



# The Ethiopian Herald

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Photo: Dagne Abera

## Ethiopia to stage 2023 Nat'l career expo

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** – National Career Expo is slated to be held here from October 18-19, 2023.

The expo aims at connecting over 20,000 recent graduates and over 3,100 highly trained Dereja Academy graduates with over 200 organizations from various sectors providing them with networking opportunities and access to employment, it was learnt.

During the announcement yesterday, Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) stated that such job fair exhibitions and expos are vital platforms for streamlining the recruitment process and minimizing unemployment rate.

MoLS National Employment Promotion Head Dejene Bekele said that as Ethiopia is currently facing a significant youth unemployment rate, career expos are addressing the issue by offering recent graduates with a highly

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See Ethiopia ...page 3

## Premier hails tourism exhibition as 'Ethiopia ideal destination'

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA**- The tourism and hospitality exhibition gives visitors an opportunity to see a sample of what makes Ethiopia an ideal destination, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

The premier made the above remark while officially opening the National Tourism and Hospitality Investment and Exhibition held at science museum yesterday.

"Tourism is one of the main pillars for the economic sector, considering we have a rich

history, heritage, culture, natural endowments, birds, wildlife and unique events that are marketable."

Reminding that Ethiopia has its own calendar,



## Efforts to inscribe wall of Halala on UNESCO in process

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## IMF gives thumbs up to Ethiopia's homegrown economy

• Ethiopia, Norway seal 25 mln USD grant Agreement

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** – The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has applauded the ongoing relentless efforts of the Ethiopia government in implementing homegrown economic reform.

This came when IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva discussed with the Ministry of Finance and National Bank of Ethiopia delegation.

In her twitter message, Kristalina Georgieva stated that 'impressed by [Ethiopia's determination] to advance Ethiopia's homegrown economic reform agenda. Discussed how the IMF can support.'

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Finance and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, represented by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Addis Ababa signed a 273 million Norwegian Kroner (NoK)

See IMF gives thumbs ...page 3



# News



Amb. Aleign Admasu

## Israel keen to bolster collaboration with Ethiopia: Ambassador

BY YOHANES JEMANEH

ADDIS ABABA - Ambassador of the State of Israel to Ethiopia, Aleign Admasu expressed that the bilateral cooperation between Ethiopia and Israel that has stood a test of time, remains unchanged.

The Ambassador stated that Ethiopia and Israel have a bilateral relations that dates back to centuries. "We have close religious, social, and other diplomatic relations," he said.

Israel is offering various support to enable Ethiopia to achieve its development ambitions in the areas of agriculture, health and innovation, he added.

According to Ambassador Aleign, Israelis NGOs have been engaged in Ethiopia where they provided capacity building assistance to more than 75,000 farmers to ensure food security.

In addition, Israelis health professionals have provided health services in Ethiopia through conducting medical operations in eye care and cardiac treatment. They also shared experiences to their Ethiopian counterparts, he noted.

He further stated that the two nations are also working together in the area of innovation in which Ethiopian professionals including government officials received training and attended experience sharing programs about skill development and job creation activities.

Israel has been sharing its successful experiences with Ethiopia as the latter is striving to achieve prosperity by drawing lesson from developed countries, it was learnt.

## College stresses collaboration towards preventing mental illness impacts

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA-St. Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College stated that collaboration and sense of belongingness is highly required to prevent the negative repercussions of mental illness by bridging gaps.

Speaking at the occasion to mark the World Mental Health Day with stakeholders yesterday, St. Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College Psychiatric specialist, Dawit Asefa (MD) said as the theme of World Mental Health Day highlights, 'Mental health is a universal human right', individuals have the right to keep their mental health with freedom, and October 10th is World Mental Health Day.

He said: "The state of mental health issues is currently better than what was in the past, but there are still many gaps that need collaboration from all parties to prevent the health illness. In addition to this, to expand mental health treatment, it needs the integration of all stakeholders."

Department of Psychiatry and Education Head, Meskerem Abebe (MD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that

although there has been an improvement in community regarding understanding of mental illness, more work still needs to be done. Government, NGOs, educational institutions, and policymakers are expected to collaborate in raising awareness and preventing mental health.

She further said that some individuals who have mental illness have faced discrimination by the community due to lack of awareness. Therefore, to mitigate this scenario, the media should work with health institutions and others concerned bodies by organizing programs that would be teach the community. The community should also encourage the patients to get treatment instead of discrimination.

The college Ambassador Artist Haregewen Asefa said: "We can do lots of works in terms of using the arts to raise public awareness about mental health. It is possible to develop compassion, love, and understanding by spreading awareness about mental health. By using art as a tool, citizens can break the silence about mental health disorders/illness that anyone can face and make stories come out in the public."

If awareness can be created about mental



health, a person with mental illness can access services without feeling embarrassed, Artist Haregewen said.

## Some 500 taxpayers to receive fifth round award

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-The Ministry of Revenues and Ethiopian Customs Commission announced that some 500 taxpayers will be awarded on the fifth National Best Taxpayers Award that takes place on October 12 at the National Palace.

In joint press conference held yesterday, Revenue Minister, Aynalem Nigussie and Customs Commissioner, Debele Kabeta briefed journalists that best taxpayers nominated from all sectors have already been identified.

"Out of 500 nominees, 50 taxpayers will receive platinum rank while the rest 150 and 300 will be decorated with gold and silver rank awards respectively," Aynalem said.

During the fiscal year of 2022/23, the Revenue Ministry has achieved 98.2 percent of its goal which is the highest record of achievement ever in its history. This year, the ministry has planned to collect 529 billion birr revenue from taxpayers, she indicated.

More than 86 billion birr revenue is expected to be collected from tax and customs within this month, she noted. Last year, the country has undertaken a successful tax collection campaign which will be resumed this October.

Furthermore, the ministry is developing new electronic invoice system to modernize taxpaying mechanisms. "Our plan is to cover all government expenses through revenues generated from tax and custom duties. So,

we are coming up with modern and fair electronic tax administration system," she said.

Customs Commissioner, Debele Kabeta also congratulated nominees of the national award saying they are loyalists to their nation indeed.

The government will continue awarding loyalists and punishing tax criminals, he said, adding that integrated operations to prevent contraband and tax evasion are being carried out in collaboration with security agencies.

Over the past few years, numbers of contrabandists have been arrested while additional measures are being taken to arrest import and export contrabandists, he stated.

## KOICA launches shape 2 project in Ethiopia

- Project aims to reduce maternal mortality, infant death

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has launched Shape 2 project and mass media campaign to reduce maternal mortality and infant death in Ethiopia.

The Shape 2 project that will stay until December 2024 aimed at promoting family planning and reducing maternal and infant mortality rate in Ethiopia, KOICA announced.

In the launching ceremony of the project, KOICA Country Director, Han Deog

Cho said that small family is essential for successful economic growth of each family as well as the nation in general.

Therefore, a mass media campaign is significant for implementation of the project that proposed to bring great transformation in sexual reproduction health in Ethiopia through shaping the attitude, behaviors of women and youth, he stated.

KOICA reaffirms its commitment to achieve the project and provide Ethiopia with health support, he added.

Public Relations and Communication Chief

Executive Officer at Ministry of Health, Tegene Regasa (MD) on his part said that only 41 percent of women reaching puberty use modern family planning.

"We have to change the misconception of women about family planning by raising awareness about its significance for the society," he noted.

He added that the ministry will properly utilize the support that provided to achieve the planned project regarding family planning to reduce maternal mortality rate and infant death and improve the health of pregnant women in the country.

It was mentioned that a media campaign for awareness creation and improvement on family planning and sexual reproductive health will be done in four languages using radio or TV drama and spot.

The Mass Media Campaign for Shape 2 project is funded by KOICA and implemented by Zeleman Communication, Advertising and Production in collaboration with Yonsei Global Health Center. Shape 2 project will be implemented in Addis Ababa, Amhara, Dire Dawa, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP and Somali states and city administrations, it was learnt.

# News

## Efforts to inscribe wall of Halala on UNESCO in process

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

**DAWURO ZONE**—The Southwest State of Ethiopia announced that efforts are being made to register the great wall of Dawuro's king Halala (Kawo Halala Kela) as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

State Cultural Tourism Sports Bureau Head Fantahun Blatie told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the wall is an amazing historical monument entirely carved out of dry stone.

The entire construction of the wall took

over 200 years and was completed in the span three generations. The length of the wall is 175kms.

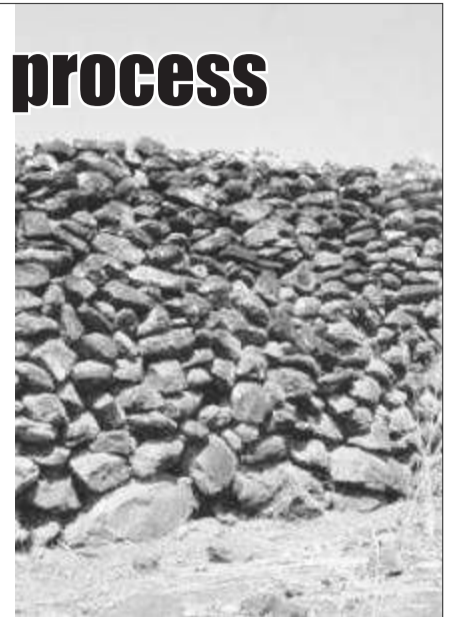
It is said that it was started by Dawuro King (Kati) Baidu in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and this amazing military defense strategy was completed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century during the reign of Kathi (King) Halala. The official said that various works are being done to inscribe this heritage as a world heritage site.

He explained that the Halala Resort was

built taking the man-made lake and the historical stone walls of Halala into account.

The head also mentioned that the problem of accommodation and wider space has been a problem preventing tourists from coming to this area of attraction. The project initiated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) is used as a springboard in this regard.

As to him, the resort is now occupied by local and foreign visitors throughout the week.



## IMF gives thumbs up to Ethiopia's ...

(approximately 25 million USD) grant agreement for the second phase of the REDD+ Investment Program.

The grant agreement also constitutes an unfunded amount of 148 million NOK, which is expected to be mobilized by the Government of Norway during implementation.

The signed agreement is expected to contribute to Ethiopia's nationally determined contribution (NDC) targets of emission reduction, increased forest cover, and increased GDP.

It is a second phase and a continuation of the REDD+ Investment Program which has been financed by the Government of

Norway and under implementation since 2017.

The grant agreement was signed by Finance State Minister Semereta Sewasew and Stian Christensen, Ambassador of Norway to Ethiopia, on behalf of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was learnt.

## Premier hails ...

possesses 900 years old Parchment heritages and rich in cultural diversity, he stressed the need to develop and promote the resources jointly. "Countries with only 200 years history generate more income through promoting and organizing event."

Thus, he called upon all Ethiopians to explore what their country offers, to extract the potential of what they discover, to promote and to serve in the interest of positioning Ethiopia as a destination with many splendors.

Emphasizing that the exhibition is essential to promote nation's rich natural tourist attractions as well as improve the tourism sector, Tourism Minister Nasise Challi indicated that every citizen must contribute its share to the development of the tourism sector thereby harnessing its benefit.

"The nation is at an infant stage when it comes to exploiting the tourism sector, however, PM's initiatives such as Dine for Ethiopia, Dine for Generations, among others, have lighted ray of hope for the sector as well as encouraged the private sector," she underscored.

Several high level government officials including Prosperity Party's Deputy President Adem Farah took part at the opening ceremony of the National Tourism and Hospitality Investment and Exhibition.

Apart from participants drawn from state's tourism bureaus, the exhibition has brought over 100 tour-operators, 50 Hotels and service providers, media and technology institutions as well as the Ethiopian Airlines together.

The exhibition is slated to be held from October 10, 2023 to November 8, 2023 at Science Museum, it was learnt.



Photo: Agape Gijyon

## Ethiopia to stage 2023 ...

sought-after platform to find employment opportunities and network with professionals in their field.

"We have been working with MasterCard Foundation and Dereja.com to equip young people with the right skills that make them ready for the job market and the platform to connect with recruiters.

He further remarked that the ministry along with partners is widely engaged in addressing unemployment rates via focusing on job creation, skills developments to promote various platforms which help to enhance job related issues in different universities and towns.

As to him, job fair exhibitions are playing a significant role in expanding experience

sharing, recruitments, and bridge skill gaps and create more job opportunities.

"The Ministry has been remaining committed to enhancing its contribution on producing qualified graduates that satisfy the requirements of the labor market for the past five years," he stated.

Africa Jobs Network Chief Operating Officer Dina Mekonnen on her part said that career expos are a critical event for addressing youth unemployment in Ethiopia thereby providing fresh graduates with a platform to showcase their skills and knowledge to potential employers and find talented young people to join their teams.

It has been offering services for agencies to issues related to human resource

administration for the last 25 years and operating in Kenya to expand jobs in Africa.

"Over 160 employers have registered and are supposed to offer close to 5,000 jobs. Besides, participating organizations are expected to represent diverse sectors such as manufacturing, financial services, agro-processing among others," Dina noted.

Alongside the expo, various activities featuring experience sharing forums, creating job seekers with recruiters and training sessions organized for both employers and job seekers are expected to take place.

The expo is to be hosted by Dereja, in partnership with MoLS and the MasterCard Foundation.

# Opinion

## Sustaining peace, stability amidst challenges

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Sahlework Zewde, on Monday, this week, opened the 6th year and 3rd tenure of the joint session of the two houses: House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) and House of Federation (HoF).

Addressing the joint session and delivering the opening speech, the President has raised the core events including major achievements registered and challenges encountered the country during the last year regarding social, economic, and political streams. Besides, the President has mentioned some of the major goals of the current incumbent plans to achieve in the current fiscal year.

The president mentioned that the nation in all streams has been going through numerous challenges. However, the country has also used those challenges as opportunities in order to achieve tangible and promising results. As the nation has encountered with multiple of problems, it also proved that there is still a way to resolve and change the scenario as the saying goes; "There is light at the end of the tunnel".

The image of Ethiopia in the eyes of the world has been an icon of independence. The nation has also played a vital role in the black people's movement to make themselves free from the shackles of slavery and independence, Sahlework reminded.

President Sahlework Zewde has also discussed about the ongoing issues in the country. Extreme views and situations seem to be unable to live together by overcoming the differences made the nation dive into conflicts in many ways that resulted in paying unnecessary sacrifice.

The realization of the long-awaited national dialogue will be effective in the current year, as to the President. "The national dialogue is a tool to narrow our differences," she said. It will also be inclusive and it will include all segments of the people. In order to build a nation that fits all, we all should be engaged in all circumstances to realize the nation we want.

The President called all Ethiopians and responsible bodies to work on the common grand narratives and commit themselves to be the part of national consensus so that it will be suitable to build stable state and a government accepted by the people. Working on repairing the fractures and narrow the differences among us are also the key to put the country on solid foundation. Drawing lessons from developed nations that have realized their growth through compromising their differences, Ethiopia's past should not be an obstacle for the prosperity and development ambition that



**The national dialogue is a tool to narrow our differences**

we pursue, she said.

Furthermore, President Sahlework said the nation should work tirelessly on crafting a shared narrative to the sought state building. Ethiopia has now embarked on a far-reaching reforms and prosperity journey that will ensure the benefits of the entire people.

In the past few years, as to the President, the nation has been at war in different fronts. However, the government has exerted its maximum effort to settle the conflicts by making itself the part of the solution. To this end, the parties that have been involved in the war, especially in the northern part of the country, have come to the discussion table to resolve their differences. In this way, bringing the issue to the African Union-led brokering; Ethiopia proved that African problems indeed need African solution.

In its long history, the country has managed to go through a number of problems and fought back to survive from those tides. Such victories have become real because the people of the nation stood in unison to defend the enemies of the nation.

In the same vein, the President has also mentioned the major economic challenges as well as the tangible achievements and steps taken to curb those problems. Sahlework again highlighted the nation's progress in the agricultural sector as the nation start exporting wheat for the first time in its history. In addition, the President noted the ongoing effort to increase production and productivity in other crops like rice and maize.

Focusing on economic achievements of the last fiscal years, Sahlework mentioned that though the nation has been gone through multiple challenges, Ethiopia still secured a 7.5% of economic growth in the last fiscal year. This shows the home-grown economy has changed challenges to opportunities and produce tangible results. On the other hand, in the last fiscal year,



the service sector was expanded by 7.8%, while tourism posted encouraging gains despite challenges, Sahlework highlighted.

Speaking of resources, the President mentioned that the country is blessed with untapped natural resources that can have an important share in the overall development of the nation. "Step by step, we are transforming from single sector to multi-sector development," she added.

According to the president, over 3.5 million new jobs need to be created due to the rapid economic growth and increasing of job seekers year after year. As a result, some 9.15 million jobs will be created over the coming three years. Job opportunities will also be facilitated to five hundred thousand citizens in five overseas countries, she disclosed.

Based on the President's speech, Ethiopia has registered incredible diplomatic progress that can still be increasing. Ethiopian diplomacy is coming out of international pressures and returning to regular diplomatic relationship. To achieve such results, the government has given special attention in order to work on improving multifaceted ties including the political relationship with neighboring nations and trade bonds.

As to the President, Ethiopia has commenced various bilateral and multilateral diplomatic activities on various issues regarding the international and regional concerns. The nation's long-rooted diplomatic history across the globe is the main reason to the recent diplomatic achievements of the nation. For Ethiopia, becoming a member in the BRICS bloc is a national glory, and it definitely lifts the nation's acceptance at the international arena.

Sahlework further elucidated that, BRICS membership will stimulate the socio-economic sector and creates opportunity for investment. Such diplomatic acceptance will also have significant impact so as

to widen Ethiopia's market options and strengthen cooperative frameworks. Ethiopia, through its diplomatic acceptance, will work to ascertain Africa's interest at multilateral arenas.

Talking about the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) or Abbay Dam, President Sahlework elaborated that the civil work construction of the dam is expected to be completed during the current fiscal year. The 4th round filling of the dam was conducted successfully. The President congratulated all Ethiopians for their contribution to the successes in the construction of GERD.

The president said that the construction of GERD has reached more than 90% indicating the fact that GERD is vital to realize Ethiopia's prosperity. GERD is not only the source of electric power. Rather, the project is a means of tourism and water resources which are important for the environmental protection. According to the President, those ongoing negotiations on GERD will be continued in a way that doesn't affect the rights of Ethiopia to develop and use its natural resources. It is practically proven that GERD will never harm the riparian countries, Sahlework addressed.

"The dam is a project that realizes Ethiopia's development demand and ensures equal utilization of common natural resources," the President added.

The opening ceremony was attended by ambassadors of various countries, representatives of international institutions, religious fathers, prominent personalities and senior government officials including Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD).

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

# Editorial

## Principled diplomacy for mutual benefit

Ethiopia, as one of the oldest nations in the world, has an advanced history of international relations and diplomacy.

According to written accounts, the country's traditional diplomatic and international relations with the external world traced back to ancient times whose origins can be traced when Queen Sheba paid a visit to King Solomon, emperor of ancient Israel, in the ninth century.

And as time passes, the domains of Ethiopian diplomacy and its international relations with countries of the world are witnessing a steady growth in various areas. Today, Ethiopia has established an important partnership and smooth diplomatic relations with almost most countries of the world in wide areas- social, economic and political development, people to people ties, as well as promoting peace and stability within the African continent and beyond.

Furthermore, Ethiopia is one of the founding members of the former OAU- the current AU- and the United Nations and also a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Ethiopia is one of few early African countries admitted to the League of Nations becoming a member in 1923.

Over and above, Ethiopia is renowned for its key role to sustain peace not only within the Africa region; but also beyond. By respecting the quest of the United Nations (UN) and AU peacekeeping mission for peace, Ethiopia has over and over again attested its keenness for global peace.

For instance, as early as the 1950s, it took part in the UN peacekeeping operations in South Korea and Congo. It is also one of the top troop contributing countries to the United Nations (UN) and AU peacekeeping mission.

Despite the challenges it faced in the last couple of years, Ethiopia's diplomacy is advancing in full-swing with nations from the four corners of the world. And over the past one year, the country has seen healthy diplomatic relations with all countries and international organizations. The resumption of some halted and suspended aid programs that occurred following the conflict, and the continuation of EU's direct financial assistance among others are showcases in this regard.

Most of all, the admittance of Ethiopia to the BRICS group is the other significant step that portrays the country's diplomatic success.

Currently, the country is intensifying efforts to further strengthen its diplomatic relations in line with the new global realities, get along with the dynamic world and fit the requirements of the day in all arenas.

While addressing the Joint Session of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HoPR) and the House of Federation (HoF), where she presented her government's plan for this year, President Sahle-Work Zewde highlighted plan to elevate the national success achieved in the concluded Ethiopian budget year in the diplomatic area to a higher level.

According to the President, Ethiopia will work diligently to raise its relations with neighboring countries from political to economic relations. Principled diplomatic works will be done to arrest unresolved border issues with countries that Ethiopia shares borders in a manner comply with international law, keeping national interest and long-lasting neighborly relationship.

"Our foreign relations will focus on increasing friendly countries; deducting enmities, and embracing development partners," Sahle-Work stressed.

And, as the President stated, Ethiopia will persistently work to maintain strong, principled diplomacy with all the corners of the world, turn conflict into cooperation, protect its national interest and prosper mutually.



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The Ethiopian Herald

# Opinion

## Ethiopia working more vigorously on its tourist attraction capacity

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Ethiopia needs to work on diversifying its tourism industry much further to meet the challenges facing the sector. For instance, cross cultural tour exchanges between staff and students of various universities, secondary schools, primary schools and research centers across the world will not only help the country to generate income from the sector but also promote the visibility of the country among international institutes of higher learning thus promoting people to people relations not only with the neighboring countries but also with partner countries around the world. This has multiple advantages of uplifting Ethiopia's position among the international community of nations and is also instrumental in combating biases and misconceptions being fanned on Ethiopia through mainstream media outlets and the social media.

Producing qualified manpower for promoting tourism is of greater importance for Ethiopia. Universities and colleges in the country need to open departments that are fully capable of producing professionals in managing, promoting and innovatively work on various programs for building the image of the country.

Trainings in cutlery and table management, front office handling in hotels is very important to provide instant services for tourists. This would also help to popularize Ethiopian traditional dishes not only to tourists but also for investors and businesspersons on trip to Ethiopia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs may assign special experts in each of the foreign missions of Ethiopia to work on special priorities in investment and tourism.

The Ministry of Tourism needs to expand and upgrade its services that could include developing a national database for tourism potentials in the country. The current level of marketing and promotion of Tourism Ethiopia is really moving at a slow pace and this need to be improved by working with international and local media companies.

Among other things, mainstreaming Tourism Ethiopia in the national strategies in the context of the most appropriate ministries and commissions is something that needs to be considered not only at the higher level of government structure but also at all levels of state activities.

There are very good indicators that conference tourism can flourish in Ethiopia over several years. Notably, the construction of world class hotels and new parks like Sheger Park, Unity Park, ecotourism resort centers at Gorgora, Wonchi, Koischa, Halala Kela effectively link the efforts in decarbonizing the country and promoting tourism as one of the pillars of the Ten Years Perspective Plan of the country.

The possibility of starting medical tourism in Ethiopia may seem to be an ambitious undertaking in the short run but the country can develop tourism in health and sports sectors over the next decade.

Diversifying the country's tourist resources may take several years but its necessity is quite obvious.

According to international Conference Alert for 2023-2024, Ethiopia will host a number of international conferences including International Conference on Virtual Tourism and Tourism Technology (ICVTTT) in Gondar on the 8th of January, Conference on Domestic Tourism and Economic Growth (ICDTEG) at Bahir Dar on the 11th of January 2024, Conference on Tourism Sciences and Sustainable Tourism (ICTSST) on the 18th of January in Dessie, Conference on Cultural Tourism and Museum Management (ICCTMM) on the 14th of February in Dire Dawa, Conference on Informatics in Smart Tourism (ICIST) on the 14th of February in Addis Ababa Conference on Cultural and Heritage Tourism (ICCHT) on 15th of February in Addis Ababa.

The above mentioned conferences will provide ample opportunity for Ethiopia to engage in full scale conference tourism and use the occasion for promoting Tourism Ethiopia and further building the image and international stature of the country.

As stated in the beginning of this contribution, apart from producing a vast amount of hydroelectric power for the country and for sale to the neighboring countries, GERD will certainly usher a revolution in the development of tourism industry in Ethiopia. The islands created in the lake to be created by the dam will be lucrative sources of investment in ecotourism accompanied by rowing sports, fishery and recreational travels on the lake. This would create ample opportunities for the youth trained in entertainment and hospitality industries. Tourists from the neighboring countries, Europe, North America, the Middle East, Persian Gulf and ASEAN can enjoy their time in Ethiopia and the country will be able to get the foreign currency it needs for the development of the national economy of the nation.

Moreover, Ethiopia's membership in BRICS will open up new and expanded opportunities for the country to lure thousands of tourists into the country from BRICS member countries. In order to ensure more benefits from the sector, Ethiopia needs to further digitalize the country's tourism industry and modernize her tourism infrastructure facilities to an acceptable international standard.

Ethiopia's tourism has far more opportunities for expanded development but the most important precondition for this is ensuring sustainable peace and stability in the country.

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

# Business & Economy

## Leveraging on transition from single-sector development to multi-sector expansion

BY HIZKEL HAILU

The Ethiopian government is determined to achieve a remarkable 7.9% economic growth in the current fiscal year. The government has been diligently implementing its plans as scheduled, ensuring progress towards the target of 7.9% economic growth, so said President Sahlework Zewde.

The President made the above remark when addressing the opening ceremony of the 6th year, third tenure of the Joint Session of House of Peoples Representatives (HPR) and House of Federation (HoF) this Monday.

The President further emphasized that the nation's economy is undergoing a historic transformation as part of a ten-year prospective plan. Fruitful outcomes have already been observed, particularly in the agricultural and industrial sectors, with surplus agricultural and industrial products resulting from programs such as "Let Ethiopia Produce" and Yelemat Tirufat development initiatives.

To sustain this growth momentum, the agriculture, service, manufacturing, and tourism sectors are projected to experience significant expansion. With plans to cultivate 2.1 million hectares of land, yielding 810 million quintals of crops, the government aims to create 3.05 million new jobs, including 500,000 opportunities for overseas job seekers this year. In the next three years, an additional 9.15 million jobs are expected to be created.

Addressing the issue of inflation, the government will reinforce fiscal policies aimed at curbing its rise. Furthermore, efforts to enhance the manufacturing sector and reduce dependency on imports will be prioritized. Poverty reduction measures, such as the school feeding and Sunday market projects, will also be sustained to address socio-economic disparities.

President Sahlework further highlighted the government's commitment to resolve internal issues through dialogue and emphasized the initiation of nationwide negotiations as part of the National Dialogue. The government is dedicated to building democratic institutions and encourages all parties, including armed factions, to engage in peaceful talks.

In terms of international relations, the government remains committed to peaceful mechanisms in addressing border issues. Additionally, it seeks to transform its political diplomacy into economic integration with neighboring countries, fostering regional cooperation and mutual prosperity.

During the joint session, President Sahlework also presented key directions and plans for the new fiscal year. Notably, she emphasized the remarkable achievements of the previous fiscal year, highlighting the creation of over 3.5 million jobs and the overall positive economic growth of 7.5%,

**The focus on job creation is significant as it addresses one of the key challenges faced by Ethiopia. The government's plan to create new jobs, both domestically and through overseas employment opportunities, will not only reduce unemployment but also improve livelihoods and contribute to poverty reduction**

despite facing various challenges.

To further propel the economy, the government introduced the "Let Ethiopia Produce" initiative, resulting in the opening of 160 factories across the nation. The service sector witnessed a growth rate of 7.8%, while the tourism sector showed promising gains despite obstacles. She said this achievement is a sign of transformation in the sector.

President Sahlework stressed the government's determination to achieve the projected 7.9% economic growth in the current fiscal year. Key areas of focus include reducing inflation, enhancing agricultural performance, and attracting increased tax revenue and foreign direct investment.

The government aims to cultivate over 22 million hectares of land, yielding 810 million quintals of crops. It will implement strict fiscal and monetary policies to address inflationary pressures and reduce risks associated with import reliance. Efforts to strengthen the domestic business system and ensure quality standards will be prioritized.

To bolster government revenue, the goal is to collect 441 billion Birr from tax revenue, along with 4.3 billion Birr from foreign resources. Job creation remains a central focus, with plans to generate 3.5 million new jobs during the current fiscal year and facilitate overseas employment opportunities for 500,000 trained citizens.

President Sahlework also expressed

confidence in Ethiopia's economic trajectory, stating that the nation is transitioning from single-sector development to multi-sector expansion. As the government strives to achieve its 10-year development goals on schedule, it aims to overcome challenges and enter a new era of sustained expansion.

A strict fiscal and monetary policy will be implemented to reduce the inflation that is challenging the sections of society with low income. She also accentuated that due emphasis will also be placed upon ensuring the domestic business system and quality.

All in all, Ethiopia's government is committed to achieving significant economic growth and exploring avenues for regional economic integration. With comprehensive plans in place and a focus on key sectors, the nation is poised for continued progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, *The Ethiopian Herald* approached Hailemeskel Taye, an Economist, in order to grasp his view regarding this issue. As to him, the President's announcement of the government's determination to achieve a remarkable 7.9% economic growth in the current fiscal year is a crucial aspect. Setting a specific growth target demonstrates the government's commitment to driving the economy forward and provides a clear direction for policies and strategies.

The emphasis on expanding sectors such as agriculture, service, manufacturing, and tourism indicates the government's recognition of their potential for driving economic growth. These sectors have the capacity to generate employment, increase production, and contribute to overall economic development.

The focus on job creation is significant as it addresses one of the key challenges faced by Ethiopia. The government's plan to create new jobs, both domestically and through overseas employment opportunities, will not only reduce unemployment but also improve livelihoods and contribute to poverty reduction, he noted.

Mentioning that, controlling inflation is crucial for maintaining price stability and ensuring a conducive business environment, he acknowledged the significance of government's commitment to reinforcing fiscal policies to curb inflation and reducing dependency on imports through industrial development. Meanwhile, industrial development helps build a robust domestic manufacturing sector and reduces reliance on imported goods.

According to him, the President's speech regarding transforming political diplomacy into economic integration with neighboring countries highlights the significance of regional cooperation for Ethiopia's economic growth. Integrating economies and fostering trade and investment partnerships with neighboring nations opens up new markets, enhances cross-border infrastructure, and facilitates economic

development.

Moreover, he explained that the President's overview of the achievements in the previous fiscal year such as the creation of jobs and positive economic growth, underscores the progress made and the potential for further advancement. Additionally, presenting key directions and plans for the new fiscal year provides a roadmap for sustained growth and development.

Hailemeskel further extended his suggestion for the government regarding the successful implementation of the plan of 7.9% economic growth and ensure sustained development. First the government should continuously improve the investment climate through reducing bureaucratic hurdles, simplifying administrative processes, and enhancing transparency. This can attract more foreign direct investment (FDI) and domestic investment in key sectors.

Infrastructure development is the second solution mentioned by the economist. As to him, it is important to prioritize infrastructure development to improve connectivity within the country and enhance logistics for businesses. It is also essential to focus on building and upgrading roads, railways, ports, and airports to facilitate the movement of goods and services.

"Thirdly," Hailemeskel said; "The government should work extensively in export promotion, owing to the fact; it is of paramount importance to develop strategies to boost exports through diversifying export products and markets. It is also important to support local businesses in accessing international markets, providing export incentives, and facilitating trade agreements with other countries to expand export opportunities.

Active participation in regional economic integration initiatives, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) should also be the government's commitment to expand market access and promote trade and investment flows among African countries. This will strengthen regional partnerships and cooperation for mutual economic benefits, he stated.

As to him, the government should also work extensively in promoting Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), sustainable development, ensuring good governance and transparency and accountability along with encouraging innovation and technology. As to him, this will help the government to achieve the aforementioned plan during the current fiscal year.

Implementing these measures requires close coordination among government agencies, private sector stakeholders, and other relevant institutions. It is also essential to monitor the progress, evaluate the effectiveness of policies, and make necessary adjustments to ensure the plan's successful implementation and achievement of the desired economic growth, he suggested.

# Art & Culture

## Creativity versus Imitation: Where are the new and original talents?

MULUGETA GUDETA

Holidays in Ethiopia are arguably the most ideal times for enjoying an endless variety of Ethiopian traditional songs and dances. It all starts as soon the dark clouds clear and the sun starts to send its generous rays thereby announcing the beginning of the end of the rainy season. Soon after, yellow carnations start to sprout everywhere, in the fields, around the hills and in the green the valleys. Rivers are progressively emptied of their waters and start to dry up by the end of September. Music vibrates in the air with new vigor as it announces the dawn of a new season, a new cycle of life and the birth of a new hope.

The media are filled with holiday music by some of our best singers in the major languages of the country. As usual, “*Abebayehoy*” sung in praise of the yellow carnations, is the first tune of the season, and has become a kind of cultural anthem. The problem with this single tune is that it is sung by the same vocalists, with the same melodies and lyrics and with a kind of seasonal punctuality. Almost all the radio stations echo songs that praise the weather, the foods and drinks with a kind of nostalgia or remembrance of past times. These songs are played year after year and no one bothers to replace them with new tunes and creativity seems to have dried up.

In the 1960’s and 1970’s, new traditional music and dances were presented to the music-loving public that was awaiting the performances by the then legendary singers and dancers. The performers used to come up with new tunes on the eve of new year day when the entire night was dedicated to broadcasting the songs live on the radio to people who stayed at home and enjoyed themselves immensely. The shows stop well before the new year dawn broke and people were busy preparing for the festivities. The new tunes take the place of old ones and you could listen to them everywhere you go until the following year comes with new vibrations.

This is not the case nowadays, as creativity among our artistic community is either on the slump has taken a more commercial direction. A number of music shows are offered for the public and broadcast on various TV stations. However, the shows that are run by private companies with the objective of identifying new talents and bringing them to the public view take place almost yearlong and mainly consist of recycling old songs sung by legendary entertainers of the past.

Profit seems the main driving force in this kind of activity because judging from the advertisement revenues and the popularity of the shows, it is absolutely certain that the organizers make a lot of money. That seems mainly why that new music shows



are popping up on major broadcasting channels and prominent music critics are taking part as judges or reviewers. This is also what the economics of show business is demanding.

One cannot argue against “privatizing” artistic shows or looking for new and young talents. Making money is not a sin in a country with so many talented youngsters and in the presence of a budding music industry. Most state-run theatres are no more functioning with their earlier capacity or dedication. They have no money to invest in order to reinvent themselves in the context of the new realities. The point is that the new approach gives more emphasis on the commercial side of the bargain and less attention to producing fresh artists that are not imitators but original creators of new songs and dances.

Imitation must be the easiest road to financial success because it is easier than creating new music with new lyrics and requires a lot of creativity in the production process. All this takes time, a lot of money and hard work and most operators in the local music industry seem to have lost the appetite for hard work and the dream of creating new songs for the new year. They seem to be captivated by the opposite option of encouraging old songs to be sung by teenage singers without much talent and make money by recycling songs that have been recycled a dozen times in the past. The potentials for creating original vocalists and musicians in general is being lost amidst the frenzy of making money quickly by any means by feeding new generations of audiences who badly need something for entertainment by any means possible.

There are of course exceptions to the rule. There are indeed singers, composers and producers who have gone up the ladder of financial success and built their reputation on solid ground, thereby earning deserved fame and fortune. The main reason why the imitators of old songs are not much successful may be because they are singing old tunes that have become boring as they were sung for decades by generations

of imitators. That is also why the new imitators often disappear from the scene as soon as they come to the public stage. Unless you can beat Tilahun Gessesse, there is no reason for you to imitate his songs because by doing so you expose your own lack of talent and fail to win the sympathy of the audience.

In the final analysis, this approach is disappointing if not demoralizing to the genuinely talented youngsters who could create their own original songs because they are frustrated by the shadows of the legends. That may also be one reason why the number of original creators is dwindling these days because there is no change in the established practice of making money by encouraging youngsters to sing their favorites songs instead of coming up with their original tunes.

One of the main characteristics of culture is its dynamism and the capacity to absorb change, renew itself and live up to human aspirations that are also dynamic in nature. Human nature is such that it always aspires for change with changing times. It seeks the new and discards the old or improves it. No country has achieved artistic grandeur by imitating others who are more talented than they are.

Culture is said to be a reflection of the material conditions of human existence. This does not however mean that culture is the direct or faithful reflection of material conditions. The best artistic talents or new productions were not necessary created under better material conditions. The classic Ethiopian cultural expressions in music, the arts, dances and other expressions appeared when society was relatively underdeveloped. By the same token, happy times did not always produce the best music, dance, poetry, or paintings. Neither difficult times always lead to pessimism in arts and culture.

The material or economic conditions of ancient Axum, which saw a high level of artistic development was not materially as advanced as 20th century Ethiopia. The level of economic or technological development

was relatively less advanced than now but the arts, architectures, music and literature were unprecedentedly advanced for their times. Leonardo Da Vinci imagined some of his amazing discoveries in engineering, medicine and biology as well as in painting (i.e. The Monalisa) when ancient Greece was still a city state and economic life was not as prosperous as it was in subsequent centuries.

The same can be said about Asian countries that were far advanced in their arts and culture in general when the rest of the world was left far behind or was altogether non-existent. What is called Western arts and culture came into existence a few centuries ago while African and Asian societies basked in advanced civilizations for thousands of years. Greek and Roman civilizations were exceptions to the rule.

Although they were part of what we call now Europe, they were far advanced in arts, culture, science and technology, philosophy and general knowledge. Such ebbs and flows in the rise and fall of civilizations are common in human existence the stretches for millions of years. Those who were first to come to last positions, while, those who were last become first. Following all the upheavals, chaos and order, what remained a constant factor was the human spirit that proved irresistible in expressing itself and changing through the times.

By the same token, Africa was once among the most advanced societies with the most advanced civilizations on earth as the above examples of Egypt and other countries shows and anthropological discoveries demonstrate. The European fascination with African arts is only one example or a proof of the past superiority of African culture. Picasso’s attraction to African masks and his inspiration for his cubist sculpture and paintings can be taken as a clear illustration of this contention.

Coming back to our original discussion, we in Africa have immense potentials for creativity in almost all artistic endeavors but our inability to encourage our young artists to be true to their African roots and manifest their creative talents has led them to choose the shortest possible road to “success” by imitating either their own local legends or foreign icons while they themselves could attain the summits of success. They are doing this either for getting acceptance and applause from the white and capitalist dominated global entertainment industry that is accepting what it likes and rejects what it dislikes even if the African tunes are potentially more sophisticated and appealing to wider audiences. African artists must first be acceptable by this global artistic machinery before they are accepted to the marketplace. This may be regarded as a shrewd way of denying African artists of their artistic roots potentials and condemning them to cultural vassalage to the global artistic industry.

# Global Affairs

## Building peace – hopes and challenges

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

Ethiopia is home to a variety of ethnic groups, all with their own traditions, languages, and customs. This ethnic diversity is a defining characteristic of Ethiopia, shaping its history and contributing to its vibrant cultural tapestry.

Ethiopia's ethnic diversity is a double-edged sword. For centuries, this diversity was complemented by strong socioeconomic ties, cultural exchange, mutual understanding, and social cohesion. However, alongside the richness and beauty of this diversity, Ethiopia has also experienced tensions and conflicts that are trying to erode and wane the strong bond that hold citizens united for centuries.

These conflicts have often been fueled by divisive political and historical narratives propagated by ethnic or religious extremists and ultra-nationalists. What is more unsettling is these negative forces are supported by foreign powers who want to see the word "Ethiopia" wiped off the world map.

Indeed, political history plays a significant role in shaping the current state of peace in Ethiopia. The nation has experienced periods of authoritarian rule, power struggles, and political repression, which experts say, have left deep stains on its social fabric.

Decades of autocratic governance, characterized by the concentration of power in the hands of a few, have undermined trust in state institutions and created a sense of exclusion among marginalized groups. This history of political repression has contributed to a cycle of violence and unrest, as different factions vie for power and influence.

Those injustices made in the previous regimes became additional liabilities that further exacerbated the confusion and arguments that the present generation needs to tackle and settle in its bid to form a stable and harmonious vibrant Ethiopian state, based on the notion of unity with diversity.

Understanding the consequences of this political history is crucial in finding ways to heal wounds and foster reconciliation. It requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the grievances of all parties involved, promotes inclusive governance, and ensures equal say and opportunities for all Ethiopians.

Addressing these concerns is pivotal in achieving lasting peace and stability in Ethiopia. It requires a deep understanding of the historical context in which these tensions have emerged, and the factors that have contributed to their persistence.

Throughout history, ethnic divisions in Ethiopia have been exacerbated by various factors, including competition for resources, political power struggles, and historical grievances. These divisions have often led to violence, displacement, and human suffering. Above all it led Ethiopians to lose a common ground and understanding of the fundamental national issues.

Understanding the complexities of this divergence is crucial in finding sustainable solutions. It requires acknowledging the grievances of different ethnic groups, and communities, by promoting unhindered dialogue and reconciliation and addressing the root causes of inequality and marginalization.

By acknowledging the historical context of the unrest and tensions in Ethiopia and addressing its underlying causes, the nation can pave the way for a more peaceful and prosperous future. It requires the collective efforts of all stakeholders, both within the country and from the diaspora, to support the country in its journey towards lasting peace and stability.

Building a sustainable peace requires addressing the underlying grievances and inequalities that contribute to conflicts. The Ethiopian government is working towards inclusive policies that promote equal opportunities and address the root causes of these conflicts.

The incumbent government plays a crucial role in maintaining peace and stability in the rule of law in the country. Effective governance, inclusive policies, and a commitment to justice and human rights are essential in building trust among the population and ensuring long-term peace. However, such things are uphill tasks involving so many challenges in the process of their actual implementation.

One solid instance that shows the Ethiopian government's commitment to peace was that it has made huge concessions in the interest of peace when it decided to halt its army advancing to Mekelle a year ago and sit at the negotiating table with TPLF and subsequently signing the Pretoria Peace Deal.

Further actions that facilitate the robustness of the justice system are a key to ensuring accountability for human rights abuses and promoting the rule of law is crucial in preventing further violence and fostering reconciliation. The government provided support for the investigation of alleged atrocities committed during the Tigray conflict. It is to be recalled that the joint investigation by the UN Human Rights Office and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) into alleged violations of human rights, humanitarian, and refugee law



committed by all parties to the conflict in Tigray has been conducted two years ago.

Above all, the government initiated the establishment of an independent commission for national dialogue to create an effective and practical platform where all stakeholders both from and abroad would be involved in meaningful dialogue with the intent of producing political consensus on fundamental national issues, and building trust and foster a sense of national unity and lay fertile ground for reconciliation and sustainable peace.

One of the potential avenues for peacebuilding in Ethiopia lies in grassroots movements. The active engagement of local communities and civil society organizations can bring about positive change on the ground. By empowering these movements and providing platforms for dialogue, sustainable peace can be achieved.

That is exactly the strategy implied by the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission in its move to achieve its objectives. In his recent briefing, ENDC Chief, Mesfin Araya underscored that of the five players designated by his commission as major stakeholders in the national dialogue, that people and traditional institutions at the grassroots level are the most important ones. Thus they will account for over 30% of the seats at the table of the national dialogue which is expected to gather about 3,000 representatives from all stakeholders.

Looking at the impressive progress made by the ENDC during the last 18 months, it is quite reasonable to be optimistic that the Ethiopians have the required wisdom, confidence, and willingness to materialize their hope of building sustainable peace. The commission has reportedly concluded the selection of representatives from five regional states and two chartered cities, Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. This is a huge achievement considering the

unfavorable environment on the ground under which the commission is carrying out its duties.

The other positive thing is leaders of the commission are fully aware of the high expectations the Ethiopian people have of the commission and they are committed to maintaining their work neutral, inclusive, and participatory. They are also appreciative of the feedback and they get from the public, and the government. Mesfin said that, about 40 political parties are communicating with his commission, and universities and federal and regional governments are providing various logistical and human resource supports. "We get all the support we seek from the government. Above all, what made us more excited and optimistic is that the government authorities have pledged to abide by the will of the people, and thus fully respect and co-operate to the implementation of the recommendations of the upcoming national dialogue." says the Deputy Chief of ENDC, Hirut G/Sellase

So there is high hope that the ENDC will achieve its objective, which is in a nutshell, to lay the foundation for social cohesion and reconciliation which are essential for healing the wounds of the past and building a peaceful future. By fostering dialogue, promoting intergroup understanding, and addressing historical grievances, Ethiopia can create a society where differences are celebrated, and unity prevails.

The sure thing is that, achieving peace in Ethiopia is a complex task that requires a comprehensive approach. By understanding the historical context of conflict, addressing the challenges that hinder peace, and capitalizing on the opportunities for peace-building, Ethiopia can aspire to a future of stability, unity, and prosperity. It is through collective efforts, both domestically and internationally, that sustainable peace may be achieved in this remarkable nation deserving prosperity.



# Law & Politics

## Ethiopia prioritizing activities to enhance diplomatic clout

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

There is no gainsaying the fact that diplomatic participation enables Ethiopia to build partnerships and establish collaborations with other nations. Ethiopia's active involvement in diplomatic activities allows the country to actively participate in global discussions and contribute its distinctive viewpoints thereby fostering a more diverse and inclusive global community.

Through diplomatic engagement, Ethiopia can contribute to discussions on global issues such as climate change, human rights, and sustainable development. By voicing its perspectives, the country can advocate for policies and measures that address the specific challenges faced by developing countries contributing to a fairer and more equitable global response to these issues.

By taking the initiative to host gatherings, Ethiopia showcases its capability to successfully manage and lead high-profile diplomatic initiatives. This not only enhances Ethiopia's reputation but also provides a platform for the country to address pressing global issues and share its unique perspectives.

Through diplomatic interactions, Ethiopia can garner support for its efforts towards social justice and equality. By actively promoting itself as an investment destination, the country can leverage its diplomatic ties to attract businesses and secure funding for its infrastructure projects, industrial development, and job creation initiatives.

Ethiopia can amplify its voice and receive assistance in implementing policies and programs that foster these values within its society by forging alliances with nations committed to promoting fundamental human rights, gender equality, and social inclusion.

By engaging with other nations at cultural events, festivals, and exhibitions, Ethiopia can showcase its rich heritage and traditions, promoting intercultural dialogue and enhancing global appreciation for its diverse cultural contributions.

Ethiopia has been instrumental in ensuring its inclusion in influential nations through a range of diplomatic initiatives. These endeavors have involved proactive involvement with other countries extensive dialogue and deliberations and a host of other diplomatic activities. By engaging with neighboring countries and regional organizations, Ethiopia can proactively contribute to resolving conflicts promoting dialogue and strengthening regional integration.

This diplomatic approach has helped Ethiopia build trust and credibility with other nations paving the way for increased cooperation and collaboration. By convening high-level diplomatic talks, Ethiopia has showcased its willingness to engage in dialogue and find common ground on various global issues.

Securing membership in the BRICS group would undoubtedly be a remarkable achievement for Ethiopia offering a multitude of invaluable advantages and prospects for both its people and its governing body. This significant milestone holds immense



potential to positively impact various aspects of the country's socio-economic landscape and elevate its status on the global stage.

Joining the BRICS group would present Ethiopia with enhanced economic opportunities. As a member, Ethiopia would gain access to a vast market comprised of some of the world's largest emerging economies including Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. This expanded trade network would foster increased foreign direct investment, stimulate economic growth, and create employment opportunities for Ethiopians.

By deploying troops to conflict zones and contributing to peacekeeping efforts, Ethiopia demonstrates its commitment to maintaining global peace and security. This active involvement in peacekeeping activities not only highlights Ethiopia's role as a reliable partner but also reinforces its status as a country that proactively engages in resolving regional and international conflicts.

Ethiopia's inclusion in BRICS would enable the country to benefit from shared knowledge and expertise in various sectors. The group's members have demonstrated prowess in areas such as agriculture, manufacturing, technology, and infrastructure development. Access to these valuable resources would empower Ethiopia to enhance its own capacities and accelerate its progress across different industries.

Collaborative projects, technological transfers, and knowledge-sharing initiatives could greatly contribute to Ethiopia's efforts to achieve sustainable development and address pressing challenges. In addition to economic advantages becoming a part of the BRICS group would open doors for Ethiopia in terms of geopolitical influence.

Ethiopia would have the opportunity to actively participate in shaping international agendas contributing to global decision-making process and advocating for its interests on a broader scale. This newfound voice on the global stage would give Ethiopia the ability to raise awareness about its unique challenges, perspectives, and contributions while also strengthening its diplomatic relationships with other influential nations.

Joining the BRICS group would enable

Ethiopia to benefit from shared platforms and initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable development and addressing global issues. Ethiopia's inclusion would afford it the chance to join with like-minded nations pooling resources and expertise to tackle common challenges and promote the well-being of its citizens.

Furthermore, joining the BRICS group would bolster Ethiopia's reputation and credibility on the global stage. The country would be recognized as a nation that has achieved significant progress and possesses the potential to contribute meaningfully to global affairs. This elevation in status would attract attention and interest from other nations opening up additional avenues for diplomatic partnerships, cultural collaborations, and trade opportunities.

Becoming a member of the BRICS group would enhance Ethiopia's capacity to address regional challenges and promote stability in Africa. Given Ethiopia's strategic location and its role as a key political and economic player in the region, its membership in BRICS would enable it to effectively engage in regional dialogues, peacekeeping efforts, and conflict resolution endeavors.

By promoting its rich cultural heritage through cultural exchanges, exhibitions, and performances, Ethiopia can foster better understanding and appreciation among nations. This cultural diplomacy not only facilitates people-to-people connections but also showcases Ethiopia's diversity, creativity, and soft power contributing to its overall influence on the world stage.

President Sahlework Zewde said that the diplomatic achievements registered in the concluded Ethiopian budget year will be further scaled up, according to information obtained from Ethiopian News Agency.

Opening the joint session of the House of Peoples' Representatives and House of Federation, President Sahlework said that, Ethiopian diplomacy is coming out of international pressures and returning to regular diplomatic relationship.

The President stated that, due attention will be put into improving the prevailing political relationship with neighboring countries to trade ties.

Diplomatic works in compliance with international law will be pursued to resolve

unsettled border issues, the President stated, and emphasized that border issues will be resolved based on national interest and sustainable neighborly relationship.

Ethiopia's foreign relation will focus on increasing friendly countries; deduct enmity, and embracing development partners, Sahlework noted.

Ethiopia has undertaken various multilateral and bilateral diplomatic activities on issues of international and regional concern, the President said, adding that the recent diplomatic achievements recognize the long-rooted diplomatic history of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's membership to BRICS is a national glory, she stated, and added that it enhances the country's acceptance at the international arena.

BRICS membership will stimulate the socio-economic sector and creates opportunity for investment, Sahlework explained, and noted that it will have significant impact to widen Ethiopia's market options and strengthen cooperative frameworks.

Ethiopia through its diplomatic acceptance will work to ascertain Africa's interest at multilateral arenas, it was indicated.

In an interview he gave recently to The Ethiopian Herald, Melaku Muluaem, a researcher on International Relations and Diplomacy in the Institute of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia expounded upon the extensive diplomatic efforts and endeavors Ethiopia has put forth in order to join the BRICS group. As he explained, the country has had to engage in rigorous competition with many African nations in order to secure its place in the group.

According to Melaku, Ethiopia's government has played a crucial role in facilitating access to this elite group through various diplomatic activities. These efforts have included intensive engagement with other nations, extensive negotiations and discussions, as well as other important diplomatic activities aimed at securing Ethiopia's rightful place among the world's most powerful and influential countries.

He emphasized that, gaining membership in the BRICS group would be an extremely noteworthy accomplishment for Ethiopia, as it would provide the country with a wealth of crucial benefits and opportunities for both its citizens and its government.

"Key advantages of membership in this influential organization could include closer partnerships with other world powers, strengthened trade relations with other nations, access to valuable resources and important information, and enhanced levels of political influence and social prestige on the global stage," he added.

Membership in the BRICS group would not only benefit Ethiopia's relationship with Egypt but also enhance its soft power and acceptance on the world stage. The ability to meet with Egypt at various BRICS stages could potentially lead to increased harmony between the two nations. Additionally, acceptance into this prestigious group would boost Ethiopia's standing in the global community.

# International

## ECA calls for support to women and youth entrepreneurs in transforming African trade

BY STAFF REPORTER

African countries have been urged to promote gender responsive and inclusive policies to support women and youth entrepreneurs to accelerate trade development in Africa.

Speaking at the 14th African Congress for Women Entrepreneurs and 4th COMESA Federation of Women in Business Forum, the Principal Regional Advisor for Regional Integration and Trade Division at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Brenda Phiri-Mundia, said women and youth, have revolutionized entrepreneurship in Africa and they are better positioned to boost trade through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The Congress ran under the theme, Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Promotion for Women and Youth and support of MSMEs for realizing Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and Regional Integration in line with Africa's Agenda 2063 and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The congress took stock of progress on tackling challenges in accessing economic opportunities faced by women and youth across the African continent.

Ms. Phiri-Mundia noted that the AfCFTA which came into force in May 2019, could advance the global and continental goals on gender equality and women empowerment.

According to the ECA, the full implementation of the free trade area will increase the value of intra-Africa trade to US\$195 billion by 2045 compared to

US\$113 billion recorded in 2020 which is the baseline.

Women have made an undeniable impact in the entrepreneurial landscape with research indicating that Africa alone has more entrepreneurs than other regions for both females and males. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rate of female entrepreneurs globally with approximately 26% of female adults involved in entrepreneurial activity.

The ECA's 2021 Women's Entrepreneurship Report estimates that reducing gender inequality will boost African economies by US\$316 billion.

Ms. Phiri-Mundia stressed that Africa's youth is a potent force for innovation and economic development with incubators, accelerators and government initiatives helping young entrepreneurs turn their ideas into reality.

Recognizing the potential of women and the youth in business development, the ECA is providing support to Member States across the continent in the development of gender-responsive and inclusive policies and context-specific interventions to drive women and youth empowerment within the continental integration agenda.

"Support is being provided for gender mainstreaming in national and regional AfCFTA implementation strategies, capacity building of women's business associations and MSMEs to ensure they also take advantage of the opportunities under the AfCFTA," said Ms. Phiri-Mundia.

However, the challenges faced by both women and youth entrepreneurs cannot

be ignored, Ms. Phiri-Mundia added, acknowledging the access to start-up financing, skills development, mentorship, promoted by various Women Business Associations and development partners to overcome the challenges faced by women and the youth.

The ECA has also stepped up its efforts to contribute to addressing the complex issue of collecting gender disaggregated data to support better policymaking and evidence-based advocacy across the African continent, said Ms. Phiri-Mundia, who represented the ECA Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, Hanan Morsy.

These efforts include a joint project with UNCTAD and the UN Economic Commission for Europe to "develop a coherent approach to measuring the impact of trade on gender equality using official statistics and building on the existing statistical data and capacity of countries".

She called for collective action to amplify collaboration in initiatives that address multiple barriers faced by women and youth which finance literacy and digital finance, apprenticeships especially in male-dominated sectors, digital skills training and profitability information across sectors.

The ECA is keen to deepen its partnerships and work towards a future where every woman and youth entrepreneur in Africa not only achieves their aspirations but also transforms their dreams into impactful, sustainable enterprises Ms. Phiri-Mundia said.

Source: UNECA

## Flash Floods Displace Over 107,000 in Somalia's Baidoa District, UN Reports

Flash floods triggered by heavy rains have displaced 107,000 residents in Baidoa district, southwestern Somalia, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The floods have inundated several houses and makeshift shelters hosting 86,700 internally displaced persons across 136 sites in Baidoa city.

OCHA stated that the floods mark the onset of the October-to-December rainy season in Somalia, which is expected to experience above-average rainfall and increased flooding due to El Nino conditions. This comes after five seasons of drought that have already displaced more than 1.4 million Somalis and killed 3.8 million livestock since mid-2021.

The majority of displaced persons have moved to higher ground near their original settlements. OCHA highlighted the critical needs for food, water, shelter, and medical assistance, while noting that road access remains a challenge due to flooding. Local authorities are preparing a response and have called on international partners for emergency support.

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization said it needs \$11.8 million to bolster flood mitigation efforts, including mapping flood-prone areas, as a rare "super El Nino" looms over Somalia.

Source: themedialine.org



## Julie Mehretu Sets New Auction Record for an African-Born Artist With \$9.32 M. Sale

A painting by Julie Mehretu was sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong last week for \$9.32 million (with fees), setting a new auction record for an African-born artist.

The sale far surpassed the previous record held by South African artist Marlene Dumas, whose 1995 work *The Visitor* sold in 2008 for \$6.33 million at Sotheby's London. Mehretu, who was born in Ethiopia and moved to the United States as a child,

fetched her first six-figure at auction in 2010 at the Lehman Brothers' bankruptcy auction.

The record-breaking piece that sold on October 5 was *Untitled* (2001). Demand for her work — typically large-scale abstraction which investigates recent world traumas — has only risen amidst a broader surge of interest in contemporary African art. According to ArtPrice, \$63 million

was spent on art from African-born artists in 2023 alone. Notable for the general art market, women artists lead sales, with Nigerian American artist Njideka Akunyili Crosby and South African artist Irma Stern consistently near the top.

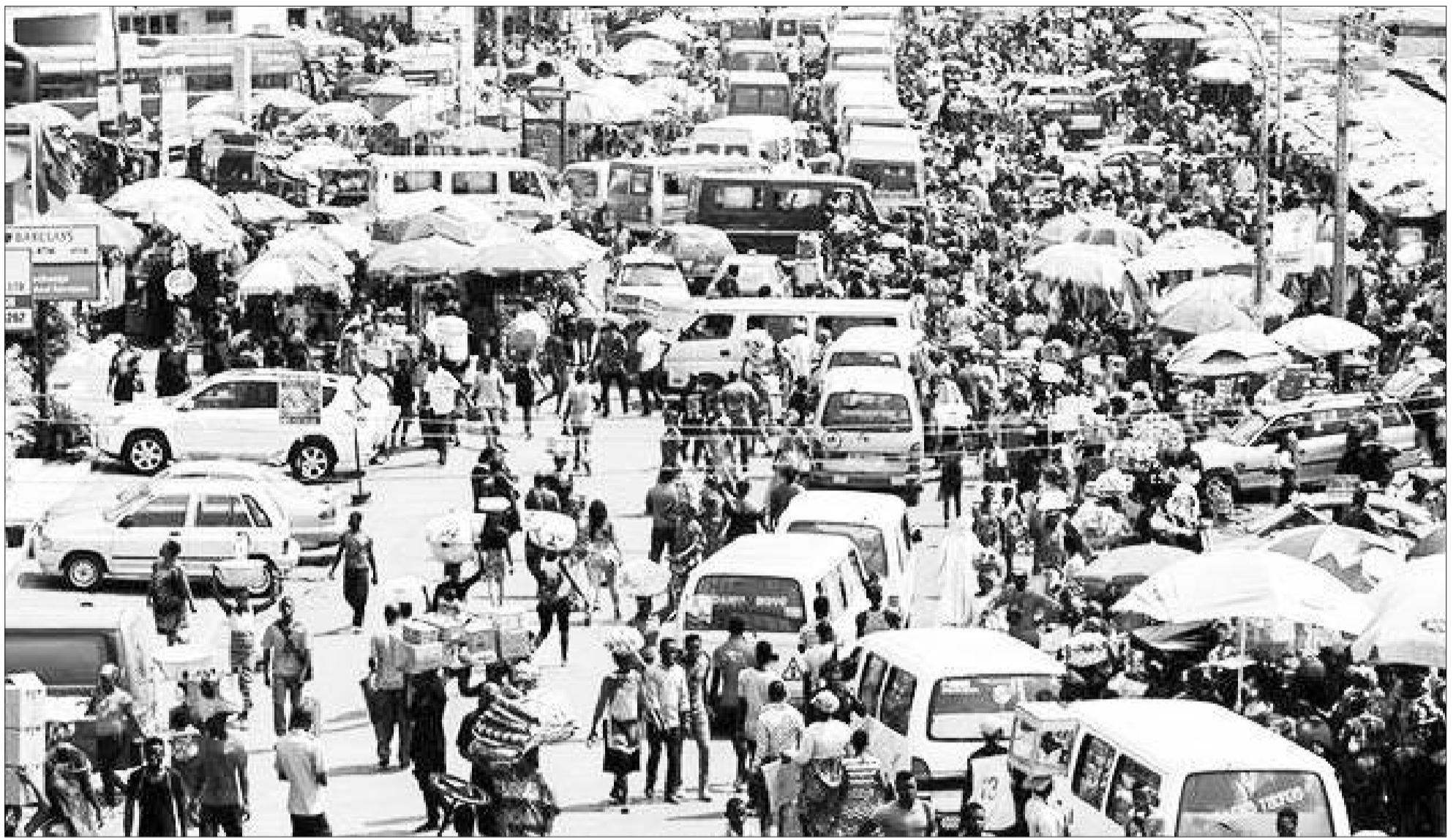
The growing collector base is due, in part, to the vibrant growth of the African art scene. West African countries such as Nigeria and Ghana in particular have in the last

decade welcomed new commercial spaces including Gallery 1957 in Accra, Ghana, and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

Touria El Glaoui, founding director of the 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, told *ARTnews* in 2022 that the opening of these spaces has heralded "a visibility moment" for generations of African art.

Source: artnews.com

# Planet Earth



## Sound policy, governance for urban development in Africa

BY STAFF REPORTER

Mayors from various African cities have gathered here in Addis Ababa recently to participate in African Mayoral Leadership Initiative (AMALI), an initiative for promoting mutual learning and devising African solutions for African problems. The gathering of the continent's mayors comes at a critical time when the issue of sound urban development policy, especially that helps ensure better urban governance is mandatory to address multifaceted problems of residents.

Addis Ababa has shouldered responsibilities beyond being the political and economic capital of Ethiopia as a seat of various regional, continental and international organizations. It is also a hub of transportation, entertainment, religious institutions and cultural events.

Despite carrying all these responsibilities that keep the city very busy, it has managed to be mentioned as an example of a rapidly growing city in a developing economy. The formation of such spaces is key to understanding the range of urbanization in Africa. In practical terms, this may mean looking more attentively at the impact that, for instance, the construction of streets and other infrastructure has on how the urban populace can dwell, make a living and articulate their interests.

Africa is a continent home to more than 1 billion people. It is a developing continent that still contends a lot of problems that beset its population. These challenges that are compounded under social and

economic issues are like schooling, health, transportation, housing ... etc.

Even though it cannot be mentioned as a panacea, various sources mention urbanization as a means to somehow address all these needs for the residents. One can go on mentioning a lot of instances for the benefits of urbanization. All these lists of advantages told about urbanization explain that cities or towns are more preferable than rural areas as they provide all these opportunities to their residents regardless of the extent or quality.

For instance one of the primary reasons for wanting to live in a city is the employment opportunities that are available there. It is very easy to find a job in a metropolitan area, whether you are currently employed or looking for new employment. You will also have the benefit of being able to save money on your rent and other living expenses.

Most cities have a lot of hospitals and doctors' offices, and they are often quite close to one another. Because you will be less likely to have to travel far for medical care, you will save money and time. Living in the city also means that you will find the services of a dentist and other medical professionals with ease.

The main reason why many people move to the city is for better education for their children. In the city, schools are usually much closer to home and you will never be far from one. Many of the best schools are in the city.

For this reason, you ensure your children get the education that they need and that will

benefit them later on in life. There is a much greater variety of entertainment options in the city. Whether you enjoy art, music, or other forms of entertainment, you find it is much easier to locate the things that appeal to you in a city than in a more remote area.

There is also the benefit of being able to enjoy many types of ethnic cuisine as compared to the village. Village life has also advantages but not more than city life. Because there is a lot less pressure to commit to things, you often find that living in the city is more enjoyable, and it can even be easier to meet people with similar interests.

In the city, you are likely to find that there is a much greater diversity of people than you would find in a more remote area. Many parents prefer to live in the city so that they can find better education for their children.

The greater diversity within the schools of a major metropolitan area can lead to significant advantages for their children, starting with a broader worldview.

Safety concerns are less of an issue in the city than in the more rural areas. There is also much more public transportation available, making it easy for you to get around safely and without having to rely on a car. Living in the city results in greater access to cultural events and venues. You will often have a greater number of cultural options where you live, and this is true with the major metropolitan areas. You will have greater access to museums and galleries, as well as to performances at musical halls and opera houses.

Because of the lower costs of living, you will find an apartment or house to rent that is considerably cheaper than one would be in a rural or less populated area. The opposite is also true in buying a home. The cost of buying a house in the city is significantly less than that in suburbs, rural areas, or small towns. Living in the city will reduce the chances that you will be a victim of crime. Because you have a higher likelihood of being seen by other passersby, criminals in the city are less likely to commit crimes.

While it is true that African cities are severely lacking all these, the bottom line for all of them is the matter of urban governance. Governance is a key issue that has the potential to settle the multifaceted problems prevailing in urban areas. 'Policies do not occur in a vacuum', as the World Development Report aptly notes. They are the outcome of complex political and social settings within ever changing rules that are influenced by various actors (World Bank, 2017, 29).

As municipalities are, with few exceptions, financially and institutionally weaker than their counterparts in the global North, they often cannot plan and order urban space as urban administrations would do elsewhere. They have to engage in novel forms of governance that are not based on Western models and their history. Research on urban governance in Africa thus has turned into a fascinating field that calls for new concepts and urban theories to analyse the entanglement of the many actors that engage in and deal with cities and the urban.