to bring peace and security to the other parts of the continent beyond its borders. Ethiopia has sent its peacekeeping missions to various parts of the region as part of AU and UN peacekeeping missions. Official reports released last year indicated that Ethiopia holds the position of the second top contributor supplying around 8 percent of the UN peacekeeping force. Ethiopian forces have paid the ultimate price in peacekeeping missions in various parts of the world including African states like

Somalia, Darfur [western Sudan], Congo, Rwanda, South- Sudan, Burundi, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire...and so on.

Apart from being the seat of the headquarter of the African Union, and the UN economic commission for Africa, Ethiopia has been selected as the seat for the fifth component of the AU's Pan-African University, and the construction of the university in the historic Adwa town was formally launched in 2017 jointly by the former Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn and the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni.

In addition, a yearly forum on Pan-Africanism, which made its debut last week as a sideline event to the grand 36th Ordinary AU summit. The forum organized by the state-run African Leadership Excellence Academy (AFLEX) gathered about 300 participants including African leaders. The forum aims to reinvigorate the spirit of Pan-Africanism, and inspired African scholars to contribute toward expediting the realization of the visions of Pan-Africanism.

Over the last few days, the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa has been brimming with the most powerful African men and women. Ethiopia shined more than ever as the nerve center of African politics. African leaders and diplomats converged and deliberated on the journey made so far, and the one ahead for 2 days toward the realization of the dream of Africans, Agenda 2063.

Last October, Ethiopia sponsored and hosted the First African Youth Summit creating another venue for senior African leaders to impart the spirit of Pan-Africanism among the prospective young African leaders drawn from more than 50 African states. In the three-day event held with a theme of promoting the integration of Africa, the participants pledged to follow in the footsteps of their forebears and contribute their share for the realization vision of AU per the timetable set in the agenda 2063.

Ethiopia not only spearheaded the efforts for the establishment and advancement of African unity. It also became a showcase validating the relevance of the continental body by practicing the popular word of wisdom of Pan-Africanists African solution for African problems. Ethiopia has ended the two-year bloody war in the northern part of the country by employing the wisdom of African leaders. Similarly, it is also Ethiopia's unwavering stance that the unsettled GERD dispute could well be solved by exploiting the wisdom and insider knowledge of African experts, scholars, and statesmen.

Of course, 60 years on, after the establishment of the OAU, the power dynamics among African states have drastically changed. And yet, it is irrefutable fact that Ethiopia is still maintaining the lead as the foremost proponent and actor of pan-Africanism. In a paper he published about a decade ago, an AU affair analyst, Mehari Taddele wrote: "Pan-Africanism is consciousness. It is a high level of awareness about responsibilities, duties, and historical position of a country and a people."

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African solution for  
African problems**



## Law & Politics

# Giving Africa the right place in the UNSC

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is unfair that Africa which possesses around 1.3 billion people lacks a permanent representation in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) despite repeated calls from various African nation leaders and scholars in a number of instances. Though a lot of efforts have been made by African nations including Ethiopia to convince the UN gives Africa a permanent seat, the council has been burying its head in the sand and failed to give a swift response.

It is public knowledge that since its inception, the Security Council has been time and time again serving as a rubber stamp and a political tool to put into effect the political interests and hidden motives of some powerful nations. As the continent lacks a permanent representation in the UNSC, Africa has been many a time and oft has been coming across a considerable amount of challenges from various entities worldwide.

To everyone's dismay, as things stand at the moment, the continent of Africa which is inundated with rich natural resources that can transform the entire world has been facing several socio-political problems. The sad thing is that merely for the love of infringing on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the continent of Africa and twisting the continent's arm, some superpowers have continued bending over backward to make their decision in the internal affairs of Africa using their veto power.

Quite a lot of decisions that have been made on the subject of Africa by some entities in the absence of Africa's representation have been one-sided, undeserved, and intolerable. To this point, the council has continued deliberately ignoring the long-awaited demand of the people of the continent of Africa.

Even though the UNSC is assembled from numerous member states, most of the decision-making process is carried out by finger-counted nations that have the veto power intending to put unwarranted foreign pressure and twist the continent of Africa's arm and maintain their interests.

Albeit African leaders have been promoting the agenda of securing permanent seats at different points in time in the UNSC, producing results in a little while turned out to be a wild goose chase and an impossible mission. As the African Union owns one of the highest authorities, it should move heaven and earth to make the dream of the continent of Africa become a reality at the earliest possible moment.

In good truth, unless African nations sustain sparing no effort to secure a permanent seat in the UNSC, pertinent bodies have not paid much attention to the issue that demands a quick response. The imbalanced representation of Africa in the UNSC for long has been criticized by each and every one worldwide despite the anticipated



objective failed to see the light of day.

It is common knowledge that regardless of the fact that African leaders requested several times for the continent of Africa to have at least two seats as permanent members in the council, no one is in the position to lend its ears yet. In consideration of the foregoing, African nations have been battling with a plethora of socio-economic and political issues intending to make the continent set in motion get back on track.

If the council continues turning a blind eye and a deaf ear to the urgent demand of the continent, Africa will continue to be a victim in international stage. African nations in the present circumstances have been insisting on permanent seats on the UNSC for the reason that it plays a huge role in smoothing the path of engaging in decision-making on the subject of their own issues.

As decisions on the topic of African nations have been made by a few power blocs treating the continent unfairly and unlawfully, Africa on numerous occasions has been falling into deep water. In relation to the biased representation of Africa in the UNSC, most African leaders have been expressing their disenchantment.

In times past, Senegalese President Macky Sall and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa denounced the "unfair" representation of Africa in the UN Security Council, regretting that no African country is a permanent member. The Senegalese head of state said he was in favor of discussions with non-African countries with a view to reforms so that Africa obtains at least two seats as permanent members, with all the prerogatives of current permanent members, according to information obtained from a local media.

"What is certain is that it is unfair that the African continent, with 54 countries, is not represented as a permanent member of the

Security Council. With South Africa, with all the other countries, we will continue to fight to stop this injustice in Africa." President of Senegal, Macky Sall said.

South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa said this is unfair, calling for a permanent representation of the African people. "We want fairness, we want Africa to be well-represented and to be heard because it cannot be fair that 1.3 billion people's views and thoughts cannot be heard at that high level in the same way that the views of the countries which have the veto right are heard."

It is worth recalling that in former times Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed concerning the issue tweeted I join other African leaders in reiterating that a continent of around 1.3 billion people needs a permanent voice and seat at the UNSC represented through a bloc. Issues and decisions that concern the continent cannot continue being addressed without continental representation.

It should be remembered that in the course of the war that lasted for two years in the northern part of the country, Ethiopia had been treated unfairly by the Security Council. It has been persistently passing a one-sided decision that had been bleeding the hearts of Ethiopians.

While on the subject, as the rejection of a permanent seat for Africa which is home to countless people and several natural resources is unfair, the council should attach importance to the continent suffering from several challenges. Unless the continent of Africa and other people from various parts of the world work in close collaboration concerning permanent representation in the UNSC, making the dream of the continent of Africa will not be a reality soon.

Africa's representation in the UNSC was top in the agenda of the 36th AU Summit held in Addis Ababa lately.

Speaking at the session, United Nations

Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres said that Africa's request for permanent seat at the UN Security Council is appropriate and fair.

Africans are not represented at the UNSC which was formed following the end of Second World War and has 5 permanent members with veto power.

The council has been criticized by many for it doesn't provide opportunity for Africa's voice to be heard at the international forums.

Hence, the African Union and its member states have been repeatedly requesting for a permanent seat at the council.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in a speech he delivered at the 36th AU summit today requested for Africa to be represented at the UN Security Council with at least one permanent seat and double non-permanent seats.

The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that it is entirely fair that the representation of Africa at the UNSC with a permanent member would be granted.

"It is true that ...the African countries did not yet exist with the exception of Ethiopia when the UNSC was formed. And it is entirely fair that the representation of Africa in the Security Council with a permanent member would be granted. Of course, it doesn't depend on me; it depends on the member states. But, it is very understandable and just aspiration," the Secretary-General elaborated.

"It is my deep belief that the biggest injustice that exists today in the Security Council is the lack of at least one African permanent member of the Security Council," United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Gutiérrez said.

Briefing journalists today, the Secretary-General said that there were few African countries that were independent when the UN Security Council was formed.

"So we have today a Security Council that corresponds to a reality that is no longer the reality of today's world" he underscored, and added that Africa was a double victim of colonialism in relation to the present institutions.

"It would be essential to have an African stronger presence in the Security Council, namely with one permanent member but it would also be important that Africans have stronger role and weight in the Bretton Woods institutions and other international multilateral institutions that were formed before African continent has moved into independence," the Secretary-General elaborated.

Several members of the Security Council including US, Russia and China have expressed that they are in agreement with at least one African member at the Security Council, Gutiérrez pointed out, and anticipated "which means there is hope that might be implemented."

# Art & Culture

## Bringing Ethiopian female heads to the limelight via art

*(A versatile Ethio-Italia artist staging songs in 7 local languages too)*

BY NAOL GIRMA

The all-rounded and gifted artist Gabriella Ghermandi is a singer, performer, novelist and short-story writer. She was born in Addis Ababa in 1965 to an Italian father and Ethiopian mother. She is brought up here in Piassa.

Simultaneous to her writing, Gabriella Ghermandi has been building a considerable reputation as a performer of narratives adapted from Ethiopia's oral and musical tradition. More often her readings are accentuated by Ethiopian music and songs. They revolve around a series of historical events. Her musical works had had excellent reviews in the international press and on various radio programs. They have been widely heard and enjoyed in Ethiopia, with presentations on radio, television, and social media.

While she was here in connection with the MAQUEDA concert held on 7 February at the Italian Cultural Institute, The Ethiopian Herald had intercepted her for interview with the intention of acquainting esteemed readers about her personal and professional life. She has touched upon a broad-array of ideas, feelings and thoughts.

**Would you brief us about Gabriella Ghermandi?**

I grew up in a world filled with different sounds: Ethiopian, Italian, Congolese and Indian. My mother used to manage a clothing store in Addis Ababa, in the main street of the Piassa neighborhood. Next to her store there was a music store run by a Greek woman: Maria Teresa Kiskas. She sold instruments, record players, 33 and 45 rpm records.

In Maria's store I listened to the Beatles, Zorba and Rebetika Greek music. On my way home I would listen to different kind of music, that of our singers, the Azmari. When I finally reached home the radio was always on when my father, who could not stand Ethiopian music, was not there. He used to describe it as a continuous lament. But we loved it, and along with my neighborhood girlfriends I danced to the tune. I also listened to Italian singers: Domenico Modugno whom my father loved and then more modern bands like the Banco del Mutuo Soccorso and the Premiata Forneria Marconi or singers like Lucio Battisti. This was the music my Italian classmates loved. In addition, I listened to our friend Geraldine's favorite Congolese music and the Indian music of my Kashmiri neighbors, of course Bob Marley, and also Genesis. Finally there were the war songs. I did not like them during those days. I used to go with my cousins to see the parades celebrating the anniversary of our victory at Adwa and the liberation from the Fascist occupation, just to laugh at the gestures of the warriors singing those war songs.

When they opened their eyes wide,



brandishing their swords and shields and when they shouted threats to their enemies. I used to find them ridiculous. In those days I would have considered anyone crazy who told me that one day I would recall our valorous patriots by imitating their gestures on the stages of theaters in Italy and around the world to remember our elders that fought for freedom.

I believe music needs engagement. There is no music just made to be performed. Music is a way of taking place and giving volume to unexpressed voices. Music does not mean politic but goes into politics, into building society, into one's life. Music is a way of giving the vision of a possible or impossible future.

**What are the themes of your literary works? How come you become versatile or multidisciplinary artist?**

The themes of my literary works are focused on Ethiopia because I came to Italy when I was a teenager. I was nostalgic about Ethiopia so much. I missed many things. So I tried to create my Ethiopia on the paper in a form of short stories. Then I began to think about our forefathers. And I started writing about the Ethiopian struggle against the Italian occupation. As such, what I basically write is focused on the culture of Ethiopia to throw light on it. It must be known that we Ethiopians have a very important history. A lot of story has to be told.

**What was the concert (album presentation) about? Who organized it?**

Our concert was organized by the Italian Cultural Institute here, Italian Embassy

in Addis Ababa and Region Emilia—Romagna region. The objective of this concert was to promote the only existing Italo-Ethiopian band that we are running in the name of Atse Tewodros Project. Making a paradigm shift we want to foreground female figureheads. Once, I noticed even some sponsoring international organizations were less observant of this fact.

**Could you brief us about the story of Maqeda and Atse Tewodros Project?**

Maqeda is the Ethiopian name of the Queen of Sheba, who according to the epic legend of Ethiopia went to the court of the Emperor Solomon to propose a challenge on mutual knowledge. And Maqeda is the name chosen for my new project, dedicated to female figures. The project aims to "universalize" the myth of the Queen of Sheba and of the other figures of Ethiopian history and mythology, and bring them out in experience of women, men and girls of different origins who will participate in the writing and serigraphy printing laboratories foreseen by the project itself.

Atse Tewodros Project is composed of a group of Italian and Ethiopian musicians born out of the idea of the Italian-Ethiopian singer, performer, and writer Gabriella Ghermandi. It is a unique project as it is the only Italian-Ethiopian band in existence.

The project takes as its symbol Emperor Tewodros, a man who was not of imperial lineage, but who managed to gain the throne through willpower and charisma, breaking with centuries of

custom. He was the first Emperor who gave Ethiopia the chance to modernize while respecting its traditions

The ensemble intends to respect traditional Ethiopian music by opening it to dialogue and exchange. The group creates pieces of local music with jazz inserts, reworking it according to the traditions – very unknown abroad – of different ethnic groups in the country and performing songs in 8 different languages.

In 2022, Atse Tewodros Project recorded the second album "Maqeda" (Ethiopian name of the Queen of Sheba), entirely dedicated to the female figures of Ethiopian history and mythology and to the rituals of the ethnic groups that have women at the center. The album is the result of painstaking ethno-musicological research in Ethiopia.

In addition to some original songs such as "Lucy" (dedicated to the first hominid), in the program of the concert in Addis Ababa, which will present the new album for the first time, some pieces of the Italian singing tradition will also be performed, inserting Ethiopian musical instruments (masinko, washint, kirar). That will be an innovative exchange, given that up to now the ensemble has performed only with original pieces, inspired by the Ethiopian tradition.

In 2010, in an effort to bring together Italian and Ethiopian musicians as a way of fostering mutual dialogue and artistic creation, she created the Atse Tewodros Project. This project got its start in Addis Ababa, growing out of the collaboration between Ethiopian composer Aklilu Zewdy and Professor Berhanu Gezaw.

Atse Tewodros was the emperor who modernized Ethiopia while respecting its traditions. He was also the emperor who fought against Queen Victoria's army and defended Ethiopian independence in the century of African colonization.

In December 2013, the Atse Tewodros Project recorded their first CD. It includes nine songs by Gabriella Ghermandi, Aklilu Zewdie, Inish Hailu, and Berhanu Gizaw. These are musical pieces in which the modes and pentatonic scales of traditional Ethiopian music, with traditional Ethiopian instruments, are combined with European instruments played in ajazz style.

The Atse Tewodros Project also includes songs from the Ethiopian Resistance that fought against the Italian Fascist regime. This is its way of reclaiming the past, both for the general public and for each individual, a way to describe the course of human and migrant lives and to talk about plural identities.

Her musical project is also the winner of the International Expo competition "Energy, Art & Sustainability for Africa", launched by Expo Milano 2015 selected out of the 41 received, and was in the ballot of the 59<sup>o</sup> Grammy Awards.