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BRICS creates more economic opportunities for Ethiopia

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

ADDIS ABABA-Joining BRICS bloc opens various economic possibilities and helps flourishing Ethiopia, Cuban Ambassador Jorge Lefebre Nicolas said. In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, the Cuban Ambassador to Ethiopia Jorge Lefebre Nicolas said: "I want to congratulate Ethiopia as it chosen to be part of this group which is an important economic actor in the international affairs."

The ambassador said the membership of BRICS may not bring a benefit that the people put in their pocket immediately.

However, tomorrow Ethiopia will get a benefit from the monetary system of economy. And BRICS member countries are able to share their resources with Ethiopia. So, it opens economic possibilities to this end, he added. Noting that the BRICS countries are decided to expand membership for the first time after its after 10 establishment 2009, though more than 20 countries have formally applied to join BRICS, a bloc of emerging



Ambassador Jorge Lefebre Nicolas

economies that includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, Ethiopia become one among the six countries invited to become members of BRICS. The ambassador said that the countries chosen to be a member of the group are

imagined economy. "They would create a solid group of negotiation for economic issues. At the same time, the presence of China, India in that group enables it to establish an international bank for cooperation created among them.

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Enset crucial to alleviate drought impact in East Africa: Kenyan scholars

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ARBA MINCH- Kenyan agricultural scholars suggested Ethiopia's *Enset* root crop as a viable means to alleviate drought impact in the east African region.

The *Enset* crop which is a staple food for over 20 million Ethiopians should be widely cultivated across the East African countries as it helps to cope with harsh climate, the scholars said.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, Senior Research fellow at Jomo Kenyatta University's Institute of Biotechnology Research, Sylvester Anami (PhD) said that the East African region is widely vulnerable to drought.



Sylvester Anami (PhD)

In Kenya for example, the amount of rain during the past five months was little. Similarly, Somalia has no sufficient rainfall. Therefore, Anami said, *Enset* should be in-



Denis Mutiso

roduced to the region for its drought resistant nature.

"*Enset* is an alternative crop in areas lack
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News



Hunde Kebede

Oromia plans to build 25 tourist attraction sites

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- The Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau (OCTB) disclosed that it has planned to construct 25 new tourist attraction sites in the next 10 years.

Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau evaluated the 2023 performance.

At the occasion, Hunde Kebede, Head of Tourism Department at Oromia region Culture and Tourism Bureau, told The Ethiopia Press Agency, in the next 10 years, the Bureau is planning to build 25 new destinations in the region that meet the tourism standards.

Hunde said that there is a need to transform the infrastructure of tourism in the region into a destination. The costs of the new tourist destinations that will be developed in the future will be covered by the government and investors. In addition to the social and economic benefits of tourism, it is becoming increasingly important in terms of building the country's image in the field of diplomacy.

In 2023, a lot of work has been done to expand tourist destinations in the region; more than 9.7 million local and foreign visitors have visited tourist destinations in the region.

In the just ended fiscal year, the Bureau has earned 10.3 billion birr fiscal year. Further tourism activities will be carried out to increase the income.

The head further highlighted that although there were many attractions in the past, there were limitations in turning it into a tourist destination. The department was planned to employ 50,000 people in the sector in the completed fiscal year and was managed to employ 44,000. There will be hundreds of thousands of work opportunities once the planned tourist attractions are finished and begin offering services.

As to him, public holidays are especially useful for expanding tourism destinations. The preparation for the upcoming Irecha festival has been completed.

Oromia Tourism Commission Deputy Commissioner Derara Ketema on his part stated that the commission has done enough promotional activities to expand tourist destinations in the region. Various activities have been done to increase the flow of tourists by using lodges built in Borena National Park and Abiata Shala Lake to promote tourism in various cities of the region.

According to Derara, the state has vast tourism resources, but it has not been developed sufficiently, and tourism has not been developed as an economic source, and lack of competent human resource has barred it from being used properly.

Ethiopian artists reveal secret behind outshining on K-Pop World Festival

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopian Winners of 2023 Korean Pop World Festival disclosed that knowing and utilizing their talent was the reason behind their achievement.

The Embassy of Republic of Korea in Ethiopia on Wednesday has held an award ceremony for K-Pop World Festival winners of the first round online preliminary competition.

The artists urged the young generation to identify talent to reach new heights in their artistic journey.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, the winners revealed that anyone who has talent of music, dance or any other field should identify his/her talent to achieve ambition and improve life.

Musician Betelhem Sewaynes who is one of the winners of the music festival said that youths have many chances thus they should identify their area of specialty and interest to succeed in the field of their passion.

"I compete on vocal music via online platform and the competition has taught me a lot of things in the field where I wish to be the best musician," she said.

She advised the youth to improve its life by



Betelhem Sewaynes

identifying and utilizing its talent properly.

She revealed that she was excited when the embassy announced her that she is among the winners of the festival who compete in the first round.

Expressing her anticipation of the next move, she said, "I expect that they will send us to Korea then get chance of training after the second round competition."

Nejat Abdella is another Ethiopian who competed in dance and received award from the embassy.

She said that she watched the competition music released video on social media on the eleventh hours but decided to be part of



Nejat Abdella

the contest and fortunately, she made to the second round.

"We compete based on choice of our own music interest and we performed better and then the embassy selected us a winner," Nejat recalled.

She expressed that dancing is her passion. "I would like to continue in this genre conducting my training, compete and develop my talent competing in such music festivals," she said.

Three Ethiopians have been qualified, awarded certification of recognition and other prizes after competed with around 22 teams in the first round of the 2023 K-pop World Festival, an annual music festival organized by South Korea.

JICA hands over road maintenance machines to AACRA

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA-The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has handed over 78 road maintenance machines and equipment to Addis Ababa City Road Authority (AACRA). The equipment would contribute significantly to smoother traffic flow and better road maintenance services in the city.

According to the AACRA data, these good-quality machines from Japan would expand and improve the road networks in the capital of Ethiopia and its vicinities.

Addis Ababa Mayor Adanech Abebe, who was the guest of honor at the recent handover ceremony, the machinery provide from the JICA would help to provide better road maintenance services in the city and its contribution to making the traffic movement smoother is significant.

She pointed out that the Japanese government and people have a long-standing bilateral relationship with Ethiopia. During these times, collaborations have been made to strengthen the relations between the two countries.

Mayor Adanech also expressed her gratitude for the support of the Japanese government in various fields and expressed her belief that the cooperation



will continue to be strengthened in the future.

The Japanese Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ito Takako, on her part, said that the support for maintenance machinery will enhance economic and social cohesion in Ethiopia; improve road coverage, and smooth traffic flow in all sectors.

Katsuki, Morihara(Ph.D.) Chief Representative JICA Ethiopia Office; regarding the support received from the people of Japan, the city's road network has grown significantly due to the government's attention to the road development sector.

Engineer Moges Tibebu, Director General of AACRA, who received the road maintenance machinery and vehicles; Japanese government's support in education and technology is helping to provide better road services.

Engineer Moges added that the city's road network is being developed and extensive road maintenance works have been carried out in the last five years. The support given by the Japanese people today will play a significant role in the further updating and capacity building of the road maintenance management.

News

Knowledgeable, ordered leadership pivotal for achieving peace: Lt. Gen. Hachalu Sheleme

• College graduates senior military officers

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA—Strong leadership based on modern knowledge as well as morally built personality is essential for achieving peace, so stated Head of Defense Union Human Resource Management Department.

Ethiopian Defense Command and Staff College graduated 37 senior military officers who were provided with short trainings for the 8th round. Officers graduated from the college on Saturday successfully completed their training in various disciplines for the past three months.

At the graduation ceremony Lt.Gen.Hachalu Sheleme, Head of Defense Union's Human Resource Management Department, said the training will enhance the skills of senior military leaders and prepare them for higher missions.

He also said that the training will help make them proficient in military science, and come up with fully qualified military cadets for the next duty. The trainees also said that they have acquired the knowledge and skills that will enable them to lead the army members and equip them for further victory bedecked with ethics, military science, professionalism and advanced preparation.

Pointing out that the army is the pride of the country duty bound to safeguard the nation,



he said that the Defense Army is working to increase the overall competence of its leaders.

As to him, the government has attempted to resolve differences through dialogue, but fighting merrymakings have left the peace option aside and continue fighting.

The Defense Staff College Commander-in-Chief, Brigadier General Mulugeta Ambachew on his part said that the training will prepare the trainees for a higher mission by enhancing their leadership skills.

He also stated that the army will be able to carry out its mission efficiently and there will be a focus on empowering a leadership

to discharge responsibility for peace by protecting the legal and constitutional system.

The college graduated 1,097 local and foreign senior leaders in master's degree, first degree, diploma, post staff course (psc), short course and programs since its inception.

He said, "The College is working to achieve its mission of receiving military senior officers from various defense forces, teaching and training them to the level of strategic leadership responsibility, so that they can carry out international military duties in the country and in the East African region."

Historian mulls in-depth discussions to overcome resentment

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopia requires an inclusive and in-depth discussions to overcome resentments that are grounded on ill-intended historical narratives backed by distorted narration and confusion.

Since confusions emanate from history are creating a range of problems in the country, the generation has to be well instructed about them in a sustainable manner, so said Bahru Zewde, Professor (emer.) of History at Addis Ababa University (AAU).

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), the Historian stated that confusions and misunderstandings which have never been seen so far regarding Ethiopia and Ethiopians are now rampant and have given citizens hard time.

It is undeniable fact that Ethiopia houses a number of nations and nationalities with

diverse languages, religions, cultures and many values, and this diversification should not be a bone of contention rather than a source of fraternity and cooperation, he said.

If there are wrong doings done in the past, Bahru advised that the new generation has to forgive one another and pave the future destiny of the country and enjoy a new chapter as the adage goes 'let bygones be bygones.'

He said: "We all have to focus on those faces potentially cement togetherness, fraternity, and amicable way of living instead of reciting deliberately orchestrated distorted narrations and purposely crafted confusions."

The confusion as well as suspicion among the generation should be alleviated through lucid, reasonable and research-based findings and close talks, he suggested

Here, the general public has to make quite

clear about what the actual history stipulates and what is reality happening on the ground in the country, he stressed.

Public forums like those organized by EPA need to be extended participating history scholars and true patriots to share their experience and knowledge to the posterity to stop continuing the wrong repercussions originate from confusions and misunderstandings, the historian indicated.

Besides, lettering history in Ethiopia based on intensive scientific evidences would help come up with meaningful change along this line, Bahru opined.

"Instead of paving conditions for a passerby who has different agenda and personal mission to produce history thereby creating confusion, it is quite invaluable to back real scholars who are capable of writing history based on truth, concrete evidences and research based knowledge," he said.

Enset crucial...

ing rain. If we collaborate in Enset growing and promotions, it would benefit the East Africa in a lot," he noted.

He also stated that Kenya and Ethiopia are establishing a partnership on agricultural development.

Accordingly, Jomo Kenyatta University of Kenya and Arba Minch University of Ethiopia have agreed to work together to conduct researches on *Enset* aimed at introducing and advancing the production of the root crop to Kenyans, he said.

"We can share technologies and innovations to make *Enset* food preparations easy," he indicated.

Another Kenyan Scholar Denis Mutiso who is also Program Director of Girl Child Network-Kenya, *Enset* is the next super food which needs to be introduced across the continent.

The Continent is facing lots of challenges related to climatic change that requires Africans to utilize *Enset* benefits to survive the hardship, he stressed.

As *Enset* is a drought resilient and environment-friendly crop that feeds more than 20 million Ethiopians, it is important to promote production mechanisms across the continent, he advised.

Senior Biotechnology Researcher at Arba Minch University Adisu Flkadu (PhD) on his part said the crop has the potential to break the cycle of hunger in drought-hit areas.

Naturally, *Enset* can grow in arid areas, so that it can be used as a strategic crop in food security programs, he recommended.

Africa's G20 representation expedites Global South, AU cooperation

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA—Africa's membership for the G20 is a showcase for its growth and would be a great opportunity for the Global South and African Union (AU), the Global Chairman said.

In his interview with WION TV, Global Chairman of Fairfax Africa Fund Zemedeneh Negatu said that the representation of Africa, which is home to the world's largest free trade area, to the G20 would be of paramount importance to the representation of African countries and the Global South.

He further remarked that the African countries representation by the African Union (AU) is a testament for its rising and hence it would propel the continent's interests and actively shape global agendas.

Moreover, he said for Global South countries, including AU members, gaining membership in global governance platforms is just the first step towards securing meaningful representation in the global governance system.

"For long, the continent has been not only downgraded but also geopolitically excluded. However, the world economy is mainly dependent on Africa's immense raw materials," he mentioned.

As African nations are endowed with natural resources, it was emphasized that joining the group would open doors to increased foreign direct investment (FDI) and economic partnerships.

As to him, the AU and Africa in general would make a very valuable contribution on the priority agenda for rearrangement of the global order that was set by the West since 1945.

He also appreciated India, which is the fifth largest economy in the world, for its unswerving commitment that was undertaken by the Indian Prime Minister since last year.

It was also indicated that the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote to G20 leaders regarding AU's membership in June.

It is to be recalled that during the inaugural session of the two-day G20 summit held on 9 September 2023 in New Delhi, the G20 members accepted the African Union (AU) as a new member in an effort to give a greater voice and more representation to developing countries.

The G20 was established in 1999 with the view of maintaining international cooperation in the fields of finance and economy, it was learnt.

BRICS creates...

"The group will be strong economy next to the north."

It is to be recalled that leaders of the BRICS nations have recently come to a consensus regarding the expansion guidelines for admission to the influential multinational association. Effective 01 January, 2024, six countries will formally become full members of the BRICS, further strengthening its global presence. These countries include Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

Opinion

Capitalizing on Productivity: Ethiopia's journey to prosperity

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Ethiopia, a diverse country known for its geographical and cultural richness, has emerged as a center of productivity, effectively harnessing its vast potential. Despite facing numerous challenges, Ethiopia has managed to impress the world with remarkable achievements in production and productivity. Among the remarkable achievements are key initiatives and sectors contributing to Ethiopia's progress, including the Green Legacy initiative, agricultural productivity, the coffee sector, power generation, and education among others.

The Green Legacy initiative

The Ethiopian government's launch of the Green Legacy initiative some years ago stands out as a notable effort to restore and preserve the country's natural balance through extensive tree planting. The public response to this initiative has been overwhelmingly positive, with ambitious targets set for planting 25 billion seedlings. The success of previous years' efforts has laid a solid foundation for this ongoing program.

The success Ethiopia registered in this sector is beneficial not only for the country, but also for the rest of the world in containing green house gas that threatens the climate emitted from highly advanced industries. Ethiopia's effort, thus, deserves recognition and reward from the international community especially from those producing the largest volume of carbon. The country must be supported economically as a compensation for what it wasted on the process of seedling plantation from nursery to transplantation which is one Dollar for one seedling roughly calculated.

Though the country is committed to keep up the green legacy initiative, support from the international community enables build up interest in the initiative that invigorates the global fight against climate change.

Improving agricultural productivity

Agriculture plays a crucial role in Ethiopia's economy, and enhancing agricultural productivity is a key focus. The use of fertilizers and real gross domestic product (GDP) positively influenced cereal productivity in both the short and long run. While the size of arable land had a negative short-term effect, it positively impacted productivity in the long run. A study conducted in this regard suggests that promoting the use of improved technologies, affordable availability of fertilizers, and diversification into off-farm activities can contribute to improving agricultural productivity.

The Government of Ethiopia (GOE) has embarked on a ten-year economic development plan (2021-2030) where agriculture is on the top of priority sectors. The agriculture sector is projected to grow at 6.2 percent per annum over the next ten years. Ethiopia's development plan has laid out enhancing agricultural production and

productivity as one of the major strategic pillars. In addition, the ten-year development plan aims at boosting agricultural export revenues and substituting imports by reducing production costs.

To achieve this, the GOE seeks to leverage on developing huge unutilized arable land, modernizing production systems, and improving uptake of technology. Furthermore, the ten-year plan envisages building a climate resilient green economy. In this regard, Ethiopia is looking to expand development efforts to fight land degradation and to reduce pollution; reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions; increase forest protection and development; increase production of electricity from renewable sources for domestic use and for export; and focus on modern and energy saving technologies.

Ethiopia is endowed with abundant agricultural resources and has diverse agro-ecological zones. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. The Government of Ethiopia has identified key priority intervention areas to increase productivity of smallholder farms and expand large-scale commercial farms. Under the current administration, the GOE has renewed its emphasis to develop the agriculture sector, ensure food security, and achieve import substitution.

Among the top priorities identified by the GOE include: small and large-scale irrigation development, financing agricultural inputs, increasing productivity of crops and livestock, improving agricultural production methods using mechanization, post-harvest loss reduction, developing a research-based food security system, and natural resource management. In addition, the GOE is looking to the agro-processing sector as one engine to spur future economic growth.

With respect to increasing productivity, the GOE, alongside its international partners, has made a number of interventions to support the development of the agriculture sector. These activities have contributed to higher yields and increased production of both crops and livestock.

At the same time, to accelerate the country's agricultural development, the government established the Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI) to address systemic bottlenecks in the agriculture sector by supporting and enhancing the capability of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and other public, private, and non-governmental implementing partners.

Ethiopia has achieved a significant milestone in the agriculture sector with the introduction of irrigation wheat production for export. This initiative has gained momentum and yielded positive outcomes.

Ethiopia is the second largest wheat grower in Africa and has high levels of demand for the crop. Shortages of grains, cereals and agricultural inputs such as fertilizer caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict are leading the Ethiopian government to focus heavily on increasing the country's productivity to

rely less on imports.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed recently launched national exports of wheat. "We have made Ethiopia's wheat export dream a reality," he said.

Challenges and potential in the coffee sector

Ethiopia is Africa's largest coffee producer and the world's fifth largest exporter of Arabica coffee. Coffee is Ethiopia's number one source of export revenue generating about 30-35 percent of the country's total export earnings. All the coffee produced in Ethiopia is of the coffee Arabica variety. In 2023/24 total production is forecasted to be 8.35 million 60 kg bags.

The coffee industry in Ethiopia is the driving force of the country's economy, socio-cultural, and spiritual life of the people. The livelihood of 25 percent of the country's population is directly or indirectly dependent on the coffee value chain will remain so in the years to come.

Ethiopia's coffee sector holds a global reputation, but it faces challenges such as climate change and trade barriers. Climate change poses a significant threat to coffee production, particularly the Arabica variety grown by small-scale farmers. Deforestation and changing rainfall patterns have adversely affected coffee production, leading some farmers to switch to other crops with short-term economic benefits but long-term negative consequences. Despite these challenges, coffee remains Ethiopia's top source of export revenue, with growing demand for Ethiopian specialty coffee due to its high quality and unique characteristics.

Power generation and renewable energy

Ethiopia has the potential to generate over 60,000 megawatts (MW) of electric power from hydroelectric, wind, solar and geothermal sources. As a result of Ethiopia's rapid GDP growth over the previous decade, demand for electricity has been steadily increasing.

Ethiopia is endowed with abundant renewable energy resources, which can meet the ambitions of nationwide electrification. However, in spite of all its available potentials the country's energy sector is still in its infancy stage. The majority of Ethiopia's population lives in the rural area without access to modern energy and relied solely on traditional biomass energy sources.

As a result, nowadays, Ethiopia has one of the lowest electricity consumption per capita in Africa. Recognizing that energy access and security are a crucial factor to economic growth; Ethiopia needs to cope with key challenges related to energy security and diversification of energy supply. Some study papers provide a comprehensive and extensive review of renewable energy potentials in Ethiopia. Further, current state of renewable energy resources is described and existing energy policies are articulated. Various policies, that could possibly promote energy technology use in a rural

Ethiopia, are proposed.

Ethiopia possesses abundant hydropower resources and has ambitious plans to increase its power generation capacity. The construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) marks Ethiopia's aim to become a major player in hydropower production in Africa. Recognizing the importance of investing in renewable energy sources, the government seeks to meet the growing energy demands and drive economic development through sustainable power generation.

Education and development

Education is a key focus for the Ethiopian government, with significant improvements in access to education in recent years. Efforts are underway to enhance the teaching and learning processes through initiatives such as the Education Sector Development Plan and the General Education Quality Improvement Program. These programs aim to improve students' achievement, reduce dropout rates, and ensure equity and access to quality education for all.

Among the major reasons why Ethiopia focuses on improving the education sector is it is the only tool serves in producing industrious generation that is well trained in all fields of economy to ensure the nation's prosperity. True, nation's being blessed with natural resources is nothing without trained, productive and ethical human capital. It is the well made human resource that converts the resource to products and make the country competent in the international market.

Therefore, when thinking and talking about productivity, education cannot be put aside. It is the weapon to kill poverty via engaging in any sector of the economy whether agriculture, manufacturing or service provision. The new generation, in order to be competent in the world, has to equip itself with the up-to-date knowledge, skill and discipline.

In a nut shell, Ethiopia's remarkable progress in productivity and production across various sectors is evident through initiatives such as the Green Legacy, agricultural productivity enhancements, and advancements in the coffee sector, power generation investments, and a focus on quality education.

Despite the challenges, Ethiopia continues to demonstrate determination in overcoming obstacles and achieving excellence in productivity. With sustained efforts and strategic planning, Ethiopia is on a path towards sustained growth and development, contributing to its global recognition as a nation of productivity and progress.

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

Editorial

Opinion

Renewing commitment to embracing transformation

Yesterday, Ethiopians celebrated the first day of their New Year, *Enkutatash* warmly. Hoping the New Year to be a year in which all their aspirations and ambitions become a reality, they are celebrating New Year's days with a renewed hope, perseverance and positive vibe.

For many reasons, the just ended year was a year that saw a number of encouraging achievements.

It was a year that decisive steps were taken in the country. The peace agreement between the government and TPLF to end the two years long conflict was signed at the beginning of the just concluded Ethiopian year, Tikemt 23, 2015 E.C (November 2, 2022.)

The year has also seen remarkable achievement while only a couple of days were left to be concluded. The fourth phase a reservoir filling of the Abbay Hydroelectric Dam was completed successfully despite unprecedented challenges.

Announcing the successful completion of the fourth round dam filling on Sunday, September 10, 2023, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said: "I am happy to announce the successful completion of the fourth round dam filling. I congratulate all who participated in the overall activities in the construction of the dam with their capital, knowledge, time, energy and prayers. For the reason we work together, God has helped us to reach our dam to this level. Our unity and cooperation should be replicated in other affairs as well."

According to the Premier, there were a number of challenges and attempts to drag the efforts back. There were also internal challenges and external pressures from varied forces. However, all were in vain. We can resist all the difficult obstacles we encountered and reach where we are now through the power of the Creator.

"Now, we have reached the top of the hill; but not at its end point. I firmly believe that we will complete what we have planned in the next time around and express our thankfulness to the Creator. I would like to take this opportunity and urge all to continue to support the construction of the dam until we can fully realize it," PM pledged.

True, the Abbay Hydroelectric Dam, which is under construction on the Abbay River by Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia, is not simply a plant that generates power. It is an emblem of Ethiopians' unity, commitment and determination. It is a flagship project that lets all Ethiopians stand as one for a common goal: to eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

It is also their source of pride that disproved the wrong attitude- "They can't do it"- and reaffirmed Ethiopians' invincible spirit to realize their dream and their success story they will pass on to the next generation.

Ethiopians, even though passed through and still entangled with a number of internal and external drawbacks, never failed to realize their development aspirations and ambitions. Against all the odds, they can manage impressive mega development projects that seemed very unlikely targeting to let poverty be a thing of the past.

Among the other things that tied them together and to witness a success, this dam is the one. The reason for their success is their strong sense of unity in both good and bad times, and patriotic feeling for a common goal.

Decidedly, all the development endeavors support positive economic and social environment and yield immense returns not only for today's generation but also the future generations.

And the New Year will be a time that we, Ethiopians, will renew our commitment and pledge to accelerate the successful completion of the dam and other ongoing projects, no matter what.

Ethnocentrism and the cacophonous politics of Social media boondoggling

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

At least three sets of despicable features explain the current juxtaposition in Ethiopian politics where every cellphone owner has styled himself / herself as a seasoned political guru.

First, the present social media vocal commandoes are trapped in a historic- political nostalgia of puffed up ethnic war mongering where emotionally charged citizens here and abroad still drum up on obsolete or outdated thinking that they can get political power via barrels of guns.

The second is both the gun tottering bush fighters and the peace keepers themselves cannot afford a single day of war because war is eating up every dime of the national economy and the so called liberators in the jungles cannot keep on begging for bullets and ammunitions indefinitely. Collective and coercive desire for peace is the only way out from the current political phantasmagoria in this country.

Third, those who are engaged in ethnic based conflicts by looting, destroying and killing human beings irrespective of their ethnic identity are specifically violating the universally declared rights of all Ethiopians to live in peace. Resorting to extreme hatred is indeed a sign of mental disorder and basically immoral because you cannot go to church or mosque or any kind of prayer meeting or assembly hating people and bragging with slapdash language.

The writer of this article is surprised to notice that none of the You tubers came up with stories about the celebrations the country is marking in the six days of Pagumen but were busy knitting false and sensational day dream type news about law enforcement programs being conducted by the ENDF.

The author of this brief article would like to address all concerned with three interrelated but poorly understood concepts which include government, governance and governability in the Ethiopian context.

Every blessed Ethiopian who has read the constitution or at least have participated or heard of it knows that the current Ethiopian government did not come from nowhere but is governing the country because it is a contractual partner of the people of Ethiopia who leased their power to do their business of governing on their own behalf through a landslide election victory that nobody can deny.

This would mean that trying to overthrow the current government by trumpeting sugar coated ethnic garnished and lie ridden charade propaganda from quack media and taking up arms is no less than disrespecting the electorate and certainly the whole people of Ethiopia here and overseas. Someone should take note of the fact that the people of Ethiopia will never choose to sit on the fence when the country is torn down into Zemene Mesafint type ethnic principalities.

As a result, the government and its functionaries from top to bottom, federal or regional, zone or woreda level must be respected both out of their role in government and as individuals. However, this does not give full license for the government to tamper with governance which is at least coved by the laws of the country.

What does governance mean? Is it an art or politics? A generic definition for governance maybe taken as "the way rules, norms and

actions are structured, sustained, regulated and held accountable. The degree of formality depends on the internal rules of a given social entity and, externally, with its business term."

Governance, also known as good governance in popular parlance is usually associated with the way governments run their duties and it certainly is no restricted to the government only but embraces all the elements of the political system of a country including CSOs, professional associations and almost all civil and civic services providers. There are several principles or corollaries that are linked to governance.

The EU Council has enacted 12 principles which included fair elections, responsiveness. Efficiency and effectiveness, openness and transparency, the rule of law. Ethical conduct, competency and capacity, innovativeness and openness to change, sustainability and long term orientation, sound financial management, human rights and cultural diversity and social cohesion as well as accountability.

In Ethiopia, as stated above, the issue of governance or democratic government if you wish is not only confined to the realms of the government but requires the full participation of the public and all stakeholders as the future of this country cannot be determined or dictated by few ethnic groups but the entire people of the country.

Apart from the above mentioned facts issues of resources, geographical proximity, logistics not only determine the quality of governance and governability as well. Those who call for war and change of government by force as well as those who call to have a regional status as their constitutionally granted right need to realize what it takes to install governance and governability in their respective areas. Running over part of a country and taking towns and villages by force may sound simple but what it entails, meaning the cost and benefit need to be carefully assesses.

Although the propaganda war focuses on the government and the National Defense Forces of the country, it must be stressed that the war be it physical or propaganda targets the entire people of Ethiopia and is certainly conducted against their will as their main interest is the prevalence of peace in the country.

The government must be able to screen out thieves and do nothing gossipers and loafers in its rank and file and strive to restore peace and good governance in the country by charting out more strategies to reduce inflation, money laundering, printing of fake bank notes, hoarding of basic commodities.

The psychology of outright denial of what has happened in this country and a querulous understanding of history is making some of our social media owners to seek a solution to the present challenges of the country in reverting back to ancient regimes of archaic, irrelevant feudal aristocratic order.

The government needs to also continue to provide timely updates on the situation in the country to provide authentic information that can debunk the false propaganda that is being spread by social media paid narcissists. This could easily disqualify attempts by our social media amateur agitators to stop and think before they spread unverified information.

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



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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Oilseeds production contribution to economic progress

BY MENGESHA AMARE

It is well recognized that thousands and millions of farmers in Ethiopia have been involved in oilseeds cultivation and the total oilseeds production in the country is rising. Besides, virgin lowland areas in the North West and South West offer opportunities for expanding production.

Cognizant of the fact that oilseeds can contribute a lot to the economic progress, *The Ethiopian Herald* approached Samrawit Debebe, an agro-economist graduated from Addis Ababa University.

She said, “Ethiopia’s oilseed sector plays an important role in generating foreign exchange earnings. The three major oilseed crops like sesame, soybean, and Niger seed contribute a lot to Ethiopia’s total agricultural export earnings next to coffee, of course. Yes, exports of sesame, Niger seed, and soybeans have helped the nation generate a great deal of export earnings. In addition, the oilseed sector provides income to millions of growers and others market actors along the value chain.”

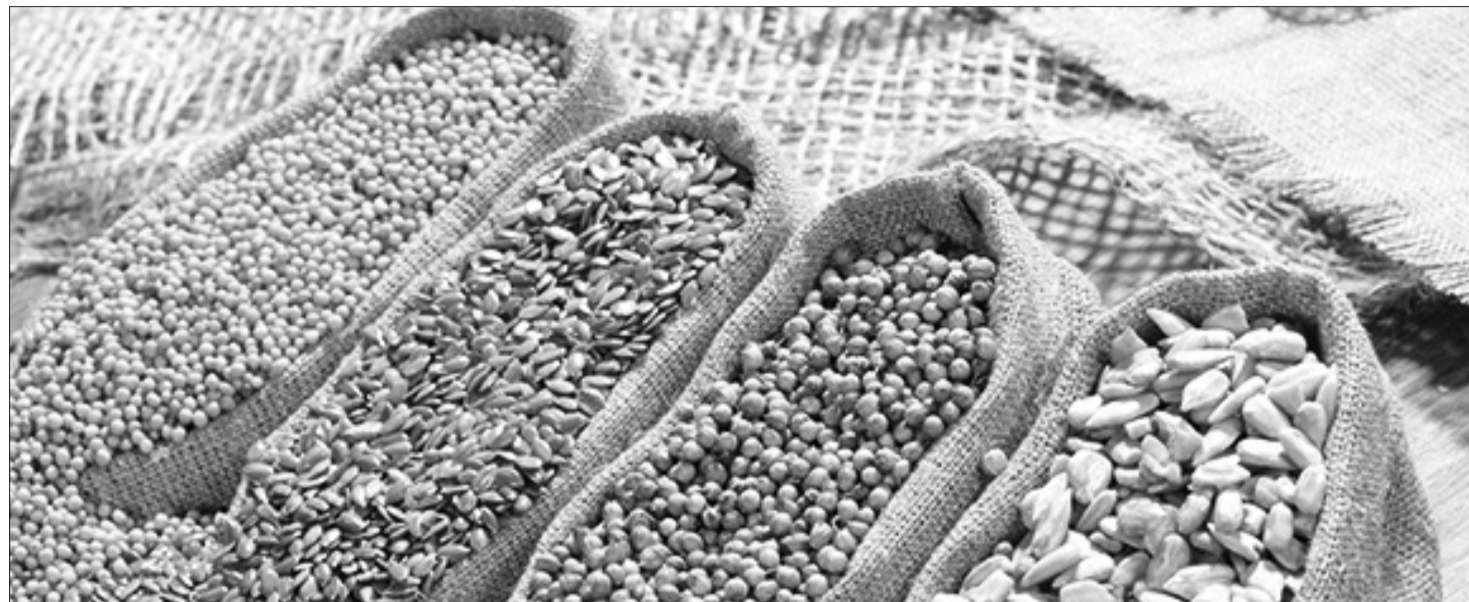
As to her, there are a couple of new large-scale edible oil manufacturing plants in the pipeline. This expansion in the agro-processing industry is projected to drive up demand for oilseeds. Recently, soybeans and Niger seed were added to the list of agricultural commodities traded on the ECX modern trading platform. This initiative is expected to create better market incentives for producers to increase local productions. Moreover, the modern exchange platform is vital to control illicit trade and improve exports.

Desert locust invasions and ill-timed rains occurred in the country during and after the main harvest collection period. Unless prices rebound, farmers in major production areas may reduce sesame seed plantings next year and switch to alternative crops such as cotton and sorghum. Sesame seed is one of the most widely produced oilseed crop, accounting for 30 percent of total oilseed production in the country. Production is mainly concentrated in the northern and northwestern Ethiopia bordering Sudan and Eritrea, she opined.

She further elucidated that even though Ethiopia is one of the major global producers and exporters of sesame seed, the country faces increasing challenges related to both supply and demand side constraints. Some of the major supply side constraints are diminishing productivity levels, pests and diseases, and poor access to modern technology. On the demand side, perversely higher domestic price, easy entry of inexperienced traders and market distortion, and contractual non-performance of export sales.

Unless farmers, traders and government address these challenges strategically, the country could lose its competitiveness in the global sesame seed market in the near future.

According to Samrawit, in the future, consumption is expected to rise due to local and international market demand. Domestic demand for sesame especially in local food processing industry is projected



to grow, as there is integrated agro-industrial parks under-construction that would begin operations in the short-term.

She said traders allude that international price volatility, currency fluctuations, excessive speculations, illicit trade, squeezed productivity levels, and local market price distortions are the main reasons for the deteriorating export trade performance. This trend has to be reversed for the country to grow.

Almost all of Ethiopia’s sesame seed exports are unprocessed, leaving a potential opportunity for value addition prior to exports. The local production of edible oil has tremendous growth potential and is expected to expand rapidly in the coming years as the population grows and as consumer income rises, she added.

With increasing demand, limited domestic production and the country’s heavy reliance on imported oil, there are frequent supply shortages especially in urban areas. In addition, as some consumers become increasingly diet conscious, they are looking for healthier alternatives to palm oil. There is an increasing preference towards alternative edible oils containing saturated oils and fats. Most Ethiopian consumers prefer sunflower, Niger seed, and soybean oils as healthier. Due to these changes in consumer preferences, consumption of sunflower oil has almost tripled over the last couple of years.

Nine oilseeds namely noug, gomenzer, linseed, soybean, sunflower, castor, sesame, ground nut and cotton are important in Ethiopia for edible oil consumption. In addition, soybean can be cultivated as a source of raw material for food and feed industries, she said.

According to Samrawit, oilseeds are also the traditional source of foreign exchange earnings since imperial era. Ethiopia is the second exporter of sesame globally next to Myanmar. Although sesame is cultivated in all lowlands, the product from Humera and Metema has prime quality.

The traditional noug growing areas are being replaced by high yielding hybrid maize, rice and bread wheat. Nevertheless, the area coverage and productivity of sesame and soybean are increasing in an exponential order due to their demand in the world market. The national vegetable oil demands have shown a severe shortfall during the last

decade causing a severe foreign currency expense.

The demand of raw materials for the local industries is enormous as compared to the national production of oilseeds. Of these, sunflower, soybean and castor are adapted from mid lands such as West Gojam and Hawassa to low lands as low as Omo. Linseed and gomenzer are adapted in the highlands with altitudes ranging from 2300 to 3000 meters above sea level what is commonly known as Central Ethiopian highlands.

Ground nuts and sesame are adapted in three ecologies namely high rainfall such as Assosa, Gambela, Metema, Humera and Pawe, Western Lowlands and, irrigated such as Omo and Awash valleys, Gode and Arba Minch. Sesame and ground nuts are also adapted in low moisture stressed areas such as Babile, Bisidemo and Kobo.

Oilseeds research should focus on productivity, oil content and quality. Although, the contribution of genetics to productivity on oilseeds is immense, crop and water management ranging from tillage to harvesting have equal influence on productivity and oil content, she said.

The current improved varieties of oilseeds have been developed either from selection of introduced or indigenous germplasm. In order to achieve the desired goal, the future variety development should be based on genetic gain or crossing followed by selection, seed multiplication and multi-environment testing both under irrigation and rain fed.

Currently, oilseeds are cultivated using farm saved seed and traditional farming practices. Oilseeds are usually sown on less fertile land and require minimum care such as weeding. Farmers tend to earn more from cereals than inherently low yielding oilseeds. Hence the production volume of highland oilseeds is not expected to increase or at least contribute significantly to the national pool. Among the lowland oilseeds sesame is an important export commodity next to coffee and will continue to contribute significantly for foreign exchange earnings.

“Oilseeds cultivation was using traditional cultivation methods and farm saved seed. Oilseed marketing consists of assemblers, whole sellers, possessors and exporters. Marketing was also as a result of government grain marketing corporations that gathers produce from farmers and either deliver for

processors or export. It was suggested that the market was not efficient and both the producers and consumers were dissatisfied,” she added.

Export market for any of the oilseeds particularly sesame and soybean is higher to the extent that the local industry may not afford it. However, the revenue from sesame can be used to import palm oil easing the burden of foreign exchange. The export value of annual oilseeds such as sesame is higher than their possible local value and the value of the oil will be beyond the reach of average Ethiopian.

Ethiopian oil seeds production and the sector play an important role in generating foreign exchange earnings and supporting the livelihoods of market actors across the value chain.

Oilseed crops are the third largest foreign exchange earners, next to coffee and cut flowers, contributing nearly 17 percent of Ethiopia’s agricultural exports, she added.

A better understanding of specific factors that influence farmers’ choices is crucial in order to effectively prepare policies, development strategies, programs and models aimed at supporting and enhancing the agricultural productivity of oilseeds.

An insight into the determining variables that guide smallholder farmers’ production decisions will enable policymakers to enhance and develop policies and strategies that could help smallholder farmers to choose more appropriate crops for production, increase crop yield as well as cope and adapt to issues of climate variability. A deeper understanding of smallholder farmers’ crop production investment decisions would enhance the development strategies and interventions necessary to ensure a successful production.

Oilseed crops have attracted much attention as potential renewable sources of raw material for substitutes to liquid fuel. With the rising focus on renewable energy sources, oilseed crops are good candidates as sources of biodiesel. Soybean, sunflower, and groundnut oils are amongst the seed oils available in Ethiopia and the government should undertake initiatives that would attract more farmers to produce oilseed crops; for instance, by offering funding that is specifically earmarked for farming oilseed crops.

Art & Culture

The Nile River, two ancient African civilizations, a shared destiny

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Personally, I am a fan of Naguib Mahfouz, the most celebrated Egyptian author who has written extensively about his country's ancient as well as modern civilizations. His oeuvre includes many novels and short stories, non-fiction as well as film scripts. It is largely in recognition of his long literary career and his portrayal of the dramas of modern Egyptian society and its history that he received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988, making him the second African writer to win the coveted prize after Wole Soyinka.

In Naguib Mahfouz's fictional world, the Nile river flows in the pages of his books as witness to Egypt's modern political and social history in an epic way. "His realism is like Michael Sholokhov's in his epic *And Quiet Flows the Don*, the epic fictional narrative of the early years of the Russian revolution. When opposing forces were fighting decisive battles on the shores of the mighty Don River, the Cossacks on the one side and the Red Army on the other.

One of his earlier works uses the Nile as backdrop to social drama and is entitled "Adrift on the Nile" which is, "a 1966 book by Egyptian author and Noble Laureate Naguib Mahfouz. The novel was later made into a 1971 film under the title, "Chitchat on the Nile". The Difference between Sholokhov's "And Quiet Flows the Don" and Mahfouz's "Adrift on the Nile" is that the former deals with war while the latter deals with peacetime social drama. The theme of this book deals with, "the absurdity and emptiness of life in Cairo and the yearning for serious existence."

The second difference between the two is that Mahfouz goes back in time to bring ancient Egypt alive while Sholokhov wrote about Russia in the early years of the 20th century when the Bolsheviks were fighting to control it. Mahfouz has written notable fiction using the Nile as a backdrop both realistically or metaphorically. As an artist, he never made political statements concerning

the mighty river or engage in discussions in the context of the claims by Egypt that the river was its sole property based on the British colonial agreement. Mahfouz writes about the Nile outside politics as an act of artistic creativity with fictional characters and settings and themes.

Both Egypt and Ethiopia were connected to ancient Greek civilization in different ways. In the case of Egypt, "Ancient Egypt and Greece were both civilizations that were located adjacent to the Mediterranean Sea, though they had different climates. Both produced artistic works that influenced later civilizations and they were both conquered by Alexander the Great and later by the Roman Empire, which linked them politically."

Like Egypt, Ethiopia too is home to an ancient civilization going back to the times of the Greeks. According to one historical account, Greeks established colonies in Ethiopia with Ptolemias Theron and Axum becoming major capitals of Ethiopian Greek culture. In the second century BC, Ptolemy III Euergetes annexed several northern Ethiopian cities such as Tigray and the port of Adulis, which became major trading hubs for Ethiopian Greeks."

Another historical reference maintains that, "the Ethiopians Herodotus described was thought to be the tallest and most beautiful people in the known world. On average, they could apparently live to one hundred and twenty years of age, a feat attributed to their water source which oddly smelled like violets and gave off a sheen like oil."

An article by C. Keith Hansley in the blog page "The Historian's Hut" relates that, "Ancient Greeks oddly believed in supernatural Ethiopia with super-human Ethiopians" and says that "In ancient Greek mythology and *The Histories* of Herodotus, Ethiopia was described as a truly special and unique place. The land was favored by the Greek gods-the poet Homer, repeatedly wrote of Poseidon visiting Ethiopia within the pages of *The Odyssey*."

Although both Egypt and Ethiopia had links

to ancient Greek civilization, Egypt and Ethiopia too share a common past as they were both related to one another throughout their ancient histories. "Egypt and Ethiopia were closely connected through diplomatic and economic activity along the Red Sea routes. By about AD 350, the archbishop of Alexandria in Egypt had appointed a Syrian called Frumentius as bishop of Axum in Ethiopia."

It is believed that Egyptians were the first to identify a name for Ethiopia, which was then known as Upper Nubia because they identified it in relation to the southern portion of the Nile River. "The southern portion, which extended north to the southern end of the second cataract of the Nile, was known as Upper Nubia; this was called Kush (Cush) under the 18th dynasty pharaohs of ancient Egypt and was called Ethiopia by the ancient Greeks."

Many civilizations and generations in both Egypt and Ethiopia have come and gone but the Nile River is still emptying itself into the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile is the second longest river in the world after the Amazon in Brazil. The modern history of the Nile as well the relationship between Egypt and Ethiopia has undergone changes and transformations. As times changed new issues were brought to the front and the two countries are committed to making the Nile a river of African solidarity, cooperation and development. There is no time to lose because the entire world is working hard to turn challenges into opportunities. Of all the continent, Africa has no time to squander in disputes over this or that issue.

Fortunately, there is no misunderstanding in the modern world that cannot be overcome through diplomacy or dialogue on a win-win basis. Unlike the Greeks and Romans, modern civilization has provided nations with the means to coexist peacefully by utilizing their common resources like the Nile River to the benefits of their peoples. The story of the Nile is also the story of modern Africa given the high number of potential beneficiaries from this great natural endow-

ment.

Despite the ups and downs, the ebbs and flows in bilateral relations between Egypt and Ethiopia, the two countries have a strong awareness of their common history and the common source of their ancient as well as modern civilizations. Both Egypt and Ethiopia are too big to fail to grasp the significance of their past and its impact on the present and the future generations.

Egypt and Ethiopia have proved to the world that they have no conflicting interests as countries sharing the waters of a common river and as Africans vying for their common survival. Egypt is fighting for its survival as does Ethiopia that cannot continue to provide food for its people and raw materials for its industries without developing its rivers, and the Nile in the first place. Egypt too has a high stake and a legitimate concern in the equitable, just and continued supply of water to its people its economy and its survival in general. As the two countries have common objectives and are living in the same geographic area as neighbors, they have the will and honesty to settle any dispute with dialogue, and agreement based not on old pre-colonial claims but on present and future expediencies. Neither geopolitics nor foreign involvement in this purely African issue should be allowed to muddy the waters. In other words, both Egypt and Ethiopia can approach the issue with an African mentality and find an African solution to this African challenge.

In the distant past, the two countries built ancient civilizations they are now proud of while the Nile flowed quietly and emptied itself into the Mediterranean Sea. Now, the Nile is waiting the two countries to make use of it in the spirit of their ancient wisdoms so that other African countries would make use of it and make Africa great again. Without going into the details, we can remain optimistic that these two ancient civilizations will live up to the challenges and forge a shared destiny with the great Nile at the center of their shared hopes in a bright African future.

Season's King—Spring

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

Welcome, welcome spring
Freedom of movement
In one's mind ring.
Birds that adore to sing,
Also for-nectar-buzzing bees
Are on the wing,
While bees keep on bubbling.

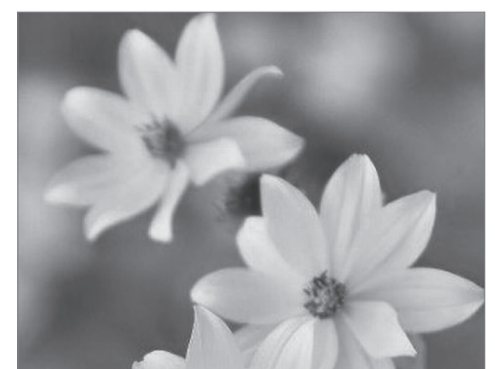
Welcome, welcome spring
You stamp on everything
Up lifting mood
From hibernating animals
To each wood.
Earth rolls out
A yellow daisy carpet
Embroidered by flowers

Vintage, purple, violet
To a blue sky its pet.
Rabbits, insects of every kind,
all, the occasion salubrious find,
While parents on the departed season
Take a stock,
Children on the gamboling fields
And football pitches run amok
Unless checked round the clock.
From the nearby forest fruits boys pick
"This one has a cover tick
That one is toothsome, while
This mouthwatering,
Try this to eat, it is bitter sweet.

In pairs, lover shepards, firewood fetching girls
Head to a close by mountain



To quench thirst from lover's fountain.
Swimming and washing in the pool



Students get ready to start school
With full granary, now and then
Adults throw party
Proving humorous and funny
They turn by turn ask each other's company
To their children's wedding ceremony;
They sing and dance, dance and sing
Appreciative of season's king -Spring.

Global Affairs

A breakthrough for Africa's voice in global decision-making

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The Group of 20 (G20) has granted the African Union (AU), consisting of 55 member states, permanent membership status to foster diversified global representation. This decision was made in response to the shifting global economic dynamics and the need to include emerging economies and countries from various regions in decision-making processes. By including the AU, the G20 aims to attain a more comprehensive representation of the global economy.

Recognizing the AU's substantial contribution to Africa's economic growth and its increasing influence in the international arena, the G20 member states unanimously agreed to extend an invitation for the AU to become a permanent member. This gesture demonstrates a mutual understanding and recognition of the AU's significance in shaping global economic policies.

Becoming a permanent member of the G20 grants the African Union (AU) an invaluable position in the decision-making processes of global economic matters. This milestone achievement opens up significant opportunities for African nations to actively participate in discussions and contribute their distinct viewpoints on pressing issues, including climate change, poverty eradication, and sustainable development.

With this newfound platform, the AU can engage more closely with other G20 members, fostering partnerships and formulating collective strategies to address global challenges.

Being a permanent member of the G20 allows the AU to have a say in crucial global economic decisions, ensuring that the perspectives and interests of African nations are taken into account. This inclusion provides an avenue for African nations to share their unique experiences, challenges, and innovative solutions in tackling issues of international significance. Additionally, it affords the AU the opportunity to advocate for policies and initiatives that align with Africa's socioeconomic realities and aspirations.

By working closely together, the AU and other G20 nations can pool their resources, knowledge, and expertise to develop effective strategies for global challenges. This collaboration enables the AU to learn from the experiences of other countries and draw upon best practices in various areas such as trade, investment, technological advancements, and sustainable development.

The AU's presence in the G20 allows for stronger partnerships between African nations and other G20 members. Through this platform, African countries have the chance to build relationships and networks with influential economies potentially resulting in increased trade, investments, and joint initiatives. These partnerships



can contribute to the economic growth and development of African nations while fostering mutual understanding and cooperation between the AU and other G20 members.

Joining the G20 as a permanent member also empowers the AU to advocate for international initiatives that prioritize the needs and challenges of African countries. By voicing their concerns and proposals within the G20 framework, the AU has the opportunity to influence global conversations, policies, and practices related to issues such as climate change, poverty alleviation, inclusive growth, and sustainable development in African countries.

The AU's permanent membership in the G20 strengthens its position as a key regional organization and enhances its influence on the global stage. It helps solidify the AU's role as a primary representative and voice for African countries, providing them with a platform to assert their interests and priorities. This recognition elevates the AU's ability to shape the global agenda, advocate for fair and just international norms, and foster partnerships that benefit the continent.

The AU's presence in the G20 as a permanent member sets a positive example for other regional organizations around the world. It encourages these organizations to actively engage on a global scale and seek meaningful partnerships with major economic powers. The AU's achievement may inspire other regional bodies to pursue similar opportunities for their respective regions, contributing to a more diverse and inclusive representation within global economic governance platforms.

The AU's permanent membership in the G20 offers African nations an influential position to engage in critical global economic decision-making processes. It presents a platform for African countries to contribute their unique perspectives and tackle urgent issues such as climate change, poverty eradication, and sustainable development. This achievement not only strengthens the AU's role as a representative for African nations but also encourages other regional organizations worldwide to actively participate in global economic governance discussions.

The inclusion of the AU in the G20 as a permanent member also carries symbolic value. It signifies a much-needed shift towards more equitable global decision-making processes and recognizes Africa's growing influence on the world stage. Furthermore, it acknowledges the AU's dedication to promoting regional integration, peace, stability, and economic development within Africa.

The AU's permanent membership in the G20 is a momentous development that reflects the global need for greater representation and inclusivity. It signifies a step towards recognizing Africa's economic potential, promoting collaboration, and fostering a more balanced and equitable approach to global economic governance.

AU's inclusion in the G20 as a member provides a promising framework that will enhance the AU's ability to advocate for Africa's interests and effectively contribute to addressing global challenges. This membership allows the AU to actively participate in discussions and decision-making processes regarding critical global economic matters, thus ensuring that the voice of Africa is heard and its concerns are taken into account.

By occupying a seat at the table where these important decisions are made, the AU has an opportunity to amplify its advocacy efforts and promote policies that prioritize the needs and aspirations of African nations. One of the significant advantages of AU's membership in the G20 is the platform it provides for the continent to actively engage in discussions regarding pressing global issues. The AU can now contribute its unique perspectives on topics such as climate change, poverty eradication, and sustainable development.

This opens up avenues for African nations to share their experiences, challenges, and innovative solutions with other G20 members, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of the realities faced by African countries. It also enables the AU to advocate for policies that align with the socioeconomic context of Africa and address its specific challenges effectively.

By working together, the AU and other G20 members can pool their resources,

expertise, and knowledge to come up with pragmatic solutions for pressing issues. This collaboration allows the AU to learn from the experiences and best practices of other countries, which can further inform policymaking and implementation efforts within the African continent.

Being a permanent member of the G20 facilitates stronger partnerships between African nations and other G20 members. Through this platform, African countries have the opportunity to build relationships and networks with influential economies, which could potentially result in increased trade, investments, and joint initiatives. These alliances can significantly contribute to the economic growth and development of African nations, while also fostering mutual understanding and cooperation between the AU and other G20 members.

Within the framework of the G20, the AU has the opportunity to voice its concerns, propose solutions, and influence global conversations, policies, and practices related to issues such as climate change, poverty alleviation, inclusive growth, and sustainable development. This enables the AU to actively shape the global agenda and ensure that Africa's interests are effectively represented and addressed.

The AU's permanent membership in the G20 strengthens its position as a key regional organization and enhances its influence on the global stage. This achievement solidifies the AU's role as a primary representative and voice for African countries, providing them with a platform to assert their interests and priorities in international discussions and negotiations. The recognition gained through G20 membership elevates the AU's credibility and strengthens its ability to shape global norms and advocate for fair and just international relations, ultimately benefiting the African continent as a whole.

The African Union (AU) has become a permanent member of the Group of 20 largest economies (G 20), according to information obtained from Ethiopian News Agency.

The Group agreed on Saturday to grant permanent membership to the AU in an effort to make the group more representative.

The agreement was reached at the inaugural session of the two-day G20 summit held in New Delhi during the weekend.

Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat tweeted that the membership will provide a propitious framework for amplifying advocacy in favor of the Continent and its effective contribution to meeting global challenges.

G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation playing an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues.

Law & Politics

The noteworthy events of Ethiopian Year 2015

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

When every New Year dawns, it is customary not only to make new pledges and resolutions but also to look back and see what went right and what did not. For countries, this is even more so because governments have huge responsibilities for running the country's affairs and would like to be blessed by the positive feedback of their constituencies, their citizens. People expect everything from their governments, and every year they look back to see what has gone wrong and what has instead fulfilled their expectations.

Many things have happened to the country in the Ethiopian year 2015, but it could best be recalled mainly for a few events, one of which was the Pretoria Peace Deal. This deal ended the brutal conflict in the north of the country between brothers. It was a war that haunted everyone in the country and lasted two years. It was the cause of the huge losses, both materially and psychologically, but most significantly in terms of huge human sacrifices.

Moreover, it was two years during which Ethiopia had to battle on multiple fronts not only at home but also in the international sphere. On the one hand, there was the pressure from outside with all sorts of negative coverage of the war that Ethiopia was forced to be dragged in. On the other hand it had to preserve not only the integrity of the country and avoid its balkanization but also maintain its sovereignty. The government and people of Ethiopia had the moral and legal obligation to resist any pressure that had come from outside and even locally from certain circles because they knew that there were forces that rejoiced when they saw things were going the wrong way for Ethiopia.

Willingly or not, Ethiopia's geopolitical position in the Horn of Africa and its being the source of a major trans-boundary river considered the means of survival for Egypt and Sudan makes it a center of attention even beyond the Horn. It is a volatile and delicate area reputed for being not always stable except for Ethiopia.

Hence, this internal conflict appeared to ruin the long-established reputation of Ethiopia as a stable, peaceful and reliable country. What is more, the way the conflict was covered by much of the international media did little justice to Ethiopia. Even traditional allies of the country failed to side with it provoking several negative repercussions not only politically and diplomatically but also economically.

Ethiopians from all walks of life had to stand by the side of their country to try and reject those allegations made against Ethiopia and explain how it had to do what it did. Ethiopia had to explain to the world that it did not need to be involved in such a ferocious series of battles that monopolized the attention of the people and the government. For a while, the entire focus of the government had to be

deviated to resist the attacks that came from the north and at the same time created a serious jeopardy to the unity and integrity of the country. That was why the government had to disregard whatever comments came from the international community and ahead resisting and countering the attacks that were launched against its military and people by the TPLF leaders and forces.

Finally, in November 2015, two years exactly from the beginning of the first moves of the TPLF, the Ethiopian government and the TPLF finally met in Pretoria, South Africa after a series of attempts by many African statesmen and the AU itself to finally reach a deal of cessation of hostilities and embark on a full and lasting peace process.

It is to be noted that former Nigerian president Olesgun Obasanjo had the big resilience of going back and forth from Addis to Mekele in the efforts to frame a peace deal with the assistance of the AU good offices and later on the contribution of the former President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, the South African government, the US and EU diplomats who had their share of merits for the success of the peace deal.

Following the peace deal, Ethiopians began to breathe an atmosphere of peace and solace with the entire rhetoric changing because at the end of the day Ethiopia stopped suffering immense loss economically. The exact cost of the conflict may not be known yet, but it was sure that huge resources were squandered and the economic trajectory of growth and development of the country suffered remarkable setbacks. Furthermore, the image of the country was substantially damaged. Besides, it must have created delight for those forces that were actively trying to inflict huge damage on Ethiopia's name and status in order to advance their own national interests at the expense of Ethiopia.

With the peace deal Ethiopians did triumph because many things were cleared and the fact that Ethiopia did not accept the interference of foreign forces in its internal problems was a reiteration of its sovereignty and independence despite the fact that it may still need the assistance of foreign forces to nurture its economy and make it reach new heights.

The diplomatic clouts of Ethiopia were once again restored to the pre-conflict period. Ethiopia regained its influence in Africa and showed to the world that it is not 'a house of cards' that could easily crumble at the first push, albeit severely challenged. It showed to the world its resolve and resilience by dismissing economic blackmail. It also resisted the multiple interventions of the UN Security Council meetings which tried to pass a resolution condemning Ethiopia for its legitimate resistance to attacks from various corners on the solicitation of certain powers. The year 2015 could thus be remembered as a significant landmark in the recent history of the country and it should be considered remarkable.

the efforts to curb climate change.

In fact in all major international conferences the Ethiopian government took part it has shared its experience. Now there are other countries particularly in the East African region emulating what Ethiopia had done to fight climate change. Recently, at the African Ministers of Environment conference carried out in Addis and the subsequent African Heads of State Environmental Summit carried out in Nairobi, Ethiopia's name and its Green Legacy Initiative have been highlighted as a resounding success which needs to be replicated in other countries. For Ethiopia, this was a huge achievement for the year 2015.

What other important development marked the just ended year was Ethiopia's admission to the BRICS group of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa at the fifteenth BRICS summit carried out in South Africa, Johannesburg. Among the scores of expressions of interest to join the group, only six countries have been admitted including Argentina from Latin America, UAE, Iran and Saudi Arabia from Asia and Egypt and Ethiopia from Africa.

This inclusion was a result of huge diplomatic efforts by the Ethiopian government. It had had to fulfill certain conditions. Ethiopia in this sense has registered a huge success because once again it showed its immense economic potential with a huge young population. It is also considered as a huge gateway to Africa with its historical roles such as preserving its independence during colonialism and being a founding member of the UN and the AU with the headquarters in Addis Ababa.

The year 2015 however did not pass all as a bed of roses as there were certain challenges Ethiopians would not like to see continuing in 2016. One challenge is the inflation that afflicted the economy defying the efforts of the government with its home grown economic reforms. True, inflation continues to be a major threat for the entire world. However, the weaker economies are the ones that feel the bite more because the stronger ones avail multiple remedies.

The Ethiopian government has thus embarked on a second economic reform to combat inflation. It includes fostering substitution of imported goods, and increasing productivity at home to save foreign currency. Fostering investment with more facilitation lures foreign business ventures. Ethiopia's joining the BRICS group is anticipated to be a stimulus in this direction.

The National Dialogue Commission, which has been operating actively to bring together all parties to a round table in inclusive dialogues, will present the new path for Ethiopia where all of its citizens feel they are adequately represented. The year 2016 hence presents certain challenges that cannot be underestimated nor neglected. The toil would lessen if every citizen collaborated voluntarily and in good faith. Ethiopia's future would then be bright.

Following the peace deal, Ethiopians began to breathe an atmosphere of peace and solace with the entire rhetoric changing because at the end of the day Ethiopia stopped suffering immense loss economically

Another huge event for the year 2015 was the successful end of the first phase of the Green Legacy Initiative with more than twenty billion saplings planted and also the beginning of a second phase trying to expand it. This obtained the admiration and commendation of all environment campaigners and governments with Ethiopia noted as one of the few countries in the world doing what is expected of it in

International

Ethiopian Airlines Enhances Cargo Service in Mexico with Move to Felipe Ángeles International Airport

BY STAFF REPORTER

Ethiopian Cargo and Logistics Services, the largest cargo network operator in Africa, has relocated its operations from Mexico City Airport (MEX) to the newly inaugurated Felipe Ángeles International Airport (NLU).

Effective September 2, 2023, this shift signifies a new era for Ethiopian Airlines in Mexico becoming the latest carrier to switch freighter flights to New Mexico City Airport

Mesfin Tasew, the CEO of Ethiopian Airlines

Group, expressed their commitment to excellence, stating, "Our relocation to the Felipe Ángeles International Airport brings with it a state-of-the-art cargo terminal equipped with cutting-edge technology and modern facilities. This upgrade underscores our dedication to efficiency and service excellence, allowing us to provide an elevated level of services to our valued customers."

Ethiopian Airlines plays a pivotal role in establishing trade routes connecting Mexico to the rest of the world and vice versa. With its modern freighter aircraft, the B777-200F,

Ethiopian Airlines operates in five cities in the Americas: Mexico City, Bogota, Santiago, Sao Paulo, and Miami. Ethiopian Cargo and Logistics Services, a key unit within the Ethiopian Airlines Group, covers more than 130 international destinations globally, offering both belly hold capacity and 67 dedicated Freight services.

The Mexican government's decree to relocate freighter operations from Mexico City International Airport (MEX) to Felipe Ángeles International Airport (NLU) aims to reduce congestion at the crowded MEX hub. Several

cargo operators, including DHL Express and United Parcel Service, have already made the move to NLU, a former military base converted for commercial operations.

Ethiopian Airlines has been serving Mexico City for over six years, operating twice a week using their B777F fleet, which has the capacity to handle 100 tons per flight. The airline will continue to serve Felipe Ángeles International Airport, mirroring its previous operations to MEX.

Source: *Airspace-Africa*

Morocco/Earthquake: India, AU, Paris, WB, IMF & EU Express Solidarity & Pledge Financial Support

BY STAFF REPORTER

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chair of the African Union & Pdt. of the Comoros Azali Assoumani, President of France Emmanuel Macron, World Bank Chief Ajay Banga, IMF Managing Director Ms. Kristalina Georgieva and Head of European Commission Ms. Ursula von der Leyen have expressed "full solidarity with the Moroccan authorities and people" following the deadly powerful quake that hit the North African Kingdom on September 9.

In their joint solidarity statement issued Sunday on the sidelines of G20 Summit held in India, they said "we offer our condolences to the families of the victims" and "express our willingness to support Morocco in the best possible way."

"We have been and continue to be committed partners of Morocco, supporting the authorities' as they have built an inclusive and resilient economy with strong institutions," said the joint statement.

"With all our international partners, we stand by Morocco to provide all the necessary support for any urgent short term financial needs and for the reconstruction efforts," added the statement.

"We will mobilize our technical and financial tools and assistance in a coordinated way to help the people of Morocco overcome this terrible tragedy," underlined the statement.

Source: *North Africa Post*

Arab guests at G20 summit put Global South center stage

It is often hard to find consensus across large diplomatic groups, and the G20 is no exception. However, the members of this group of the world's 20 largest economies, though often lacking in commonalities, do together drive the world economy. Very much a creation of the 21st century, the G20 club of countries rose in importance after the 2008 financial crisis.

The group's growth in prominence provides a forceful addition to the role of the post-Second World War Bretton Woods institutions, which are less reflective of the balance of power in the world today. India's invitations to the UAE, Oman and Egypt to attend this weekend's summit, alongside members Saudi Arabia and Turkiye, put the Middle East at the forefront of the considerations of the Global South, following years of a perceived American disengagement from the region.

A fortnight after an unprecedentedly large BRICS meeting that saw the admission of the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Iran to the club of large developing economies, the G20 this weekend reinforced the trend that rapidly growing economies from the developing world seek to restructure the international system based on their disenchantment with the postwar global order.

The COVID-19 pandemic created major economic inequalities and exposed the unbalanced nature of an international system that is increasingly perceived to ignore the interests of the developing world. With the growing clout of these nations allowing them to increasingly promote their vision of the world, especially their own conditions for trading in the global economy, it is little surprise that India is using its G20 moment to reinforce these arguments.

Since 2004, when Canada surpassed Saudi Arabia as the largest single oil exporter to the US, the Middle East region has gradually strayed from the

focus of US policymakers. Though the US remains a major trading partner of Saudi Arabia, the latter's trade with China is almost double.

A surge in oil and gas exports from the UAE to China also makes Beijing its largest trading partner. Significant and importantly growing trade with India, Egypt, Pakistan and Turkiye, among others, highlight the increased importance of South-South trade and thereby the efforts of BRICS and India to integrate new actors.

Though Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman and Egypt have different levels of development, they are united in their strategic importance and indeed their potential for growth. Despite their position as energy producers, they will also play a role in the future of energy.

Oman and Saudi Arabia will play a role in hydrogen production and Egypt will be a significant producer of the "transitional fuel" of gas during the global energy shift that will inevitably take place. Together occupying the Suez Canal and the straits of Hormuz and Bab Al-Mandab, these countries are integral to global supply chains and ripe for a project akin to the International North-South Transport Corridor that connects India, Iran and Russia.

It is little surprise, therefore, that central to India's outreach to Western Asian nations for the G20 summit is transport. Aside from New Delhi's increased foreign policy focus on the future centers of global trade through the auspices of the G20, it has already been building its ties in the Middle East.

The UAE's first ever comprehensive economic partnership agreement was signed with India in February last year. A dirham-rupee trade agreement has also come into force to encourage increased bilateral trade between the UAE and India, with a target of \$100 billion in non-oil trade by 2030.

Alongside the strategic partnership

that exists with Saudi Arabia, India has sought to expand its ties with the Kingdom beyond oil, focusing on the growing digital and innovation economy.

A rail and port infrastructure deal that would better connect the Middle East with India, though endorsed by the US under its "Partnership for Cooperation," is very much indicative of India's growing clout. The plans for a far-reaching, multinational ports and railways deal are a direct counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative global infrastructure network, which also has the Middle East in its sights.

Though President Vladimir Putin's continued absence from the G20 is significant, as British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak stated, he is "the architect of his own diplomatic exile."

More significant for the Arab attendees was Chinese President Xi Jinping's decision not to attend the G20 summit in New Delhi. Though seen by some as a snub toward the Western bloc at a time when China seeks to bolster the BRICS grouping, it is more likely borne of China's resentment at India's economic rise.

India's growing role in the Arab world is also likely to concern China, which has worked assiduously to present itself as an alternative to Middle Eastern states seeking to renegotiate their relationships with the US.

Though India's role has been hitherto economic, the recent military exercises conducted with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman and Egypt, alongside increased diplomatic initiatives, could be seen as a challenge to China, which so recently sought to bring Iran and Saudi Arabia together in a major diplomatic coup.

Looking ahead, Arab nations must make sure that an apparent great-power vacuum does not force them to impossibly straddle the growing global geopolitical divide.

Source: *Arab News*

Planet Earth

Summit helps Ethiopia to share its climate change mitigation efforts

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in weather patterns and global temperatures caused by human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation. These activities release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide, which trap heat and lead to a rise in global temperatures. Climate change has various impacts, including rising sea levels, extreme weather events, loss of biodiversity, and disruptions to ecosystems.

The concept of climate change is supported by extensive scientific research and is recognized as a pressing global issue by organizations like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The consequences of climate change are far-reaching and affect all aspects of life, including human health, agriculture, water resources, and economic stability.

Addressing climate change requires collective action at all levels, from individuals to governments and international organizations. This involves reducing greenhouse gas emissions by transitioning to renewable energy sources like solar and wind power, improving energy efficiency, and adopting sustainable practices in transportation, agriculture, and industry. Additionally, protecting and restoring natural ecosystems, such as forests and wetlands, can help absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Taking these facts and the vulnerability of the continent into account, the Africa Climate Summit was held in Nairobi, Kenya under the theme “Driving Green Growth & Climate Finance Solutions for Africa and the World. More than 13,000 delegations from across 130 countries including several heads of states in the summit advocate on bringing about new climate finance architecture. The summit also provides an opportunity for leaders to make a united voice to achieve the desired impact.

The summit helped African nations to share innovation, knowledge, experience, and practical approaches to deepen and expand understanding of climate challenges and opportunities, and enable Africa to renew its vision and become more assertive in pursuing a climate and development agenda through a unified approach.

More importantly, the summit helps Ethiopia to share in climate change mitigation efforts. According to Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde, Ethiopia’s unwavering commitment to work with fellow Africans and other global partners to achieve the priorities and the long-term objective of making the planet comfortable



Addressing climate change requires collective action at all levels, from individuals to governments and international organizations

for present and future generations.

Africa has tried its best to make its voice heard to speak with one voice and alert partners of the disastrous consequences, noting that Ethiopia has been at the forefront of this fight. She also stressed the need for sufficient research publications on climate change to get accurate representations of Africa’s special needs and circumstances that would build evidence for advancing the key ask of the continent.

President Sahle-Work said that Ethiopia has witnessed in the past decades including the last consecutive years a persistent drought, flooding, and locust invasion where millions are severely affected. Hence, the country has been carrying out different practical policy and action interventions as steps to contribute to emission removal and building adaptation capacity, she further added.

“Building climate-resilient green economy is one of the pillars of our 10-year national development plan. As part of our strategic

consideration, we have launched the long-term low-emission and climate-resilient development strategy that has been submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with the aspiration to achieve net-zero emission and building climate-resilient development by 2050,”

She recalled that the Ethiopian Green Legacy Initiative, which was launched in 2019, has succeeded in planting 25 billion seedlings on the degraded landscape by mobilizing volunteers throughout the nation.

“The Initiative helped the development of more than 120,000 nurseries and created more than 180,000 jobs throughout the country. More importantly, the GLI is intended to inculcate green behavior in each of our citizens. The greening initiative has been scaled-up into fruit-bearing perennial trees thereby directly linking it with the country’s food system transformation strategy.”

In the agriculture sector, the president indicated that Ethiopia has achieved notable progress in enhancing its wheat production, effectively transforming a deficit of 15 million metric tons in 2019/2020 into a surplus of 65 million quintals in 2022/23. This achievement has enabled Ethiopia to meet not only its domestic needs but also to commence wheat export.

“Ethiopia planned to cultivate 2 million hectares of farmland during the dry season alone in 2023. The success of wheat production is critical for the country’s efforts to enhance food security and to achieve food sovereignty.” In terms of renewable energy production, she said Ethiopia is also investing in green energy projects, such as hydroelectric, wind, solar, and geothermal energy sectors as well as promoting modern rural cooking technologies.

Ethiopia is striving to finance climate actions proactively and persistently as a means of systematically addressing

the economic challenges of the country. Accordingly, she said the government has invested over 82 million USD from 2011 to 2019, mobilized from domestic, bilateral, and multilateral sources, as well as from international climate financing institutions on climate change mitigation and adaptation projects and programs in agriculture, energy, transport, industry, forestry, urban development, and health sectors.

Ethiopian Ministry of Planning and Development Minister Dr. Fitsum Asefa said that the severe drought that Ethiopia has experienced in recent years is an example of the damage that climate change is causing. She said that the drought has displaced millions of people and has caused widespread food insecurity. She also noted that climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of natural disasters, such as floods and storms, which are also displacing people.

Despite various challenges, Ethiopia is committed to addressing climate change. The Green Legacy Initiative benefits Ethiopia to minimize its greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change, she highlighted.

Besides, she called on all countries to support Ethiopia’s efforts to address climate change. She said that climate change is a global problem that requires a global solution. She urged all countries to work together to prevent climate change-driven migration and to build a more sustainable future for all.

Indeed, policy changes are also crucial in addressing climate change. Governments can implement regulations and incentives to promote renewable energy, reduce fossil fuel consumption, and encourage sustainable practices. More importantly, International agreements like the Paris Agreement aim to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Education and awareness play a vital role in tackling climate change. By understanding the causes and consequences of climate change, individuals can make informed choices and advocate for sustainable solutions. Sharing knowledge about climate change with others helps build a broader understanding and support for action.

Overall, addressing climate change is a complex and urgent task that requires global cooperation and commitment. By taking the Ethiopian practical example into account the world especially Africans can reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainability, Individuals can contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change which could create a more sustainable future.