



# The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXIX No 144 25 February 2023 - Yekatit 18, 2015

Saturday

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## Commission working on donors' speedy drought response

- Delivers over 240,000 quintals of grain

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Apart from its steadfast engagement to deliver assistance to the drought-hit Borena Zone of the

Oromia State, the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) has been working to facilitate the donor's speedy response.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency

(EPA), the NDRMC Public Relations Director Debebe Zewde said that close discussions are underway with the World Food Program (WFP), donor groups, and

See Commission working ... Page 3



Francisco José da Cruz

## AU needs to act to encourage investors for AfCFTA implementation

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

ADDIS ABABA - The African Union (AU) must create incentives for the private sector to play a role in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), so remarked Angolan Ambassador to Ethiopia.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, the Angolan Ambassador

See AU needs ... Page 3

## East African Holding to build 108- Million- USD industrial park

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- The East African Holding S.C. signed an agreement yesterday with the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) to build an industrial park in Bishoftu town of the Oromia State with an outlay of 108 million USD.

Speaking during the occasion, East African Holding Chairperson Bizuayehu Tadelle(PhD) stated that the park, which will lay on 100 hectares of land, is expected to create 15,000 jobs and facilitate immense technology transfer.

The chairperson further highlighted that the expansion project will be developed

See East African ... Page 3



Photo- Hadush Abreha

## EU runs 1.4- bln- Birr projects to deter illegal migration

BY KFLEEYESUS ABEBE

ADDIS ABABA- The European Union (EU) announced that it allotted 1.4 billion Birr for several projects that are aiming to combat illegal migration and support Ethiopian citizens to change their lives through work at home.

The EU hosted here Thursday the "Migration Challenge 2022" short film competition with the topic "Migration- Opportunities and Challenges" and awarded the winners at the Ethiopian National Theatre.

See EU runs ... Page 3

# News

## Trade fairs enhancing economic cooperation: Ministry

- 25<sup>th</sup> edition Addis Chamber International Trade Fair kicks off

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA**—Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration stated that international Trade Fair is significantly expedient in strengthening regional economic cooperation among countries.

The 25<sup>th</sup> edition Addis Chamber International Trade Fair was officially opened on Thursday under the theme: ‘Enhanced Export for Sustainable Development,’ in which over 70 local and international companies took part.

On the occasion, Trade and Regional Integration Minister Endalew Mekonnen said that boosting national exports is the highest prerequisite of the government in an effort to rebuild foreign currency reserves. It has been doing in its capacity to achieve a projected growth of 7.5 percent in 2022/2023 fiscal year. Macroeconomic indicators achieved so far are believed to help to achieve the projected growth.

“Trade fairs help exchange best practices and new business know-how. The government considers the private sector notably Addis Chamber as a strategic partner and important stakeholder in the implementation of the national economic reform agenda. It fully recognizes the works and services of Addis



Chamber’s iconic international trade fairs in promoting trade and investment,” he said.

Addis Chambers International Trade Fair is one of the close to 31, 000 international trade fairs take place worldwide each year he said adding that it is one of important events favoring all business sectors such as commerce, finance, manufacturing, agriculture, agro-processors, technology, culture, education and others.

Trade Fairs are significantly contributing to the government’s effort towards strengthening regional economic cooperation among countries, he added.

Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations President Mesenbet Shinkutie on her part said that the prospect of economic growth and diversification directly depends on the level of economic freedom in a country.

“We are hopeful the government would provide favorable, transparent and predictable conditions for conducting business. The International Trade Fair has become generally recognized and an integral part of economic development and needs collaboration to flourish the export sector with friendly working relations among institutions,” she

added.

She called on business community members to take advantage of the presence of both local and international companies, share experiences, new technology, and know-how and explore possibilities of establishing business partnership and joint ventures with matching companies.

Addis Chamber hosted four international trade fairs. A large number of international and local companies exhibiting their products and services are making business contacts and networks, she stated.



## Debre Birhan issues business licenses for 188 investors

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** –Debre Birhan town Administration announced that it has issued business licenses to 188 investors with a total capital of 24 billion Birr over the last six months.

The town investment office Head Birhan Gebrehiwot stated that six industries which have been engaging in production were able to export their outputs and registered 12,529,000 USD in the same period last year.

The head said : “Now, we are working hand in glove with various stakeholders to beef up investor’s capacity, involvement. Besides, regular follow up will be made to

push some 24 industries functional in the next six months.”

He further said that the administration is screening investors who have not been engaging in investment yet and would take stringent measurements against them.

“We are eying on bringing foreign and local investors to make the town an investment hub,” Berhan said.

Recently, it was remembered that DebreBirhan town had staged a nine day International Trade, Investment and Finance Expo that brought over 200 local and foreign businesses together in a bid to pull more investment and reactivate economic activities, it was learnt.

## Ethiopian wins STAT Trade Times Cargo Excellence Awards

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA**—Ethiopian Airlines, the largest airlines in Africa, has won the STAT Trade Times Cargo Excellence Awards in the “African Cargo Airline of the Year” and “Air Cargo Brand of the Year in Africa” categories.

According to the airlines ,these awards were announced and presented during the Air Cargo Africa 2023 event held in Johannesburg, South Africa named by STAT Times International Awards for Excellence in Air Cargo.

The awards were presented in Johannesburg, South Africa during the Air Cargo Africa 2023 event, the Airline disclosed in its social media pages a day before.

The STAT Times Award is an international award for excellence in air cargo and provides recognition for outstanding achievements in the airlines industry across the world.

The Airline also expressed its gratitude to those who voted for it to win the coveted prize.



The airlines has also taken the crown for best Airline in Africa 2022 for 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive years, best Business Class Airline in Africa 2022 for 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive years, best Economy Class Airline in Africa 2022 for 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive years and best Business Class Onboard Catering in Africa, according to the Ethiopian airlines.

It is to be recalled that Ethiopian Airlines also won Multiple Prestigious Awards at SKYTRAX 2022 World Airline Awards on September 2022.

# News

## Ethiopia to host 2<sup>nd</sup> IGAD's labor, employment, migration ministerial conference

BY NAOL GIRMA

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Second Ministerial Conference on Labor, Employment and Labor Migration of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is slated to be held soon here, *The Ethiopian Herald* learnt.

The Conference will take place on 2 March 2023 in Addis Ababa, aiming at pinpointing roadmap towards the development of IGAD Regional Labor Market Information System

(LMIS).

Ethiopia to review the progress made since the signing of the Djibouti Declaration on Labor, Employment and Labor Migration in the IGAD Region and provide guidance on key priority areas of common concern on different pillars of the Declaration.

According to the press release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*, the conference would be attended by representatives of Ministers of Labor and Employment of IGAD member

states, namely Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda, those of African Union, social partners, development agencies and other key labor market actors in the region.

The conference will be preceded by a three-day expert meeting from 27 February to 01 March 2023 that will bring experts of IGAD Member States and development partners together to take stock of the implementation of the Djibouti declaration and deliberate on key priority areas of common interest.

The conference is expected to deliberate on key strategies towards improved coordination and action on key labor migration challenges of the region including fair Recruitment, bilateral labor agreements and building the capacities of labor attachées and embassies of IGAD Member States in key countries of destination.

As to the release, Horn of Africa Confederation of Trade Unions (HACTU) and Confederation of IGAD Employers (CIE) will also launch their five-year strategic plan .

## Commission working on donors'...

various embassies.

The director further stated that the government has also been exerting consolidated efforts to encourage other donors to contribute to the drought response and join its efforts to address the problem.

Meanwhile, the commission distributed 204,756 quintals of food for some 604,000 people living in the 13 districts of Borena Zone during the past two months and two weeks. Furthermore, ten quintals of nutrition food were delivered to children, and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in the area.

Investors, members of the community, and volunteers have made overwhelming participation in providing food and non-food amenities for people affected by the drought. "Despite such local engagement, the response of the international partners to the drought is slow."

"Particularly, the Oromia State has requested additional provision of food and non-food amenities to address over 800,000 people in the Borena Zone. In this regard, the federal government is working in unison with international partners to solve the problem within the shortest possible time."

The commission is also employing the emergency coordination center, which was established at the state level, to withstand the drought in Bale and other parts of the country. The Incident Command Post (ICP) that was installed at the zonal level is also instrumental to mobilize the resource for drought response, Debebe emphasized.

Borena Zone Chief Administrator Jarso Boru said that over 800,000 people have been affected by the drought and over 2. 2 million cattle died. Of these, 167,000 people are in a dire situation and need urgent and continuous support from the government and international partners.

## East African ...

with 108 million USD and the design follows the industrial park usage system, complete infrastructure, 40-megawatt power supply, and focus on renewable energy and increased exports. The park will connect the local farmers with product supply and will pay special attention to local resources.

"When the park is fully operational, apart from providing products for domestic consumption, it will earn foreign currency by exporting."

Bizuayehu added: "The industrial park will be located 40 kilometers from Addis Ababa and is close to the Ethio-Djibouti railway station. To be situated three kilometers away from Addis Ababa- Adama Expressway and 15 kilometers from Mojo Dry Port, the facility is unique in many features."

EIC Deputy Commissioner Daniel Teresa pointed out that Ethiopia has implemented multifaceted political and economic reforms and witnessed sustainable economic growth. The reforms are playing a vital role in increasing the capacity of new and existing investments.

The government has introduced and implemented viable policies and reforms that bring commendable results in strengthening the flow of investment and supporting the operation of special economic zones and industrial parks. Accordingly, Ethiopia has managed to attract more than two billion USD in foreign direct investment in the last six months," he elaborated.

East African Holding is an indigenous company involved in various sectors including industrial park development, cement production, building materials, and real estate development. The company is also engaged in mining development and logistics and has created over 6,000 permanent and temporary jobs.

## EU runs 1.4- bln- Birr projects ...

Speaking at the occasion, EU Ambassador to Ethiopia Roland Koiba, stated that since 2015, the union has steadfastly supported the country on migration-related matters through its EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa project.

"The allocation of 1.4 billion Birr clearly demonstrated our seriousness to the project that aims to raise public awareness on migration and help them to cope with difficulties. There is a lot of education, vocational training, and job creation support."

Noting the short film competition is part of the EU's multifaceted efforts, the ambassador highlighted the significance of regulating migration with proper documentation and process. "Migration needs to be framed, organized, legal and then it can work. Illegal migration is very



often a recipe for failure."

A winner of the competition Tesfa Dargie also advised migrants to have full knowledge about their journey. " People might migrate for different reasons, but the point is to know whether it is the right time, the right place, with the right person and documentation."

The program spur discussion about challenges and opportunities of migration for all. It also promoted EU migration activities in Ethiopia and in the Horn of Africa at large.

Public figures attended the event while artist Kassmasse and fashion pioneer Mahlet Afework "Mafi" were members of the jury of the video contest.

## AU needs to act to encourage investors...

to Ethiopia ,AU and UN Economic Commission Francisco José da Cruz said that Africa countries need to address the trade barriers and make things much easier for the private sector to play significant role and need to have a regional integration to make sure that the free trade area becomes a reality.

"We need to facilitate VISA's so that people and goods are moving freely across borders and address the trade barriers."

With regard to the 36<sup>th</sup> AU summit, the ambassador said that the summit focused on advancing the African Free Trade Zone, and how it will to move forward with regional

integration. Apart from AU reform, the summit also discussed peace and security issues giving special emphasis to DRC as it currently faces multiple simultaneous crises including violent conflict and instability.

Commending the Pretoria peace agreement between the Ethiopian government and TPLF, the ambassador said: "We have also seen progress in some other parts of the continent even though we still have concerned countries, especially those who made unconstitutional changes of governments."

"It is important to indicate that they continue to make progress and come up with a civilian

lead government so that they can rejoin the Africa Union as they have been suspended," The ambassador said.

Asked about the AU come up with wonderful decisions but lagging behind from being changing into practical actions, he said: "That is why the institutional reform of the AU is significant."

This organization needs to be more result oriented, make things and even make decisions with a very pragmatic approach and can implement them not just as political statements without practical ways of making them a reality, Amb. Francisco José da Cruz said.

It is important to find "Africa solutions to Africa problems" as those solutions will be based on our reality and traditions as well as culture. So, they have to be sustainable, the ambassador said.

"We need to have a strong sense of solidarity helping those countries in need. That is why a country like Angola is engaged in conflict prevention, management and resolution due to the fact that we have experience and sense.

It was learnt that Ethiopia is conducting diplomatic relationship with Angola through its Embassy in Zimbabwe and Angola opened its Embassy in Ethiopia in 1979.

# Opinion

## Ethiopia: Cross Border Trade

BY GETACHEW MINAS

There are several requirements for cross-border trade at regional level. These apply to Ethiopian traders engaged in the exchange of goods and services at the border area. One of the requirements is licensing and renewal of license. Entry into petty cross-border trade is not hampered, obstructed or impeded by cumbersome, awkward and burdensome regulatory procedures. The traders are required only to fill in a very simplified form with photographs and a fee to be paid in Ethiopian Birr to get the license. To avoid confusion and facilitate services, it is clearly indicated in all petty cross-border trade directives that, in matters not specifically covered by the directives, the Commercial Registration and Business Licensing Proclamation will be applicable.

The law requires that every Ethiopian engaged in cross-border trading is required to renew the license every year upon payment of a fixed fee in Birr. It is prohibited to use this license as a cover for illegal trading activities. Those traders who fail to adhere to the legal obligations stipulated in the law will have their license revoked. Following that a new license may not be given for a trader involved in such activity. A trader will be totally banned from conducting a petty cross-border trade if he commits such crime again. Illegal cross-border trade may lead to tax evasion which negatively affects the revenue of the government. With expansion of illegal trade, goods and services are expected more in both directions. Export items crossing the border may reduce the foreign exchange earnings of Ethiopia.

Traders that have secured a license to import or export have to undergo procedures of Customs. This means that they have to show their import licenses to customs officers who are in charge of checking and differentiating traders without the right permit. This is done to prevent illegal trading in which goods and services are brought into Ethiopia secretly. This illegal operation denies the country from collecting import taxes. If traders are successful in bringing goods into the country without paying taxes, it creates disruptions in the pricing of imports. Such imports are cheaper compared to those similar commodities imported legally. The market prices of legally imported goods are higher than those illegally imported. Consumers would demand cheaper goods even if they are illegally traded items.

Customs officers may try to discourage purchasers of illegal imports, but this effort is not productive. They find it hard to detect and snatch it from those who purchased it in the open market. But, illegally imported goods are exchanged underground and are difficult to detect. It is not only the government that is at a disadvantage but also legal market operators. These operators are at a disadvantage as they could not compete in a market where illegally imported goods are sold at cheaper prices. What is exchanged underground

had to come to the open market to attract customers and consumers. The custom officials and controllers have no means of detecting or capturing illegally imported goods exchanged in the open market. Both legally and illegally imported goods end up in the same shops.

The regulatory requirement related to a letter of credit and hard currency for permitted items is very strict. Importers have to produce authenticated documents for importing goods. These documents have to be checked and verified by customs and bank authorities, based on the law of the country. Similar check and control apply for goods exported abroad. However, cross-border trade is treated differently as it plays a vital role in improving the livelihoods of Ethiopian traders. Ethiopia, as a country, has a long history of cross border trade agreement with neighboring countries. These agreements play a vital role in maintaining healthy and strong bilateral relations which foster the realization of legal trade flow among nations in accordance with international trade law.

Ethiopia has taken significant steps in enhancing bilateral relations in the fields of cross-border trade. The formal cross-border trade in Ethiopia involves “both” large-scale and small-scale trade. The large-scale cross-border trade is carried out by enterprises with large financial capacity. It consists of trade in goods or services carried out by legally registered traders. They have to fulfill all requirements of the trading countries involved. On the other hand, small-scale cross-border trade involves low-income individuals who live close to the country’s border engaged in trading activities. They may deal with export and import of a limited number of basic commodities. The government has reasons for allowing small-scale cross-border traders. These operators are encouraged to be owners of legal business at the borders of the country.

There are basic reasons for permitting small-scale cross-border trading at the Ethiopian borders. One reason is that the basic goods frequently used by the local people living near the border do not “reach” the area in sufficient quantity. Even when the goods reached these locations, their prices would be high due to transportation costs becoming unaffordable for the poor. The other reason is to curb illegal and informal trade across the border by allowing the people to freely import basic commodities. Ethiopia traded with neighboring countries to help the people, particularly women, residing on the borders. In Ethiopia, women are active partakers in cross-border trade. Their participation in this trade enhances and improves food security. It helps reduce poverty among the vulnerable groups of people.

Major products traded at the borders contribute to the wellbeing of the people in that area. These products include agricultural produces, livestock, sanitary and beauty products, medicines, footwear and textiles, cereals, processed and semi-

processed foodstuffs. These include pasta, sugar, wheat flour, and tea. Other produces such as kerosene, charcoal and khat are also exchanged. The trading of these goods benefits Ethiopian women engaged in small-scale cross border trade. It serves as a means of livelihood for their families, particularly their children. Such trade enhances food security and reduces poverty. However, this trade has its challenges for cross-border traders. They face the high cost of transportation, which is discouraging small businesswomen. They are also confronted with lack of marketing information, which is very useful in fixing prices.

Small-scale cross-border traders in Ethiopia are faced with shortage of finance to run their business. There also suffer from lack of access to credit. In this situation they fail to buy goods traded at the border areas. They are deprived of the opportunity to store goods when prices are low. Added to this problem is the absence of marketing infrastructure for delivery of goods along the border areas. If goods are not delivered to the market on time, the petty traders miss the opportunity for selling goods. Lack of marketing infrastructure creates inefficiency in the marketing system. Inefficiency causes loss of business and closing of petty enterprises. This will be accompanied by unemployment and frustration among small business operators, particularly women entrepreneurs involved in border trade. Unsuccessful border trading creates high risk including loss of business, income and revenue.

Taxes imposed in the “formal large-scale” cross border traders vary in their nature. These are customs duty, excise tax, value added tax, surtax and withholding tax. Customs duty is a tax imposed on imports and exports of goods. The rates of customs duties are either specific or ad valorem. The supply of goods and services by registered persons is subject to a 15% VAT for all goods and services. Some products and services are exempt from VAT. These include financial services, educational services, and healthcare and transportation services. Customs duty is a kind of an indirect tax that is imposed on both exported and imported goods and services. The tax imposed on the import of goods is known as the import duty. Whereas the tax imposed on the export of goods is known as export duty.

Excise tax is a tax on the production, sale or consumption of a commodity in a country. Such taxes may be imposed on the manufacturer, retailer or consumer, depending on the specific tax. It is charged on excisable goods manufactured in Ethiopia by a licensed manufacturer, excisable goods imported into Ethiopia, and excisable services supplied in Ethiopian by a licensed person. Generally, the rates of excise duty range between 5 percent and 500 percent. The 500 percent applies to goods such as old motor vehicles.

Value Added Tax (VAT) is also charged in Ethiopia. It is a consumption tax that

is charged on the supply of taxable goods or services made in Ethiopia and on the importation of taxable goods or services into the country. The standard VAT rate is 15 percent and applies to goods and services that are neither exempt from VAT nor zero-rated. In other words, it is a tax, which is payable on sales of goods or services exchanged within the territory of a country. It is ultimately payable by the final consumer of the goods and services. There is, however, a difference between taxable supplies and exempt supplies. Where the supplies are taxable, the registered person is required to charge VAT but is also eligible to recover VAT incurred on such supplies as input tax. VAT incurred on making exempt supplies is not recoverable as input tax.

Surtax is an additional tax levied on top of an already existing business or individual tax and can have a flat or progressive rate structure. In other words, it is a tax levied upon another tax, also known as tax surcharge. It is an additional tax levied on incomes exceeding a certain amount. It is used to fund a specific program of the government and this can be ascertained in the form of a percentage of a specific amount or it can be charged as a flat amount. A net investment income tax is charged as surtax on a portion of the gross income. Withholding is the income an employer takes out of an employee’s salary and remits to the federal or local government. It is calculated based on the amount of income earned, the taxpayers’ file, the number of allowances claimed, and any additional amount requested by the employee.

In Ethiopia, withholding tax is the current payments of income tax at the time of goods imported and payments made on account of goods and certain services. Withholding tax is meant to curb income tax evasion and it is not a separate tax on its own. In contrast, VAT is a separate type of tax. VAT is a consumption tax payable on the goods and services consumed by any person whether government agencies, business organization or individual. Withholding tax encourages voluntary compliance. It reduces cost of collection effort. It prevents delinquency and revenue loss and it prevents loss in the fiscal conditions of the government by providing revenues throughout the taxable period. In the last six months, the Ethiopian Customs Authority caught over 780 delinquent traders at the borders and saved forty billion Birr. These cross-border traders who failed to adhere to the legal obligations stipulated in the law will have their license revoked. Cross-border trading does not mean double-crossing, cheating and abusing the law of the country. All the laws related to border trading and taxation has to be respected by business persons, border traders and by concerned authorities.

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

# Editorial

## Lifesaving response is urgently demanded!

The Borena Zone of Oromia State in Ethiopia is facing the worst drought. The zone has been experiencing severe drought conditions over the past three years due to lack of rainfall. As a result, hundreds of thousands of people are facing acute hunger. Evidence indicates that the area has not seen such a deadliest drought for years. Since the situation is very shocking, many Ethiopians are currently sharing heartrending pictures on social media calling for urgent response from the humanitarian aids.

The past three years have been unfortunate for hundreds of thousands of people residing in the zone as it has been affected by the recurrent drought that resulted in the death of over 3.3 million livestock putting the semi-pastoral communities in danger. More than 800,000 residents have been exposed to catastrophic situations since their lives are dependent on the rainfall that has not been received for three years. As they are mostly pastoralists their livelihood and animals are inseparably interwoven. These three years have been years of suffering for Borana pastoralists.

According to Chief Administrator of Borena Zone JarsoBoru, the Ethiopian government is striving to handle the situation as about three hundred thousand people have received aid in three rounds. Nevertheless, the humanitarian assistance being delivered to the affected communities is not enough to meet the growing demand. Even recent reports are indicating that the aid is far below from the demand. Here, it is unfortunate to see the international humanitarian agencies that are looking somewhere else when the people in the Borena Zone are suffering from this prolonged drought.

It is high time for humanitarian agencies to respond to this urgent need and support the effort of the government through increasing emergency assistance to the drought affected communities so that the situation might be contained before it causes further devastation. Unless the circumstance is met with urgent assistance, large scale of death is inevitable. Thousands have already been displaced due to this problem. As aid agencies have not been responding and humanitarian assistance arrives very late, it will be too late to prevent large-scale destruction.

The fear is that the zone is heading for a humanitarian disaster that can cost thousands of lives unless a very urgent response that can alleviate the situation is made. Since the situation is intensifying at an alarming speed, humanitarian agencies must not fail to intervene to prevent this large scale of death. Currently, many Ethiopians, on their social platforms, are appealing to national and international authorities to urgently respond to this deadliest condition to save the lives of hundreds of thousands.

Unfortunately, there are predictions that the situation could be far worse than the one that happened in Somalia more than ten years ago which claimed the lives of more than 260,000 people. Livestock is a source of wealth and pride as well for Borana pastoralists who have completely lost their livestock to this prolonged drought. Million heads of livestock have died. This left above 67,000 households with no livestock. Hence, the zone is currently facing the worst famine in history. To save the lives of hundreds of thousands, we call on global and local humanitarian agencies to provide urgent lifesaving humanitarian assistance.



## The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays  
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

Office of the CEO  
Tel. 011-126-42-22  
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

### Advertisement and Dist.

Department  
email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com  
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew  
email- workubelachew@press.et  
Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city  
Woreda - 05, House No----  
Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama  
Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:  
Alem Hailu  
Elizabeth Mengistu  
Zekarias Woldemariam  
Desta Geberehiwot  
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et  
email: ethiopianherald@press.et  
Fb/ /Ethiopian Press Agency/  
The Ethiopian Herald

# opinion

## Buttressing Ethiopia-Korea multilateral relation to the uppermost

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Special Envoy to Africa Union (AU) Summit and Ethiopia Jang Sungmin said that Africa is a continent of limitless prospects and possibilities. The Republic of Korea (ROK) is always looking for ways to advance forward and thrive all the more.

According to the press release sent from the ROK Embassy to *The Ethiopia Herald* Special Envoy Jang Sungmin underlined African countries are truly great partners with great potential for collaboration in a wide range of fields, including economy, trade, or development cooperation.

In this regard, as a part of the efforts to further enhance the solid ties between the ROK and Africa, Special Envoy Jang announced that the ROK will host the first "Korea-Africa Special Summit" in 2024.

Special Envoy Jang explained that Ethiopia is one of the ROK's key interests in Africa because Ethiopia was a country that came to the ROK's rescue during the Korean War. President Yoon feels very strongly about countries that helped the ROK preserve its freedom, which is one of the pillars for the ROK's development. Hence, quite naturally, Ethiopia is currently the largest recipient of the ROK's development assistance in Africa.

Special Envoy Jang voiced hope that the ROK becomes a "true partner" of Africa. He explained that President Yoon, who was elected President in May of last year, has a very strong philosophy towards his foreign policy, which emphasizes Africa. With the national vision of becoming a Global Pivotal State (GPS), the ROK's new foreign policy focuses on core global power that contributes to freedom, peace and prosperity. President Yoon believes there can be no real peace without freedom and no prosperity without peace. With this mindset, President Yoon is out to strengthen ties, especially with Africa.

Special Envoy Jang explains "The ROK was a war stricken country, impoverished; but with the help of the international community, it was able to grow immensely and is now thankfully among the top ten economic powers in the world."

Meanwhile the Republic of Korean government confirmed Korea is keen to provide 100 million USD to Ethiopia with a view to assisting the latter to ensure economic development.

The special envoy has delivered personal letter and message of Republic of Korean president, Yoon Suk Yeol regarding government's new direction towards Africa

and its closest country, Ethiopia.

Jang said; "It is a good time to strengthen the two countries' relation since Ethiopia is the prime nation to Korean government to have deepest relation in economy as well as the political arenas."

He said Korea would hold Korea-African Summit 2024 and would like to make successful summit to develop together which has of paramount benefits for Korean and African economic cooperation.

The envoy also noted that investment, economic cooperation and development assistance would further continue to Ethiopia since the war was over. The current Ethiopia's peace makes the country more politically stable and economic prosperity.

Korea would also expand more cooperation in Ethiopian health and transport sector as it did in the past to make cultural exchange with Ethiopians, too.

He visited Ethiopian Korean War veterans in the capital, and said that: "I visited them because we deeply respect, value, and remember Ethiopian soldiers who sacrificed in the two Korean War for Korean freedom."

Korea celebrates 60 years anniversary of diplomatic relation with many African countries and tries to further enhance its diplomatic relations and economic cooperation to share prosperity.

"It is good time for Korean government to expand trade and investment with Ethiopia and Korea would like to have different economic partnership with Ethiopia in the fight against climate change and poverty via supporting Ethiopia's development efforts."

"Korean government has four target areas to support Ethiopian government and Korea would like to double its support to Ethiopia in upcoming ten years through KOIKA."

The ROK achievements would not have been possible without the support of the international community. That is why the ROK is reaching out to countries, especially Africa, to strengthen economic cooperation and enhance development assistance. As Special Envoy Jang stated, Money alone is not the answer. For sustainable development, fish alone cannot be the answer, but rather sharing know-hows how to fish is a key. The ROK has that know-how and it wants to share it with Africa.

Jang Sungmin is the ROK President Yoon Suk Yeol point man for future policies. He currently serves as the Senior Secretary for Future Strategy and was recently appointed by President Yoon Suk Yeol to be his Special Envoy to the African Union Summit and Ethiopia.

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

# Art & Culture

## How to demonstrate abundance?

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

Eckhart Tolle says think of whatever you want to manifest as though it already happened and then you will start manifesting it. This also coincides with the idea of paradigm... if you are in the paradigm of 'bountifulness' that is what you will manifest. You also have to work towards it.

Having the mindset that it will happen is very crucial in determining whether you will get it or not.

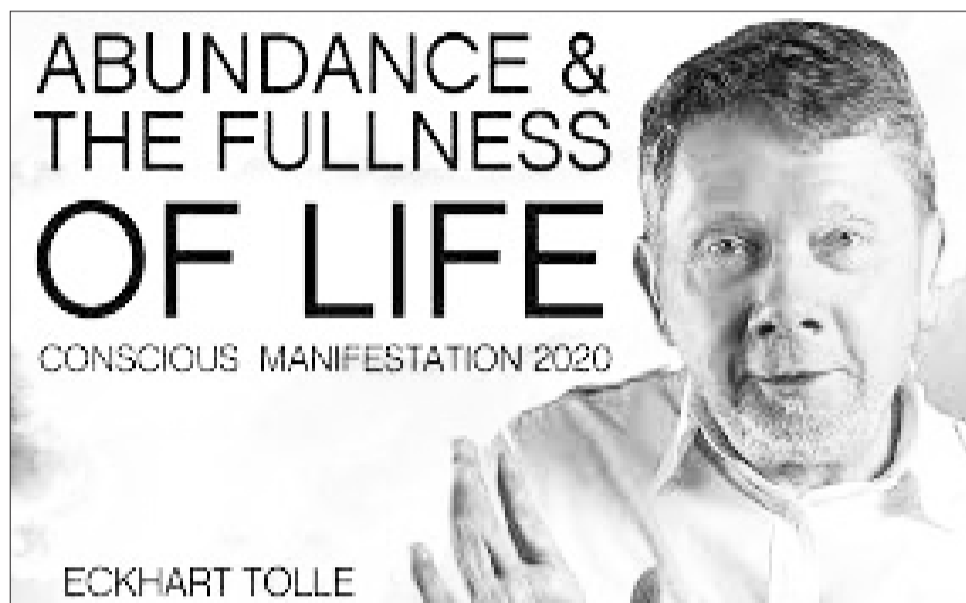
Many successful people will tell you the same thing. They deeply believed that their success would be a reality and it became ... Their belief helped them to work towards their goal and it became their reality.

Take Oprah Winfrey for example... even though she was raised in poverty she knew it wouldn't be her fate. She knew she'd manifest abundance and she did... She worked relentlessly towards her goal and she made it her reality.

So a paradigm shift in one's thinking or thinking abundantly instead of having a mentality of scarcity is what will make a person successful.

A mentality of scarcity means that a person feels like they won't change or they don't want to come out from their comfort zone... chances are they will remain that way without changing. They will feel like they are not in control of their situation.

So think greater to achieve better is the gist of this writing.///



## Ethiopian All time best novel to get screen adaptation

BY KFLEEYESUS ABEBE

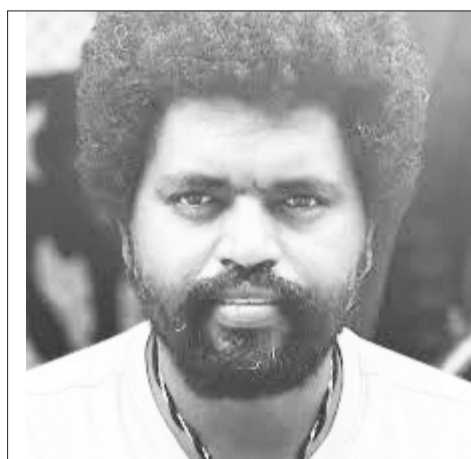
'Fiker Eske Mekaber' is a pioneering and one of best selling Amharic novel portraying love between members of the nobility and the working class. The book became famous as it brought Ethiopian rural life with authenticity, originality and influence during the emergence of modernity in Ethiopia. 'Fiker Eske Mekaber' also portrayed the nature of feudalism in Ethiopia and its impact on the lives of people at the time. Since its release, people never miss mentioning the book while talking about Ethiopian literature. It is not an exaggeration to say it has set a standard in Amharic literature. It is a literary work that influenced Ethiopia in many ways. Like other parts of the world, it was customary in Ethiopia to exemplify strong love with William Shakespeare's characters: Romeo and Juliet. But Haddis Alemayehu's 'Fiker Eske Mekaber' was successful as it replaced Romeo and Juliet

with local name Seblewongel and Bezabeh. The book has been translated to English by Sisay Ayenew titled 'Love Unto Crypt'. It is also narrated by the famous theatrist and radio host Wegayehu Nigatu. Now, this much-loved novel is to appear on the screen. The National TV, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation signed deal with cinematographer Sewmehon Yismaw and his company Sewmehon Films to adapt it into drama series. Sewmehon is an emerging cinematographer with notable works like African festival premiered short film "Ewir Amora Kelabi", feature film "Sewnetwa", the recent captivating music clip "Enatwa Gondar" and others.

Signing the deal Sewmehon said the crew would try to understand the gist of the story and other works would be easy.

Assistant professor, Theatrist Nebiyu Baye says it would be a huge project since many people like the novel upto wondering what would the characters look like in cinema.

"Many young Ethiopians have read or listened narration of the novel and have their own mental picture of the characters. They



are eager to see the book characters into life (movie characters). They would be wondering what Seblewongel and Bezabeh looks like. How the director brings the time to life."

CEO of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation Fessiha Yetagesu says the adaptation of 'Fiker Eske Mekaber' is part of advancing the corporation in terms of content and style. He is hopeful that this project will attract more viewers to the channel.

"We know that Ethiopian Radio narration of the book by Wegayehu Nigatu has raised the level of prominence to the novel. Through translation, the novel has reached across Ethiopia. We believe the book has a lot to give for this generation too. We have been thinking of bringing 'Fiker Eske Mekaber' into drama series for long. Now we are at crucial stage of signing a deal with film company. The drama series will make us competitive in the market."

The drama is projected to have four seasons and 48 episodes.

The Ethiopian Herald learnt that families of Haddis Alemayehu appealed for patent right about the creation of "Fiker Eske Mekaber" into cinema. If this is sorted out and "Fiker Eske Mekaber" appeared on cinema, it will be a historic project with acclamation or critics. What is for certain is the book is deserving and adaptation of books into cinema is what Ethiopian cinema should culture as larger audience needs to get thoughts that are shared by different literatures.



# Law & Politics

## AU Summit showcases Ethiopia's pervasiveness in face of coordinated pressure

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The African Union (AU) summit has been concluded with nations firmly vowing to strengthen ties and cement cooperation in different frontiers.

The summit which Ethiopia peacefully and successfully hosted also placed a great deal of emphasis on some of the pressing issues facing the continent. It also set directions on social, economic, and political issues. Unconstitutional change of government, external intervention, peaceful resolution of conflicts and common development goals were top in the agenda of the summit.

Above all, Ethiopia has showcased the world that it remains a linchpin in the continent by putting forward the major priorities the continent should work on. Besides, by hosting a successful summit, the country has proven the world it still continues to be a preferable diplomatic center.

It should be remembered that in the course of the conflict that lasted for two years in the northern part of the country, the country was a victim of coordinated campaign which tarnished the good image of the country.

In consideration of the foregoing, Ethiopia had been under unwarranted foreign pressure under the guise of lame reasons from some entities aimed at encroaching on the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In a similar vein, last year, some discredited media outlets had been engaged in defaming the country with the intention of making member states of the African Union not to attend the summit in AU alleging that Addis Ababa was under siege.

But, the country proved naysayers wrong by organizing the summit in Addis Ababa successfully. The summit was held in the company of quite a lot of heads of state and government of members' states with flying colors deliberating on several continental matters.

It is pertinent to note that carrying out the African Union summit in Addis Ababa has played a huge role in making conversant the wider international community with the existing situation of the country and rebuilding Ethiopia's status in the shortest possible time.

It is worth recalling that AU has played a huge role in deciding the AU summit to take place in Addis Ababa despite wet blankets' spurious stories against the positive achievements of the country. In good truth, this in black and white demonstrates the firm stance of the continental bloc to consolidate continental unity and harmony as well as defend potential threats.

Due to the uncompromising stance of all member states, the continent has also deliberated on ways to deepen ties and ensure harmony among nations in accordance with the objectives and principles of the African Union.

As a matter of fact, the AU-led peace talks signed between the federal government and Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) was seen as best example in terms of resolving African issues through African mechanisms



and addressing problems peacefully. In point of fact, AU's brokered peace deal turned out to be the talk of the world for showing its capability in getting to the bottom of the continent's problem in its own way.

Other than that the member states of the AU have been playing a leading role in providing a good opportunity for the country to smooth the path of its diplomatic undertakings in terms of bilateral and multilateral relations. Apart from that the AU summit has played a great role in bringing the wider international community into the light with the fact the country has resolved its predicaments and returned to normalcy through the AU-brokered peace deal.

Ethiopia in due course turned out to be triumphant over their evil mission. In the present climate, the country has been going to the ends of the earth to restore security and stability by fighting against terrorism in the Horn of Africa.

At the AU summit held recently in Addis Ababa, quite a lot of journalists drawn from various parts of the world have taken place. While on the subject, their presence plays a huge role in familiarizing the global community with the existing circumstances on the ground about Ethiopia and building its image. In actual fact, the country welcomed all of them with a genuine spirit of friendliness.

The hospitality service sector comprising hotels and other amenities has played a huge role in carrying out the necessary preparations for the AU summit participants.

During the 36<sup>th</sup> Ordinary of African Union (AU) summit, Ethiopia has registered huge diplomatic achievements and successfully built its images with member states and global allies, so remarked Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

In his biweekly press briefing, MoFA Spokesperson Meles Alem said that the summit has helped Ethiopia build its image and scale up capacity to safeguard its national interest.

During the course of the AU summit, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) discussed

a range of issues with various heads of states and representatives of international organizations leaders in a way to strengthen diplomatic and multilateral ties.

Accordingly, the premier has had fruitful discussions with leaders of various countries via informing and briefing Ethiopia's current situation.

He recalled that Ethiopia has successfully hosted the 36<sup>th</sup> AU Summit and 42<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, as well as other side events in which number of heads of state and government, representatives of countries and international organizations and others participated.

The summit was also attended by UN Secretary General António Guterres, the representatives of different countries, UAE, EU, and delegates from other countries and international and multilateral organizations across the globe.

Following the summit the economy and service sector of the country has been stimulated and the outlooks of pan-Africanism, which were started by Haileselassie, Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta have been reinvigorated, he said.

He recalled that the government has established a national committee to host the summit successfully and Ethiopia has been actively participated in the summit to defend and sustain its national interests.

Ethiopia has carried out successful diplomatic activities on the margins of the 36<sup>th</sup> Africa Union (AU) summit held in Addis Ababa over the past days, the ministry added.

The 36<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Assembly, that attracted a number of Heads of State and Government of member countries as well as several guests from across the world, was concluded, according to information obtained from Ethiopian News Agency.

During the summit, the President of Comoros, Azali Assoumani, has taken over the chairmanship of AU from Senegal's Macky Sall.

The incoming AU chairperson, Assoumani, has promised to discharge his continental responsibility with African passion focusing on promoting peace and security as well as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

In a speech he delivered at the opening of the summit, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has hailed the principle of African solutions to African problems stating that "Ethiopia is where it is today in no small part because of the tireless efforts of the African Union and the wisdom of its deeply-held belief in the principle of "African solutions to African problems."

Abiy further added: "I would like to use this opportunity to lend my voice yet again for Africa to be represented on the UN Security Council with at least one permanent seat and double non-permanent seats."

On the margins of the two days summit, President Sahle Work Zewde, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen and other senior government officials of Ethiopia have conducted successful bilateral discussions with several leaders and foreign affairs ministers of African countries, as well as heads of international organizations, and invited guest.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Birtukan Ayano told ENA today that Ethiopia has successfully organized the 42<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council and 36<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit noting that the people of Ethiopia played big role in this regard as they had demonstrated the usual hospitality to the guests.

As a result of this, the leaders of African countries have reaffirmed the fact that Ethiopia is their second country and Addis Ababa is the capital of Africa.

Hence, Ethiopia has achieved big successes in both bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, she added.

The State Minister has extended gratitude to all that helped for the successful conclusion of the summit.

# Peace and stability

## in the continent is important to achieve progress

*Francisco José da Cruz,  
Ambassador of Angola to Ethiopia, AU, UNECA*

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

*The Africa Union has made its 36th Head of States and Governments summit from February 16 to 19 / 2023 at its headquarter Addis Ababa ,Ethiopia with the presence of UN Secretary General António Guterres and other top ranking officials.*

*The summit concluded passing imperative decisions with regard to various continental agenda's mainly peace and security, the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and AU reform.*

*The Ethiopian Herald raised a range of questions to Francisco José da Cruz, the Angolan Ambassador to Ethiopia, African Union and UN Economic Commission for Africa. The briefing of the ambassador is presented as follows. Have a nice read!*



### What is the focus of the 36th African Union Heads of State and Government summit?

The 36th African Union summit focused on diverse issues. First of all it finds ways for advancing the African Free Trade Zone and how we are able to move forward with regional integration. We also discuss peace and security issues centralizing DRC as it currently faces multiple, simultaneous crises including violent conflict and instability.

Last Friday, we had two mini summits on DRC: one was organized by Angola and Burundi to discuss the heads of state on the situation in East DRC. Later on, there was a Peace and Security Council meeting on DRC again under the chairmanship of South Africa. Peace and security is a priority for Africa if we want to have development.

The African Union summit has highlighted some progresses we have made in the continent especially the peace agreement made between the federal government of Ethiopia and TPLF which is seen as the very encouraging step in silencing the gun in the continent and to emphasize the importance of national dialogue and inclusive way of dealing with national issues. We have also seen progress in some other parts of the continent even though we

still have concerned countries, especially those who made unconstitutional changes of governments.

It is important to indicate that they continue to make progress and come up with a civilian lead government so that they can rejoin the African Union as they have been suspended. It seems that the summit has accomplished the goals and expectations. So, now is the time to implement the decision we have made.

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**Most of the time the Africa Union passes important decisions, however, what factors forced it to lagging behind?**

That is why the institutional reform of the African Union is significant. President Paul Kagame has once again presented the report. We are making progress even though not up to our level of expectations but we are definitely moving on the right track. This organization needs to be more

result oriented, make things and even make decisions with a very pragmatic approach and decisions we now can implement them not just as political statements without practical ways of making them a reality. The approach we are trying to follow and we see that and we are moving in that direction.

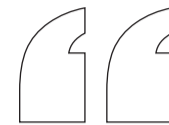
**AU was commending Ethiopia for the milestone to ensure peace in the country. How do you see it?**

This is a very important example of how we can really have African solutions to African problems and how Nationals (people of the same nation) can overcome their differences. There would always be some challenges/ grievances but as long as we are committed to the common good, we will find solutions. That is what the federal government and TPLF demonstrate with the signing of the peace agreement and the way the agreement has been implemented. The agreement was signed at the time when we are still facing a number of challenges in terms of democracy and political inclusion. So, we really salute the Ethiopian leaders for showing the way and having taken a high ground approach to solving national problems.

**The African Union is reforming itself. Would you tell us the progress?**

“**It seems that the summit has accomplished the goals and expectations. So, now is the time to implement the decision we have made**”





**W**ith regard to the reform, it is also important and that is why the AU can help the member states to become more aligned in terms of policies and regulations conducive to enhancing trade and cooperation among ourselves

There has been reform to make the organization efficient to make it align with main power capable of running the organization in a more efficient way. It is not an easy process. It takes time and step by step, we are moving in the right direction. We are making recruitment based on merit which requires attention, an approach that at the end really hires the most talented African we can find in the market.

**What do you think would be the challenges awaiting Africa free trade area so as to implement it across the continent?**

When you have a very pragmatic approach, in this process, the regional economic communities play a very critical role. It is also necessary that as countries we start trading more between ourselves and try to find solutions to our commercial needs in Africa first before trying to go to the other regions in the world. It has to be a result oriented approach which brings the benefit of trading with our neighbor first, without region and the continent as a whole.

**What should governments do in supporting AfCFTA and the reform as a whole?**

I think the government must create incentives for the private sector to play a role. We need to facilitate VISA's so that

people and goods are moving freely across borders. We need to address the trade barriers that make things much easier for the private sector to play the role which is important and need to have a regional integration to make sure that the free trade area becomes a reality in the continent.

With regard to the reform, it is also important and that is why the AU can help the member states to become more aligned in terms of policies and regulations conducive to enhancing trade and cooperation among ourselves.

**Does the AU reform help Agenda 2063?**

Yes. Because what we do is to make sure that we are able to achieve the strategic objectives of Agenda 2063. For that we have to have an organization which is efficient with the main power capable of driving it in the right directions and align with the objectives of agenda 2063.

So the approach the new AU commission is taking as I said we are in the process of recruiting the best and most talented Africans. We have a system to place based on merit, trying to be more transparent, equitable and give the opportunities to all member states to come forward with the nationals. At the end we have a representative of the continent as a whole.

“We think that for us peace and stability

in the continent is important to achieve progress. Therefore it is always a matter of concern when peace and stability are challenged in any member state. As a whole, we think that it is important to make an effort to silence the gun in the continent because it will be the only way we will fulfill the agenda 2063, and will be able to provide conditions for our people.”

If you want to add any more points, Please take a chance.

African countries achieved independence because of the resolve and determination of our people and our leaders. Today we continue to face challenges in terms of peace and stability, development, the wellbeing of the population and we can only achieve sustainable solutions if they are based on our reality. And that is why the AU is pursuing the strategic objective of identifying African solutions to African problems we face today. This has to become at the continental level or our individual countries' agenda. Because we know what problems we face and solutions have to be based on our facts, our realities so that we can come up with very pragmatic solutions to which people can buy into, they become part of those solutions to be sustainable.

We think that for us peace and stability in the continent is important to achieve progress. Therefore it is always a matter of concern when peace and stability are

challenged in any member state. As a whole, we think that it is important to make an effort to silence the gun in the continent because it will be the only way we will fulfill the agenda 2063, and will be able to provide conditions for our people. The world is becoming more competitive and we need to be united to be able to defend our interest in this international environment in which everything is becoming more competitive.

I just want to say that we should continue to have hope that the continent is moving in the right direction. There is more ownership of Africans regarding our own future. It is important we continue to find “African solutions to African problems” as those solutions will be based on our reality and traditions as well as culture. So, they have to be sustainable. We need to have a strong sense of solidarity helping those countries in need. That is why a country like Angola is engaged in conflict prevention, management and resolution due to the fact that we have experience and sense. Because of our own history we make it available and provide assistance to other countries based on that. This is the way to move forward with our continent. So we can achieve the objective of agenda 2063.

**Thank you very much.**

**You are welcome**

## Society

## Renewed commitment to end AIDS

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Last Monday, African leaders and partners joined together at a high-level event on the side-lines of the 36th Session of the African Union to commit to a set of actions to boost progress towards ending AIDS.

The event, Health Financing and Sustaining Action to End AIDS and related Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases, was co-hosted by the African Union, NEPAD, UNAIDS and PEPFAR.

In her opening remarks, Chief Executive Officer for the African Union Development Agency – (AUDA-NEPAD), Nardos Bekele said that this is the right time to reflect on previous commitments, implementations, and what has worked and what has not.

“The COVID-19 pandemic presented essential lessons that we should use to shape the future of our health systems, the African Continent spearheaded collective actions to respond better. Furthermore, we saw the private sector coming together to work with the governments to provide services to the people that needed them.”

The commitments come at a critical time because despite unprecedented progress, AIDS in Africa is far from over. The massive impacts of the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and HIV have exposed huge weaknesses in health systems across Africa; and the continent is not on track to achieve an AIDS-free Africa by 2030.

“The coming into force of the African Medicines Agency (AMA) Treaty is an important milestone for the Continent. Aligned and coordinated regulatory systems will open up the continental market for pharmaceuticals and enable our manufacturers to leverage the advantages of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA). The AUDA-NEPAD will continue taking technical leadership in the operationalization of the AMA which will bring us a step closer in our fight against AIDS” said Nardos.

Africa has been disproportionately affected by the AIDS pandemic with 67 percent of people living with HIV living on the African continent. The spread of the disease has affected every dimension of African society.

“This event is timely as it will allow us to take stock of the progress made and challenges remaining and to consider a way to end AIDS by 2030,” stated Amb. Minata Samate Cessouma, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, African Union Commission.

“A goal, which includes achieving the 95-95-95 targets, access to medicines and diagnostics, reducing new infections, diversified and sustainable financing, while closing the equity gap, was set. Let me reaffirm that whenever our leaders take bold initiatives and actions, significant progress has always been made. I hope there will be an Extraordinary Summit dedicated to taking concrete steps towards an AIDS-free Africa by 2030,” she concluded.

According to information from UNAIDS,



**When HIV/AIDS is over, establishing regional manufacturing on the Continent of Africa will be our legacy for fighting infectious disease across the Continent and globally**

with the concerted efforts of partners including UNAIDS, PEPFAR and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, Africa has achieved remarkable results in lessening the burden of AIDS. New HIV infections have been reduced by 60 percent since the peak in 1996 and in some countries by as much as 95 percent, AIDS-related deaths have been reduced by 72 percent since the peak in 2004, and in 2021, 88 percent of people living with HIV in Africa knew their HIV status of whom 89 percent were accessing antiretroviral treatment.

However, for the first time in more than two decades, global progress against AIDS is faltering. In Africa, six out of seven new HIV infections among adolescents aged 15-19 years were among girls. Women and girls accounted 62 percent of all new HIV infections in 2021 and only 50 percent of children living with HIV received the lifesaving treatment they needed.

U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy Ambassador Dr. John Nkengasong, who oversees PEPFAR said, “When HIV/AIDS is over, establishing regional manufacturing on the Continent of Africa will be our legacy for fighting infectious disease across the Continent and globally.”

The declaration noted that weak health systems are continuing to hamper progress, including inadequate human resources for health, weak drug and commodity supply chains, insufficient quality control, inadequate integration of HIV services with other health and social services. A failure to build the capacity, fund and include community organizations as critical and valued partners in the response to HIV is also preventing accelerated progress.

Winnie Byanyima, UNAIDS Executive Director sees universal health care as key. “Universal Health Coverage is another opportunity for African self-reliance, creating national insurance schemes where resources are collected and insurance is rolled out for

all those who cannot afford it,” she said. “This must include HIV services. People living with HIV are citizens like any other.”

There was also a deep concern that a significant share of HIV-related programs were primarily managed, implemented, and financed by external donors rather than governments, and that less than 10 percent of the 55 African Union member states have met their pledge under the Abuja declaration to allocate 15 percent of the annual budget to the improvement of the health sector. In the new declaration, leaders committed to implement the Abuja 15 percent target on domestic financing for health, while transitioning away from dependence on partners’ funding. Leaders noted with appreciation the Outline of the Roadmap to 2030: ‘Sustaining the AIDS response, strengthening health systems and ensuring health security’; and its six pillars and requested the Commission, AUDA-NEPAD, to develop a roadmap to 2030 and to submit to the Assembly at its next session.

It also invited the Assembly, 10 years after the Abuja+12 declaration, to hold a Special Session on Ending AIDS, preventable Maternal deaths and Health Systems strengthening by 2030 no later than July 2024; and called on partners, especially PEPFAR, UNAIDS, The Global Fund, The African Private Sector and others, to support the implementation of this Declaration and Roadmap to 2030.

At the event, heads of state and government adopted a declaration which includes commitments to take personal responsibility and provide active leadership in the AIDS response, champion science and mobilize domestic political and financial support.

They also expressed their commitment to create a conducive structural, legal, regulatory, and policy environment that addresses persistent HIV-related equity gaps, promote gender equality, respect human rights, and eliminate discrimination and stigma against people living with HIV.

# Verbatim and Caption

## Africa's genuine demand for permanent seat at UNSC



### Africa needs strengthening international its multilateral relations: AUC Chairperson

*Africa needs to strengthen its multilateral relationship with the international community to make the continent's voice heard by focusing on a partnership with the world in accordance with the specific needs of Africans.*

*Africans must strengthen its participation and contribute its role in international multilateral relations. Africa's strong presence in international multilateral institutions would help both the continent and the world in general.*

Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) said at the 36<sup>th</sup> AU summit

### UNSG says Africa's permanent seat demand at UNSC genuine

*Africa's request for permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is genuine and appropriate. 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*

*It would be essential to have an African stronger presence in the Security Council. Africa would be granted a permanent seat. Of course it doesn't depend on me; it depends on the member states. But it is very understandable and just aspiration.*

United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) Antonio Guterres said at the 36<sup>th</sup> African Union summit here in Addis Ababa last week.



### Africa must granted at least one permanent seat at UNSC: PM Abiy

*I would like to use this opportunity to lend my voice yet again for Africa to be represented on the UN Security Council with at least one permanent seat and double non-permanent seats. Africa should be represented at the UNSC and Africa also needs to have proportional representation at the G-7, the G-20 and similar global forums.*

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said at the 36<sup>th</sup> AU summit



## Published every Saturday in Coopreation with Armauer Hansen Research Institute

### AHRI's effort in unlocking health innovation bottlenecks

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Indeed, health systems consist of all organizations, people, and actions whose primary intent is to promote, restore or maintain health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the health system's goals are 'improving health and health equity in ways that are responsive, financially fair, and make most efficient use of available resources'. The key functions of the health system include: providing services; generating the human and physical resources that make service delivery possible; raising and pooling the resources used to pay for health care; and the function of stewardship.

Several health systems frameworks have been documented including an analytical framework by the WHO which disaggregates the health system into six core components, leadership and governance (stewardship), service delivery, health workforce, health information system, medical products, vaccines and technologies, and health system financing, also referred to as building blocks.

Another analytical framework is the health system dynamics framework which incorporates components of the WHO building blocks, and considers some components more important than others, with governance and leadership and interaction with the population and actors being central to service delivery. The health system dynamics framework also draws upon

the concepts of systems taking into account the dynamic relationships and interactions between the components of the health system.

The recent global developments have brutally shown the need for strong health system.

For instance, COVID-19 pandemic has been an eye-opener and a sad reminder of the urgency to be better prepared for a wide range of challenges that may beset healthcare systems.

It is also a testimony to Africa extraordinary capacity to be resilient. The good lesson from this event need to be translated into positive action so that we? build more resilient and sustainable healthcare systems apt to anticipate - and hopefully avoid - future public health threats.

Taking these into account the first Ethiopia National Health Innovation Steering Committee had been conducted on February 15 at Bishoftu town held and discussed on ways to tackle all the Grand Health Innovation challenges that are hampering the real life application of health innovation within the country.

Speaking on the occasion, Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI) Director General Prof. Afework Kassu said that since 2017, AHRI has hosted the Grand Challenges Ethiopia (GCE) which over the years has played a crucial role in stimulating innovations that solve health sector grand challenges.

Prof. Afework further underlined that the healthcare system is working in resource limited

settings still operating indeed facing challenges in adoption of these innovations. To this end, he called on the steering committee to take on the responsibility of unlocking the challenges as well the opportunities in nurturing the various health innovations to market.

GCE Program Coordinator Dr. Shallo Daba, had delivered an overview outline the steering committee background of GCE Initiatives. He further noted types of innovation supported by GCE as well objectives of GCE: the funding mechanism of GCE, eligibility criteria for GCE and evaluation process, and implementation progress of GCE.

While giving the back-story to the formation of the steering committee, he explained that following a high level health innovation projects visited at Jimma University led by Health Minister Dr. Lia Tadesse and Health State Minister Dr. Dereje Deguma and other representatives of various institutions, with the listed points below found as bottlenecks to health innovation;

- Lack of standards for locally developed medical, diagnostic and therapeutic tools,
- No clear system in place to evaluate and approve locally developed tools in the country
- Delay in getting ethical clearance for clinical performance tests
- Lack of an established national system for mass production of locally developed tools

Limited fund for health innovation projects Thus, in order to alleviate the innovation constriction as Dr. Shallo explained, a direction to establish the national health innovation steering committee was set, to whom its members spanned across 19 institutions, with the core responsibilities as enlisted below;

- Create a system to solve challenges that hinders the progress of health innovation projects
- Create a system that could motivate the involvement of private sectors for mass production of the developed tools
- Motivate health innovators to play their role in solving health sector grand challenges though using exciting resources and knowledge.

Following the comprehensive introduction, the steering committee members proceeded to view the various health innovations on display and had a one on one discussion with the innovators.

Moreover, a plenary discussion was moderated by the steering committee- secretary H.E Dr. Bayissa Bedada, State Minister of Innovation Technology Development and Management and Prof. Afework Kassu.

During the session the steering committee members raised discussion points pertinent to grand challenges innovation issues and looked into the synergetic roles each member institution could play to spearhead the innovations to market.