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Ethiopia needs Red Sea port to deter existential threats: U.S. political analyst

• Commercial ports advantageous for costal neighbors

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- The rationale for Ethiopia's quest for sea access is to escape existential threats that have been created by the geopolitical dynamics in the Horn of Africa, a Moscow-based American political analyst said.

In his recent article titled "It's Not Controversial for Ethiopia to Negotiate for Its Own Port in a Neighboring Country," the analyst Andrew Korybko (PhD) argued that Ethiopia's claim to sea port is legitimate and rational as the situation has posed existential risks to Africa's second most populous country.

On last Tuesday, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) asked the parliament, "What can we do to the 120 million Ethiopians on the event that the consequence of great power games on the Red Sea puts the country's lifeline-Port Djibouti under siege?"

Sharing the Prime Minister's concern, Korybko warned in his article that the
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Iran pledges improved economic partnership with Ethiopia

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA – Iran has revealed interest to strengthen and expand the long diplomatic ties in the economic frontier notably in agriculture,
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Tourism revenue hits over 1 bln USD in first quarter

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Ethiopian grosses over 2 bln USD from cargo service

• Recognizes leading customers

BY FIKADU BELAY

ADDIS ABABA – The Ethiopian Airlines said it secured over two billion USD in the last fiscal year from cargo service, keeping the extraordinary growth it has been witnessing over years.

The Airliner marked Ethiopian Cargo Customers Day on Thursday in a bid to recognize exporters with the largest export output.

Speaking at the occasion, Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mesfin Tasew said the airliner has solidified itself as Africa's top cargo operator and secured over 2 billion

USD by transporting more than 740,000 tons of goods in the reported period. The performance demonstrates an exceptional record of success.

Mesfin pointed out that the group has made large expenditures to expand the fleet growth and infrastructure to boost its loading capacity. With a combined annual capacity of one million tons, the airliner has built two state-of-the-art cargo warehouses that are equipped with sophisticated and automated machinery to handle a variety of cargo types such as dry, perishable, and medicinal items.

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Photo: Eyob Tefari



Diversity, Depth and Impact of African Art, Influence on European Modernism

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Silencing the guns to make peace in Sudan, Horn region

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I am optimistic about the industrialization agenda in Africa

Stephen Karingi (PhD)

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News



Authority underscores gov't role for widening civic space

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Following the reform, the government has revised legal frameworks to widen civic space in the country, Authority for Civil Society Organization said.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Authority's Chief Executive Officer Tesfaye Shiferaw said that as a key priority, the government has been reforming the restrictive charities and societies law to enhance civil society organizations' indispensable contributions to development, democracy and good governance.

In a bid to achieve the country's vision of reaching middle-income group countries by 2035, the chief stated that the government has been undertaking political, social and economic reforms to bring about the desired changes.

"Currently, the need to build a vibrant civil society has come to be a common theme with all contemporary thinkers, reformers and other actors. Hence, the authority has registered about 3,000 civil society organizations thereby achieving a remarkable achievement in the country for the last four years," he said.

Currently, the Authority is working to provide appropriate leadership to enhance their role and participation in all development endeavors and democratization processes, he emphasized.

He said, "The government and civil societies have undertaken principle-based engagements in the process of making extensive reforms to ensure equality, justice, human rights and democratic governance for all citizens."

Mentioning the former charities and societies limited engagement in rights-based activities, he said, adding that the Authority is playing important roles in supporting and encouraging the CSOs, creating an enabling environment for CSO, offering training, coordinating among others.

"In doing so, creating policy dialogues on the overall humanitarian response, development interventions and experience sharing among members and partners are some of the significant changes that have been made with respect to broadening the space for CSOs in the last four years."

Since the enactment of the new CSOs law, he pinpointed that civic space has become widened, constructive engagement and collaboration between civil society and the government progressed.

In its journey, the authority has registered remarkable achievements such as an online E-service delivery system, the new organizational structure has become effective and continuous training has been given for the last four years to enhance the employee's capacity.

The authority has established a 10-year strategic and transformational plan to maintain conducive policy and regulatory environment, enhance service accessibility and strengthen collaborative partnerships with regional administrations and other agencies, it was learnt.

Workshop aims to enhance Ethiopia's currency, payment system

BY ESSEY EMENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- The German Embassy and Giesecke & Devrient held a workshop for the Ethiopian banking community on enhancing Ethiopia's currency and payment systems.

According to the press release of the German Embassy to the Ethiopia Press Agency to improve Ethiopia's currency and payment systems, the German Embassy and Giesecke & Devrient organized a workshop for the country's financial community.

The event focused on solutions in currency management, payment systems, and digital security innovations.

On the occasion, the German Ambassador Stephan Auer remarked that this commitment by the German government to support change and promote a socially conscious yet free market economy is further strengthened by German enterprises, embodying these principles.

The workshop hosted by the National

Bank of Ethiopia and sponsored by Giesecke & Devrient was an excellent opportunity to delve deep into a number of topics related to currency management, payment systems, and digital security innovations. This is only the first of a series of conversations with the banking sector and offers the chance to proactively drive change.

As the National Bank of Ethiopia has been spearheading reforms to modernize the financial system, the experience and offerings of companies such as G+D can potentially play a supportive role.

The overarching goal for all stakeholders involved is, we believe, providing accessible banking services to Ethiopians and Ethiopian businesses, Ambassador said.

Giesecke+ Devrient's workshop series exemplifies knowledge transfer across continents and the importance of sharing experiences is to find solutions.

The German Embassy recognizes the ambitious reform plans the Ethiopian



Government, including the National Bank of Ethiopia is working on. Germany encourages them to continue the path of reform and stands ready to support, where needed.

G+D Ethiopia's Managing Director, Beide Worku, stated, "We take great pride in serving as a trusted partner to governments and institutions, aiding them in shaping their future according to their unique requirements. We are immensely proud to be able to contribute to the promising future of this country."

Ministry, ethio telecom ink MoU for urban transformation

BY EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA- The Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ethio-telecom with a view to transforming urban areas and modernizing city administrations.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Urban and Infrastructure Minister, Chaltu Sani, highlighted the urgent need to revitalize out-dated city systems and eliminate obstacles from which citizens are suffering.

As to her, the collaboration with ethio-telecom aims at addressing these challenges by focusing on key areas such as digital infrastructure development, reforming revenue systems, and embracing digitalization.

She said, "The partnership also seeks to bring about significant changes in the course of running municipal and construction services, leveraging the power of digitalization and technology."

She further elucidated that the ministry is working to streamline processes, reduce bureaucratic hurdles, and ultimately enhance the quality of life for residents by modernizing the city's infrastructure.

"One of the primary objectives of the partnership is to optimize the construction sector by leveraging data management, cost reduction, and efficient project execution. The impact of these initiatives extends beyond improved services. Not only is the government increasing service



satisfaction but it is also enhancing the economic growth of cities by modernizing the urban sector," Chaltu added.

Ethio telecom CEO Frehiwot Tamiru on her part stated that the company is eager to set up the partnership emphasizing the role of technology in creating a digital society. The MoU is significantly useful in accelerating the digitization of municipal and urban services, ensuring their accessibility, speed, and modernization, as well as boosting the construction

sector. By leveraging digital solutions, the partnership has also focused on reducing costs for both the construction sector and customers hand in hand with improving project transparency and monitoring.

"In the digital age, leveraging technology is not just an option; it is an obligation. The collaboration between the two parties signifies a commitment to modernize the general services of cities, including the municipal and construction sectors," Frehiwot underscored.

News

Tourism revenue hits over 1 bln USD in first quarter

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Over one billion USD was obtained from tourism in the first quarter of the current Ethiopian fiscal year, the Ministry of Tourism said, adding that 280,000 tourists from various countries visited the country.

The ministry presented its three-month performance report to members of the Trade and Tourism Affairs Standing Committee of the House of Peoples Representatives yesterday.

During the performance evaluation session, Tourism State Minister Sleshi Girma said that some 1.005 billion dollars was secured from foreign tourists in the reported period. Ethiopia sets a plan to secure four billion USD from the tourism sector in the present fiscal year.

Tourism Minister Nasise Chali for her part highlighted the ministry's engagement to increase the tourism sector's income through the preservation and promotion of tourist attraction sites and developing new destinations. In order to equip the sector through technology, attempts have been made to utilize visual reality options and websites that would inform visitors about payment and other related



issues.

The ministry cascaded the three-year tourism plan (2023 to 2025) from the Ten-Year Medium-Term National Plan.

Standing Committee Chairperson Aysha Yahya urged the ministry to pay due attention to tourism development and work in coordination with relevant private and government institutions to enhance the sector's contribution for the overall economic progress.

The Chairperson said, "Activities should be done in line with the Ten-Year Medium-Term National Plan and attention should also be given to address infrastructure setbacks and employ more

citizens in the sector."

Standing Committee Deputy Chairman Aschalew Alamre said the ministry has made commendable jobs withstanding security problems and the COVID-19 outbreak and reviving the sector. He urged the ministry to improve the existing decrees and directives that inhibit its performance.

The Standing Committee stressed that the utilization of potential tourism resources and destinations should be increased by identifying and promoting them. "Besides, the protection of wild animals, restoration and care of historical heritage are worth equal consideration."

Ethiopia

country will remain vulnerable to great powers rivalry unless its naval force is restored in the Red Sea. "The New Cold War and related proxy conflicts between its protagonists, particularly those fought around the Red Sea, could disrupt the maritime logistics upon which Ethiopia's economy depends due to its reliance on fertilizer and fuel imports."

The analyst also noted that Ethiopia's quest to negotiate for its own port in a neighboring country is legal, rational, pragmatic, and in the region's objective interests. "There is no unfairness for Ethiopia in questing seaport at the Red Sea, while states quite distant from the sea have accessed it."

According to him, what Ethiopia wants isn't any different than what the U.S and China have already obtained in Djibouti, namely a long-term lease over its own port there. "Ethiopia's interest makes it an 'appealing partner' unlike global powers as the former is not a protagonist to Djibouti."

In another justification, Korybko indicated Ethiopia's commercial port access makes Djibouti more beneficiary than the spacious military bases of global powers that have been stationed in the country for long.

"The U.S. agreed in 2014 to pay Djibouti 63 million USD a year to lease its base for the next ten years with the option to extend this for another decade. There is also a 2016 report that indicated China pays 100 million USD annually for its own base. Although other reports cite different figures for China's rent, the point is that neither it nor the U.S. pay anywhere near the annual two billion USD in commercial port fees that Ethiopia does."

Renegotiating the existing Ethio-Djiboutian deal is entirely in line with international law. If Ethiopia's query fails due to third party interference, then the Horn of Africa will remain hostage to Great Power games with its security and sovereignty threatened. Henceforth, Ethiopia's and the region's economy would be threatened, the analyst emphasized.

Iran pledges...

health, business, construction and technology.

Being home to the AU and UNECA, Ethiopia presents itself for increased connection in the economic field with the globe, Babak Sherkat Ardebili, First Counselor of the Embassy of Iran told *The Ethiopian Herald*. Accordingly, Iran has a growing interest to step up the linkage with Ethiopia in agriculture, medicine, technology transfer and cultural exchange.

"We have inked various agreements and Memorandums of Understanding in different fields to boost bilateral relations, to use the capacities and opportunities available within the two nations."

Iran is ready to transfer medical technologies including medicines and vaccines to Ethiopia and it has a strong desire to cooperate with the latter in construction materials investment. "We are inviting our companies to come and do business here."

Moreover, Iran is ready to support the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and wants to capitalize the private sector to transfer technology, knowledge and experience sharing between the two countries' businesspersons.

"There is also inspiration to sell Iranian-manufactured vehicles in Ethiopia's market at a decent price and Iranian banks are ready to work with Ethiopian

counterparts in technology, knowledge and skill transfer."

Lauding Ethiopia's rapid economic progress over years, the consular advised the country to make more of a push to integrate with the rest of the world to witness more success in the economic frontier.

Iranian investors have been engaged in Ethiopia in agriculture, manufacturing, energy and construction industry as well as other priority sectors.

Currently, the diplomatic and political relation between Ethiopia and Iran, which started some 70 years ago, is expanding in the spheres of trade and investment.

Ethiopian grosses over 2 bln USD...

Currently Ethiopia's flag carrier operates 16 cargo aircrafts, including Boeing 737 and Boeing 767 types, especially for commerce. Plan set to increase the fleet size to 21 with a view to increasing the annual cargo transport capacity to one million tons.

The CEO further stated that the airline has made cutting-edge information and communication technology a priority, which has enhanced customer service and operational effectiveness. With a large network, *Ethiopian* serves 135 passenger destinations and offers

outstanding cargo services to 67 designated cargo destinations globally.

In line with the above, the Ethiopian Airlines added three new freighter destinations this year, which are Shenzhen and Ximang (China), as well as Casablanca (Morocco). "These expansions have been extremely important in boosting Ethiopia's export industry and advancing the nation's economic development."

The group also invested 50 million USD in a state-of-the-art 15,000-square-meter

e-commerce facility after realizing the growing relevance of e-commerce. This facility, with a 150,000-ton annual capacity, is scheduled to open next month and would handle primary, postal service, and e-commerce items. To this end, the airliner teamed up with Ethiopost to offer affordable and cross-border e-commerce services for customers.

Ethiopian Cargo and Logistics Services have won multiple awards, including the esteemed designations of Cargo Airline of the Year at the Air Cargo News

Awards 2023 for two years running and Best Cargo Airline in Africa for five years. The airline acknowledges the crucial role that its partners and customers played in helping it achieve these distinctions, Mesfin remarked.

On the occasion, the airliners awarded exporters with the largest export output across a range of industries in the Cargo Customers Day.

Government officials, diplomats, company leaders and other invited guests attended the event.

Opinion

Ethio-Saudi Arabia relations to be fortified in various ways

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Ethiopia has strong historical ties with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Diplomatic relations between the two countries began in 1948, when Saudi Arabia opened its embassy in Addis Ababa, placing it among the first Arab countries to do so. After recuperating from a siege mentality that deepened during the previous governments, Ethiopia is no longer an isolated culture country. On the sidelines of the Saudi-Africa Summit held in Riyadh recently, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed exchanged views with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on ways to strengthen the two countries' multifaceted relations and partnership.

Its socio-cultural relations with the country are being used in a very meaningful manner. This has led to the diversification of culture, and the revival of an economy based on trade, technology, and global dynamics that enhance the Ethiopian economy at large. These developments keep political, religious and other conflicts at bay. Moreover, one may derive stable relations from the Ethiopia's long tradition of relative tolerance. Over the years, its common and friendly relations have proved to be stronger than her religious differences.

Experts are of the opinion that if the Ethiopians are left on their own, one may expect a process of constructive transformation in the country. Nevertheless, this process does not take place by Ethiopians alone. It demands a rapid integration into the economic, cultural, and strategic circles at the global level. But, this again depends on level of external influences affecting the country. In this case, a major determinant factor is the nature of involvement of friendly countries in the current development process in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia have been engaged in positive economic relations, particularly in external trade. Foreign trade has become increasingly significant to Ethiopian economy, but Ethiopia's foreign trade with Saudi Arabia depends mainly on agricultural produces and petroleum oil. On its part, Ethiopia exports coffee, sesame seeds, animal products, meat, live animals, cereals, spices, fruits and vegetables. It imports petroleum products, detergents, and other manufactured goods. Experts argue that the structure of Ethiopia's export is a direct reflection of an underdeveloped economy. As a least developed country, its exports are dominated by agricultural commodities that are sold at low prices.

Agricultural and mineral raw materials are subject to dealers pay low prices but charge high cost of operation. At the same time they charge higher prices for imported industrial manufactures, intermediate inputs and oil. Such unbalanced transaction greatly affects Ethiopia's trade balance. Experts explain

that there are several factors that facilitate this trade. These are clannish social relations that play a critical role in mediating the high levels of risk and uncertainty found in rural settings.

Also, the reluctance of neighboring countries to control contraband trade is a crucial factor. Due to the benefits they obtain in terms of domestic consumption and re-export they deliberately abstain from monitoring illicit trade. The Horn region is also prone to resource based conflict. There are also conflicts in the Somali region of Ethiopia that hamper control of illicit export of livestock to the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, all year round.

Experts reveal that most of the Ethiopian commodities are exported to these countries in their raw forms. The reason for that is the status of the agro-processing and manufacturing industry in the country that is in its infant stage. Also, health and sanitary conditions in the country are poorly managed. It is reported that the animal feed and animal transport facilities operate at the low level of standards. One should, therefore, not expect that the export market to be competitive under such conditions. This fact is especially observed in meat and related products.

Ethiopia has the largest cattle population in Africa and the tenth largest in the world. It has a proven export potential for live animals and livestock products to the Middle East and Saudi Arabia. Experts believe that this comparative advantage has not yet been converted to its economic benefit. The reason for that is the country's export market for these commodities are dominated by raw and semi-processed products. These products fetch lower prices as compared with manufactured goods.

On the other hand, Saudi's export products to Ethiopia are primarily manufactured goods in addition to petroleum and petroleum products. Most of these imports from Saudi Arabia are manufactured agricultural products. This indicates that Ethiopia exports large quantities of fresh fruits and vegetables in their raw form, but the country imports agro-processed produces such as tomato ketchup and other tomato sauces, and juice of citrus fruits. In addition, Ethiopia exports sesame seeds and natural gums; but it imports prepared glues and other adhesive glue. Ethiopia has recently started exporting manufactured commodities, but it faces some marketing problems.

Other elements that erode comparative advantage are the manner in which most domestic animals are raised in Ethiopia. These animals are still handled traditionally by small-scale farmers or pastoralists, who do not have the skills to manage commercial operations. They are rather small holder farmers that produced in traditional systems. The export items are limited to few commodities which are susceptible to the

mood of the global market.

Furthermore, the quality of export items is low and has only a small share of the total exportable items. The Ethiopian exporters are, therefore, simply price takers in the global market and they suffer from price fluctuations. They also face the same problems in Middle Eastern markets, including Saudi markets, where exports of primary produces are cheap. Ethiopia may not have the chance for exporting items of high value-added to these countries without preferential treatment. In this regard, there is a limited progress for manufactured exports, including leather products, processed meat, or clothes that are facing greater domestic obstacles in the importing countries.

This trade imbalance indicates that Ethiopia needs support in terms of finance and technology from economically advanced countries like Saudi Arabia to accelerate its effort of transforming the economy from agricultural led to industry led.

In good faith, it is helpful to note the notable success of flower exports from Ethiopia. Although an agricultural product, the improvement in the export of flowers to the Middle East and Saudi needs high capital. It involves green houses, cold stores, refrigerated trucks, and timely air freight systems. This reflects the technical cause of trade imbalance with petroleum producing countries, including Saudi Arabia. The trend in the global market shows that the demand for fuel has increased dramatically. Rising import prices of fuel have eroded the benefits that accrued from higher export revenue. Ethiopia may, therefore, need a special trading partnership with Saudi Arabia in order to reduce its fuel import burden and trade imbalances.

Experts are of the opinion that a minor change in oil prices will definitely lead Ethiopian export-import economy into unprecedented crises. In order to meet the need for Ethiopia's livestock in Saudi market, Ethiopia needs to work on quality and quantity of its exports. The cooperation between the two countries has to consider that as an emerging economy, Ethiopia demands technical and financial support to improve quality of its livestock in terms of health, sanitary and quantity to hit the required amount by the market and Saudi Arabia can show its friendship to Ethiopia via providing fund and investing in the sector.

On the other hand, Saudi Arabia has to cooperate with Ethiopia in fighting illegal trades in which Ethiopian animals are smuggled to Saudi through alternative routes while it imposed ban on legal trade under the guise of low quality. This action must be part of the agreement between the two countries for the reason that, unless reversed, it has adverse impact on the bilateral trade putting Ethiopia in a disadvantageous position.

In line with this, as of experts, Saudis' ban

on Ethiopia's livestock import must have scientific base. If not, the experts believe that this raises some questions about the influence of different interest groups. These groups wanted the control of access to such markets driven by factors other than health risks.

Regarding the important Saudi Arabian market, some have suggested this control is more related to protectionist policies in response to large numbers of animals brought across the sea illegally, depressing market prices. Being a member of WTO may help to avoid this arbitrary import bans. Import bans on live animals and meat from Ethiopia and from other countries in the Horn of Africa is very discouraging.

As there has been no officially recognized case of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) in Ethiopia, the importing countries have only exercised "precaution". Also, the import bans have not been consistently applied to all African countries in the region. Within Ethiopia, the ban has seriously affected pastoralists and traders in Afar and Somali regions.

Another problem of animal export is that Ethiopian exporters have little knowledge about the market structure, rules and regulations as well as consumer tastes and preferences in importing countries like Saudi Arabia. Also, sufficient knowledge of the changing market conditions in the importing countries, including Saudi Arabia, is not available to the Ethiopian exporters by the concerned agencies. As a result, suppliers from other countries who were better prepared to meet the market demand and conditions entered the market gradually replacing Ethiopia as a supplier.

It is also noted that health and sanitary conditions in Ethiopia are poorly developed. Also, animal feed and transport facilities operated at the lower standards. It is, therefore, unfair to expect exporters to be competitive under such difficult conditions. Thus, animal products exported from Ethiopia fetched lower prices.

Moreover, supply conditions in Ethiopia have remained practically unchanged to meet the rapidly changing market demands in the importing countries, including Saudi Arabia. Thus, cooperative work between the two countries to alleviate the problem needs commitment from both sides. In this regard, Ethiopia, as a part of its policy, is diligent to work with Saudi Arabia expecting equal response from the other party to improve its export trade in the way it benefits the first hand producers and animals' herders as well as the country by large. It is hoped that trade, labor and other related issues could be resolved soon.

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

Editorial

Opinion

Industrialization: Key to diversify Africa's economy

It is increasingly evident that industrial development is not a luxury but an essential component for sustained and inclusive economic growth in Africa. Sahlework Zewde, President of FDRE said, making strong appeal to the continent's industrialization agenda.

The President's remark came on last Thursday while she addressed the 2023 African Economic Conference (AEC), jointly organized by the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) here in Addis.

True, Africa is at the bottom of the global value chain with its share of global manufacturing. African economies still rely too heavily on raw commodities which need urgent transformation. According to Ethiopia's Minister of Industry Melaku Alebel, Africa has been the least industrialized continent, with a less endowed production capacity accounting for only 2.1 percent of global manufacturing. An almost non-existent trade among African countries, resulting in a less-desired economic performance, experts say, further complicates this situation.

Exporting raw commodities with low price and importing industry outputs with high price for Africa is contradictory in which it remains to be loser and coerced to stay under the vicious circle of back breaking debt. Unless the trade balance between Africa and the rest of the world, especially with those highly industrialized ones become closer, it will be hard for Africa to escape from poverty and become economically self-sufficient.

It is a tangible fact that the desired trade balance cannot be real by miracle. It rather necessitates hard work to transform Africa's economy with the vision in mind that its prosperity will be true. This is not a day dream but a reality as the continent is endowed with resources reserved both underground and on its surface.

The major thing Africans need to do in this regard is looking inside how wealthy they are and act accordingly to exploit their resources. To this end, industrialization comes at the forefront. Some African countries have gone good distance in the sector though it needs more effort whereas most of them are at the infant stage.

Ethiopia, through its "Ethiopia Tamirt" (Let Ethiopia Produce) initiative has shown keen interest to transform its economy. It has paid great attention for the manufacturing sector via expanding industrial parks across the country that attract investors both local and foreigners. The investors began operation in the industrial parks play pivotal role in import substitution and producing goods for export that fits the international market's demand in quality and quantity.

Melaku further stated that Ethiopia exemplifies this ambition with notable economic resilience and growth, underpinned by the Homegrown Economic Reform and a 10-year development plan. "This aims to elevate Ethiopia into a middle-income country by 2025, focusing on key sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism, and ICT."

In doing so, it can be a good example for the rest African countries and willing to work in collaboration. President Sahlework also urged her fellow African leaders and captains of industry to closely collaborate to adopt a more efficient strategy towards achieving import substitution while promoting intra-African trade.

According to UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa Director Matthias Naab, now is the time to invest in Africa's value addition and investing in its abundant raw materials and commodities that have transformed the economies of several advanced economies. "Africa must ensure that this value addition is also based on the regional value chain approach."

Besides, African countries should pay attention for the expansion of intra-continental trade. Intensifying intra-African trade enables the countries get good market for their products and purchase needed products with fair price from their fellow countries.

Strengthening the continental trade gives chance to control capital flight thereby build strong and sustainable economy. Making this ambition a reality necessitates the urgency of industrialization. No time should be wasted in this regard and collaborative commitment from all is essential.

Ethiopia's National Dialogue Program gaining momentum

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

The convocation of Ethiopia's National Dialogue is expected to take place in the current fiscal year. The Ethiopian National Dialogue Council has been activity working to discharge its national mandate entrusted to it by the proclamation that provided for its founding.

This is the first ever national dialogue session to be conducted in Ethiopia. A number of African countries including Central African Republic, Kenya, Senegal and Tunisia have conducted national dialogues in their respective countries. As it is the first experience in the country, there are various preparations that are to be made through the coordination of the ENDC. Ethiopia's national dialogue program as stated by the ENDC functions on four major principles which include inclusivity of representatives of all stakeholders, transparency, ownership and neutrality. Although the independent Commission is conducting the coordination of the entire process the entire people of Ethiopia own the program itself.

Despite some security challenges in several zones in the country, the ENDC has been conducting selection of participants from grass root and woreda level as well as on zones and regions including Addis Ababa. The author of this article does not intend to dwell upon the timeline of events pertaining to the overall activities of the Council but wishes to opine on what is to be done over the next several months before the National Dialogue is to take place.

In the first place what are the urgent priorities that need to be addressed by all stakeholders? Let me begin with the media. The author fills that enough is not being done with regard to promoting public education on the importance and necessity of the dialogue. Yes, a number of public media outlets have been covering news on the activities of the ENDC but only in a very scanty and brief manner focusing on official reports and meetings. This could be fair enough but not sufficient for popularizing the issue among stakeholders with a variety of mixes. It must be underscored that both the Ethiopian and international media outlets need not only to cover the news or seminars regarding national dialogue but they are also expected to provide basic education on the matter in cooperation with ENDC and all other stakeholders with major languages in the country.

CSOs in Ethiopia need to come to the front and cease this opportunity to contribute their part in supporting the needs, interests, values and positive attitudes of the public towards a sustainable peace in the country. The writer feels that they have a far greater stake in promoting inclusive dialogue based on promoting the participation of all sectors of the society including women and the disabled section of the society. Professional associations including lawyers associations are expected to render tangible and meaningful contribution to the entire cycle of the deliberation of the National dialogue in cooperation and coordination with the ENDC.

As the President of Ethiopia and the Prime Minister of the country have stressed on the need to focus on national narratives instead of fanning isolated agenda on the social media, attaining meaningful agenda and dialogue can become a reality when everyone focuses on burning issues of national importance.

Responding to the questions recently raised

by the MPs at HPR, Primer Minister Abiy has called upon ever one to support the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission for the benefits of citizens and the country, Prime Minister Abiy underscored.

As there are difference of opinions and disagreements among various opinion leaders and segments of society on some fundamental national issues, it is necessary to alleviate and resolve the differences and disagreements through a broad based inclusive public dialogue and reach national consensus.

We have to help the commission which has been working with great diligence in every way we can, the premier's. The Ethiopian National Dialogue is only national in form but is regional and global in content. Henceforth, apart from the support that is being provided by major EU countries like Austria, Denmark, Germany, Luxemburg, Spain, other EU countries are expected to support Ethiopia's National Dialogue which is being organized in the midst of multifaceted socio-economic and political internal challenges the country is facing in the process of promoting inclusive democracy and national consensus for accelerated socio-economic development in the country.

Ethiopia needs full diplomatic and financial support from the UN systems and the AU to cover the massive expenses that could the country incurs in building peace and national dialogue in the country. This is the time on which they can reward this country for the contributions it had made to safeguard regional peace and security for over several decades.

What after all are some of the challenges that the National Dialogue in Ethiopia is facing? Operational budget that the government has earmarked for the ENDC will not suffice to cover all the expenses needed to conduct the dialogue and international partners can provide at least part of the expenses to be covered. On the other hand some political elitists in the country and those who reside abroad are conducting disruptive propaganda work that is incompatible with the national interest of their country.

In the first place the issue of ascertaining peace should not be left only to the government and the ENDF. Here all citizens of all walks of life both in rural and urban settings need to cherish the values of peace and be ready to defend it by all means. A dialogue on peace, reconciliation and peaceful coexistence is not something that should be raised on the event of the National Dialogue but needs to be an important component of the socio-political culture of the country that needs to be conducted at any point in time.

Promoting the culture of the multi-national population in this country requires according respect to all constructive cultures that show the diversity of cultures in the country. Opening dialogues on respect for cultures and traditions in the country and recognition of religious diversities need to be one of the major points on which agreeing on common narratives are required.

In addition, Ethiopia occupies an important position on the promotion and development of regional socio-economic integration that is to be developed in Africa. The Ethiopian National Dialogue to be conducted this year is expected to promote common understanding on the above mentioned issues and other equally important issues that are not mentioned here.

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Art & Culture

Diversity, depth and impact of African art, influence on European Modernism

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Artistic expression is no doubt one of the critical attributes of being human. There are perhaps two most important functions of human communities anywhere in the world. The first is that men need to produce the means of material existence in order to live as human beings while the second may be engaging in artistic activities as a reflection of their conscious survival or their materially productive lives.

As a corollary of this, every human community, nation, country, region or continent has its specific artistic creations with which it is distinguished from the men and women next door. Art, besides being a creative endeavor in its own right, is also a process by which identities are shaped, histories are written and meaning is given to human existence in general. Art is also a common attribute of humanity as it is also a tool with which we differentiate one community from another and a marker of economic activities that humans living in certain geographic areas are engaged in.

Art has thus, anthropological significance as “the study of all aspects of human life and culture. Anthropology examines such topics as how people live, what they think, what they produce, and how they interact with their environments. Anthropologists try to understand the full range of human diversity as well as what all people share in common.” Art is therefore one dimension of human existence and that is why we are talking about European art, African art, Chinese art, Russian or Ethiopian art. Every art has something in common with other arts while it keeps its distinguishing features that are shaped through history.

Marxists say that men should eat before they engage in politics. Although men should engage in material production in order to secure the food and other necessities they need, they have also to engage in artistic creativity in order to meet the needs of their creative existence. Which one comes first is not important unless we want to into the egg or hen first dilemma.

Artistic production is consequently one of the most primitive forms of human creativity at a time when material existence was at its primitive stage.

African art is therefore the totality of “modern and historical paintings, sculptures, installations and other visual culture from native or indigenous Africans and the African continent.” African art is so broad and varied that it is nearly impossible to put it under one single rubric bore because it is the totality of artistic productions of hundreds of millions of people living in a distinct geographic area. Nevertheless, it is technically possible to identify the specific areas in which African art shines. According to available information, it is most famous for the sculptures and masks, textile design and manufacturing.

According to some sources, “African Art and Architecture, works of art and architecture created on the African continent south of the Sahara. The immense Sahara acts as a natural barrier, separating African cultures to the north from those to the south. Although there has always been some intermingling of peoples on the two sides of the Sahara, differences



in history and culture are pronounced.” This distinction is relevant because art north of the Sahara generally belongs to Arab arts due to its proximity with the Middle East and Berber or Arab influence and is known in some literature as Islamic art.

The point here is not about analyzing the two sides of the same coin, or the northern and southern faces of the same African art. The issue is rather how African art emerged and how it developed and distinguished itself from the art of other peoples and regions.

To begin with, African art has a history that spans over 10,000 years with evidence of artistic expressions dating back to prehistoric times. Ancient African civilizations such as Egypt, Nubia, and the Kingdom of Kush produced exquisite works of art, including sculptures, jewelry, and pottery. African art is so vast and diverse that it would be impossible to describe all of them in such a short article. Hundreds if not thousands of books, studies and researches have been conducted and African art is not still exhaustively understood or known.

The second point is diversity of African art that distinguishes it from the arts of other regions or peoples. “African art encompasses a wide range of styles and techniques reflecting the diversity of cultures and traditions across the continent. One of the most well-known styles of African art is the mask which has a significant cultural and religious significance in many African societies.”

One of the characteristics that Distinguishes African art from other arts is the deep symbolism and significance that it reflects. African art has thus two dimensions, namely forms and meanings. According to one source ,the symbolism and significance of African art in the following way. “African art is often rich in symbolism and holds significant cultural and spiritual meanings. Many African artworks are created for religious or ceremonial purposes

and they have believed to have spiritual powers or serve as intermediaries between the physical and spiritual realms. Masks for example are used n African rituals and performances to respect deities, ancestors and spirits and they are believed to embody their powers and protect the community.”

African art does not exist in the vacuum but coexists with other arts and cultures although it did not develop parallel to them. What differentiates African art from other forms of art is in the specific purpose it serve. For instance, African art differs from European art in the sense that, “African art, unlike most European art, generally serves a function. The art may satisfy an everyday household need, adorn the body, or fulfill a social or religious role. These objects of use also have artistic value because skilled artisans have designed and created them with a strong concern for visual beauty and symbolic meaning.”

Among the varieties and expressions of African art, masks occupy a dignified and special place for their functions and symbolism. “Masks are worn during festivals, celebrations, and ceremonies whose purposes are to cleanse, honor, entertain, initiate, or bless. A mask serves both to disguise and to protect the wearer, who is most often male, as he performs in dances or theatrical skits. Most masks are carved of wood, although some are made of cloth and other materials. They may be decorated with paint, beads, cloth, or raffia.”

African masks have deeply influenced the surrealist, such as cubism, tradition in European art and its most celebrated practitioner of African masks in his works is Pablo Picasso, who single handedly elevated it to an unprecedented artistic status. “African artists invented the aesthetics that would later inspire the so-popular Cubists styles.” According to another source, “The influence

of African masks on European modern art has more recently been recognized as significant and it has been established that artists such Pablo Picasso were heavily influenced by the aesthetic of these masks.”

In this sense, some writers and art critics consider that African art has indeed influenced European art basing their observations not only on African masks but also on African art and architecture in general. Thus, they came to the conclusion that, “In the 20th century, African art has greatly influenced much Western art and the concepts of beauty that underlie it. For centuries, however, exposure to African art had little effect on European art.

The concepts behind African art-its function in ritual and its emphasis on abstract patterning rather than representation-made it so foreign to European sensibilities that many Europeans did not consider it art at all. In the 20th century, a search for new artistic forms led European artists to look anew at the abstract forms of African art.”

This assertion was later on supported by other observations by the same art critics who saw in African art a greater scope of influence on European art. “Wider recognition of the artistic value of African artifacts began in the early 20th century. Western artists at that time sought to break free from established artistic conventions, and in doing so they rediscovered African sculpture. Their enthusiasm for African art was based on form; Western artists had only vague and romanticized ideas about the cultures that had produced the art.”

Despite available and concrete evidence of the influence of African art on European modernism, there are still remnants of the old school of European art that tend to deny this influence because in their views African art is still primitive and unable to be put on a par with its European counterpart. These are Eurocentric or biased views proving that colonial and neocolonial views and prejudices are not completely extinct from Europe.

The fact that some of the most celebrated European modernist artists admitted that some of their most important works had been inspired by African art that can claim the mantle of modernity in its own right. “Spanish artist Pablo Picasso’s Les demoiselles d’Avignon (1907, Museum of Modern Art, New York City) is probably the best-known Western painting inspired by African art. It features a group of female figures whose angular forms and large facial features resemble African masks. Although Picasso denied any African influence on this painting, his friend and colleague André Derain wrote that he introduced Picasso to African art in 1905, and Picasso himself later spoke of the strong impression African art had made on him.”

Africa is not only famous and influential with its traditional arts and architecture. There are also young and upcoming modernist artists who are using the African art legacy in order to create and recreate the continent’s greatness and originality on the canvass as well as on the building designs they are imagining and implementing. it would be safe to say in this context that while European modernism is something passé African modernism is just starting to shake the global art world, reflecting Africa’s artistic renaissance. The long journey has only just started.

Law & Politics

Silencing the guns to make peace in Sudan, Horn region

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

In Sudan, there has been protracted conflict that has caused much suffering and loss of life. The situation has been ongoing for many years, and the people of Sudan are tired of the violence. There is a growing recognition that the only way to achieve lasting peace is to silence the guns. The guns have been major obstacles to progress in Sudan. They have caused immense damage to infrastructure including schools, hospitals, and roads.

The economic impact of the conflict has also been devastating with many people struggling to make ends meet. If we can silence the guns, we can start to rebuild and create a brighter future for the people of Sudan. One of the main reasons for the conflict in Sudan is political division. Different groups have been fighting for power and influence which has led to a lot of tension and violence.

If we can find a way to achieve political stability, we can reduce the need for violence and address the root causes of the conflict. Peaceful resolution of conflicts is a fundamental human right. Everyone has the right to live in peace and security without fear of violence or persecution. By silencing the guns, we can ensure that this right is upheld and that the people of Sudan can live in safety and security.

A peaceful Sudan would have many benefits for the wider region. It would create opportunities for trade and cooperation which would boost economic growth and development. It would also help to reduce the spread of extremism and terrorism, which are major challenges facing the region. International support is crucial in achieving lasting peace in Sudan.

They can also put pressure on warring groups to lay down their arms and engage in dialogue. While progress has been made towards peace in Sudan, there is still much work to be done. The process of peace-building is complex and challenging, but it is essential if we want to create a better future for the people of Sudan. It requires the commitment and cooperation of everyone involved.

Through peace-building efforts, political stability, and inclusivity, we can create a peaceful and prosperous Sudan that benefits the wider region. The efforts to mediate dialogue between the warring parties in Sudan are extremely important because they provide a vital chance to stop more bloodshed and suffering. This means that instead of continuing to fight and harm each other, the warring groups can come together and have discussions to find a peaceful solution to their conflicts.

Dialogue is an essential tool in resolving conflicts. It allows the warring parties to communicate each other, express their concerns and grievances, and work towards finding common ground. Through dialogue, they can understand each other's perspectives and explore potential solutions that are acceptable to all sides. By engaging in dialogue, the warring parties have an opportunity to address the root causes of

their conflicts.

This means discussing the underlying issues that have fueled the violence and seeking ways to resolve them. It could involve examining political, economic, or social factors that have contributed to the tensions and finding ways to address these in a peaceful manner. Mediation efforts can also help build trust and create a sense of unity among the warring parties. This can pave the way for empathy and understanding, which are crucial in achieving lasting peace.

Halted bloodshed and reduced suffering will have a transformative impact on the lives of the Sudanese people. It will allow them to live in safety and security, free from the constant fear of violence. It will also enable them to rebuild their lives, communities, and institutions that have been shattered by the conflicts. Moreover, successful mediation efforts in Sudan can serve as an inspiration and example for other countries facing similar challenges. It can demonstrate that through dialogue and peaceful negotiations, even the most entrenched conflicts can be resolved.

This can contribute to global peace building efforts and promote a culture of dialogue and diplomacy. To ensure the success of mediation efforts, it is crucial to have impartial mediators who can facilitate the dialogue process. These mediators should be trusted by all parties involved and possess the skills to foster constructive communication and compromise. They should also actively listen to the concerns of each side and help facilitate productive discussions.

The international community plays a significant role in supporting the mediation efforts in Sudan. They can provide resources, expertise, and diplomatic pressure to encourage the warring parties to engage in dialogue and work towards a peaceful resolution. Furthermore, international involvement can help ensure that any agreements reached are implemented effectively. The mediation efforts to facilitate dialogue between the warring parties in Sudan offer a critical opportunity to stop further bloodshed and suffering.

Through dialogue, trust-building, and addressing the root causes of the conflicts, lasting peace can be achieved. The international community's support and impartial mediators are keys to the success of these efforts, which can serve as a beacon of hope for other conflict-affected regions.

IGAD, which stands for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, has been working together with the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) to help make the dialogue happen in Sudan. This means that these three organizations have been putting their efforts and resources into assisting and encouraging the discussions between the warring parties.

IGAD has a keen interest in promoting peace and stability in Sudan. The organization understands the importance of finding a peaceful resolution to the conflicts and has taken on the responsibility to facilitate the



dialogue process. It works together as a team to ensure that all parties involved have the support they need to engage in productive conversations.

Conflict is still ongoing in certain regions of Sudan, with violence and fighting causing immense suffering for the people. However, IGAD's interest to involve in mediating talks between the different groups involved in the conflict presents a significant chance to put an end to the bloodshed and alleviate the pain being experienced. The efforts made by IGAD to bring the warring parties together for dialogue are of utmost importance.

This is because dialogue provides a space for peaceful discussions and negotiations, which can lead to finding common ground and resolving the differences that have fueled the conflict. By facilitating these dialogues, IGAD is creating an opportunity for the conflicting parties to come face-to-face and share their concerns, grievances, and aspirations. This open exchange of ideas allows for a deeper understanding of each party's perspectives and can help build empathy and bridge divides.

The ultimate goal of IGAD's mediation efforts is to establish a peaceful resolution to the conflict. This means finding ways to address the root causes of the violence, satisfy the needs and desires of all parties involved, and prevent further bloodshed and suffering among the Sudanese population. The involvement of IGAD brings international attention and recognition to the dialogue process in Sudan.

It signifies that the conflicts are not just internal matters but a concern for the global community. This can exert pressure on the warring parties to engage seriously and work towards a peaceful resolution knowing that the world is watching. Halting the conflict through dialogue would have numerous positive outcomes. It would not only save lives but also enable the people affected by the violence to begin rebuilding their lives and communities.

Additionally, it would create an environment where stability and development can thrive leading to a brighter future for Sudan as a whole. IGAD's mediation efforts foster an environment of trust and cooperation between the warring parties. By providing a neutral platform for dialogue, IGAD offers the assurance that all voices will be heard and respected, regardless of their position or power. This encourages the parties to engage

in the dialogue process more sincerely.

IGAD's involvement signals to the international community that Sudan's conflicts are being taken seriously. It highlights that there are concerted efforts to resolve the issues and alleviate the suffering of the Sudanese people. This can attract additional support and resources from other nations and organizations strengthening the chances of successful mediation.

IGAD Executive Secretary Workneh Gebeyehu has reiterated the need for an immediate ceasefire in Sudan, according to information obtained from Ethiopian News Agency.

Addressing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) ministerial session, the executive secretary and co-facilitator of the Jeddah Sudan process emphasized the importance of silencing the guns to pave the way for a lasting peace.

The Jeddah Sudan process, initiated by Saudi Arabia and the United States, aims to bring together Sudanese stakeholders to negotiate a comprehensive political settlement that will end the ongoing conflict and pave the way for a democratic transition in the country.

IGAD, alongside the AU and the UN, has been actively involved in facilitating the dialogue.

The PSC meeting provided an opportunity for Workneh to inform the AU member states about the progress made in the Jeddah process and to seek their continued support for the efforts to bring peace to Sudan. The AU has played a pivotal role in mediating conflicts and promoting peace and security across the continent.

Briefing the African Union Peace and Security Council, Workneh provided an update on the Jeddah Sudan process dialogue facilitated by IGAD. He reiterated IGAD's call for an immediate ceasefire in Sudan in order to silence the guns.

In his X, former Twitter, the executive secretary posted, "I also called upon the international community to support our collective journey towards establishing enduring peace and stability in Sudan."

The briefing comes at a critical time, as conflict continues to grip parts of Sudan. IGAD's efforts to mediate dialogue between warring parties represent a crucial opportunity to halt further bloodshed and suffering.

I am optimistic about the industrialization agenda in Africa

-Stephen Karingi (PhD)

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

As the second largest continent in the world both in terms of population and geographical area Africa is a rapidly growing continent that attracts attention of the world. It is endowed with natural resources, strategic location and work force that important input for its economic and social development.

Yet at this moment Africa is contending various economic challenges. It still largely depends on agrarian economy where its products are sold without adding value. Still being able to generate some resource from the micro economic activities, it loses much of it again as it depends on the import of industrial items from out of the continent. Such industrial items would otherwise be produced within Africa, sold on affordable prices for the people of the continent to save expenditure by replacing import, and then build up the capacity of the continent to be competent to produce exportable items and maximize its revenue.

Africa is now striving to speed up its industrialization to realize the goals set by African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 the Africa we want. One of the goals is to facilitate intra Africa trade through implementing the continental initiative Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

AfCFTA is believed to benefit the continent in many ways including accelerating the movement of people and goods within the continent thereby maximizing the benefit of the continent from its own rich economic potential.

Along with this, industrialization plays meaningful role in adding momentum for optimal intra Africa trade. Industrialization in Africa suffers some setbacks that should be alleviated on time so that the continent can move forward. Recently the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has held the annual African Economic Conference (AEC). The AEC was launched in 2006 and has been running annually propounding various vital issues surrounding Africa's economy.

This year's edition, entitled *Imperatives for Sustainable Industrial Development in Africa*, has also brought together various actors in the continents economic and industrial development arena.

Stephen Karingi (PhD) is the Director for Regional Integration and Trade Division at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). During his brief interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, he has raised issues on current situation of industrialization in Africa, important considerations about the possible realization of industrialization in the continent, important experiences from Ethiopia's industrialization efforts, among others. Have a nice read!

Could you tell us briefly about current situation of industrialization?

It's easy to be pessimistic. And to start by lamenting because for sure, we have not done very well, in the context of industrialization as a continent. We are even in a worse position in terms of our industrialization or in terms of what we call manufacturing value added than we were 40 years ago.

So from that perspective, one could be pessimistic. Now, the good thing is that the desire for industrialization and the commitment to the industrialization objective, that agenda is something that Africa has actually continued to hold on.

I would say that the global rules, in the last 20 or 30 years, and the kind of policy orientation was not very supportive of the idea of the transition of industrial policy to advance them. And I guess that was probably because of the bad experiences, so to speak, whereby some of the industrialization policies in the past were used in a way that did not keep the results that were desired. And so it was a situation whereby everybody wanted industrialization. But the approach that had been used was not sustainable. But now today, we know what needs to be done. We know that it has a realization needs to be seen as part and parcel of the whole economy.

One has to think about the linkages



I am very optimistic about the future, when it comes to the industrialization agenda in the continent

within the economy. And if one was asked to think about the linkages with the markets, that's why we talk about regional value chains and the global value chains. And so whatever action that you take, in one of the linkages, it has an implication on the outcomes of your industrial policy. So coming back to the present, Africa is very well positioned to take advantage of it as realization, not only because the question of climate change is presenting opportunities, where Africa has a lot of comparative advantages in renewable energy, but also because we have a policy framework set up under the African Continental Free Trade Area, that is actually going to make it as current as they should policy. So I would like to say that, even though I started by stating a pessimistic outcome of the past, I am very optimistic about the future, when it comes to the industrialization agenda in the continent.

Africa is endowed with diverse natural and human resources as well. As industrialization itself is very diverse including, manufacturing sector, tourism sector and the like, where should be the focus in such diverse situations?

During the negotiations, and now the implementation of the AfCFTA one

Continued to Page 9



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I am optimistic about...

of the things that all of us focused on, is on the industrialization question. So what our empirical work, or the Economic Commission for Africa shows is that if you were to implement the AfCFTA, effectively, you would have an additional more than \$200 billion worth of intra African trade in 2045, than if you did not have a CTA. So just by implementing the AfCFTA, we would be able, in the 20 of the year from now, because, you know, AfCFTA is implemented over a number of years. Yes, in the 20th year from now, intra African trade would have increased and you would have an additional of \$200 billion dollars, intra African trade addition. Now, most of that is actually going to be from manufacturing, value added trade. In fact, it's almost two thirds of that 200 period is going to be in a task in value added goods, industrial goods. So to answer your question, we have started now we have been unpacked, what are those sectors where this is going to happen? It is pharmaceuticals. It is agri foods, there's also going to be a lot of services that are relevant to the manufacturing processes, there's also going to be a lot of services growth that are essential for the functioning of the manufacturing sector, take the case of Ethiopian Airlines, Ethiopian Airlines is what you need to move intermediate inputs that are required from Ethiopia to Nigeria or from Nigeria to South Africa for this industrialization process. So we have studied this automotive sector. Textiles and Apparel, autos are going to the sectors where it has realization within the continent. All the empirical work shows there's going to be opportunities.

Does it mean Africa has already got all that it takes to industrialize?

Absolutely, we do we do have what it takes to industrialize. First of all, we have the raw materials. I've not even talked about the critical raw materials that everybody is going for, which are essential for producing the renewable energy, that's a whole sector in itself, on the electric battery value, value chain, so we have every or that you know that you need. And at the end of the day, you also have the market because I think for industrialization to be sustainable, you also need to be able to have the market and the AfCFTA is actually opening that market for that. Okay, for instance, one of the necessary things is financing.

So, how are we going to do about the financing, especially with



for industrialization to be sustainable, you need to be able to have the market and the AfCFTA is actually opening that market for that

regard to making the majority of the financing from local sources?

First of all, I want to start by saying that there is sufficient opportunity to mobilize resources domestically. Starting with, for instance, just a domestic resource mobilization in the area of taxes.

And so, if we want to close this gap of what you need to finance the infrastructure that you need for your industrialization process, we must start at home. Then of course, the public private partnership model is also a very important model. For instance, what the Ethiopian government has done in building the structure for the Special Economic Zone has attracted the private investors to come to Ethiopia and invest in the textiles and apparel and in the leather sectors. So talking about mobilizing resources, the Public Private Partnership model, which has been demonstrated to be working in some of these special economic zones, is another way to mobilize the resources.

Of course, there is room to create a macro policy environment that allows foreign direct investment and Africa direct investments from other African countries within Africa, to also be part of the financing framework. So those are three things that you actually have a handle, you have control. And it's not something that you cannot say that you do not have a handle over

them. So it's possible to finance our industrialization agenda.

Does Africa have trained human resource that can contribute to its goal of industrialization?

Of course, that's the starting point you need to have. It's not just those who have the skills for operating in the industries or in the factories, but you also need to have a public sector, our civil servants need to be people who understand what the manufacturers are doing and what they need, so that even as they enact new policies or design policies, they respond to them. So in fact, we call it as part of the skills development. We advocate for the embedding of Publics happens in these ecosystems of the industrialization. So you need to have individuals who go to other places like Hawassa and not just only here in Addis Ababa, they got to have as they understand what's going on there. Hence, they can come up with good policies that would also influence the type of skills that the government invests in, when it comes to the manufacturing process. And this has to happen across the continent.

When we manufacture something, we also create a market. So do we expect only within our market within Africa, we orient ourselves we have to orient ourselves to export out of Africa. So is it going to be a challenge or the enabling conditions?

At the moment, the African market is the switch that everybody needs to look at. The African market is phenomenal. And the minute you conquer the African market, you also conquer the global market, if you can be able to satisfy 1.4 billion, it means you must be very efficient and very good in this process.

And you will have scaled up your skills and your standards that will allow you now because the idea is to use the African market through a regional value chain to enter into the global value chain. And so the market is there. The policies are being harmonized, the regulations and standards are being harmonized under the AfCFTA so really, there is no reason why as an industrialist, you should not look at the African market. Of course, there are challenges of connectivity infrastructure, like I talked about but that does not mean that we should sit back and see.

Thank you very much for your time!

You're most welcome!

Society

Cultivating hope through training

BY ELIZABETH MENGISTU

In areas where commercial activities are rampant, the possibility for under age children and young people to engage in some types of income generation activities is common.

Mainly in families where the yoke of poverty is the highest and families cannot afford to meet the basic necessities of their children including to put bread on the table, cover education and healthcare services and other similar expenditures, it is normal for many families to send their children to be engaged in income generating activities, make earnings and support themselves and their respective families.

As a result, despite governments' commitment and efforts to ensure the rights of children they are entitled to and avert the practice of child labor, several children are still in child labor; and child labor remains an unclosed chapter.

Ethiopia, as a country ratified regional and international conventions is working committedly to address the challenges of its young people, protect them from any form of abuse and harmful practices, and secure their safety and wellbeing

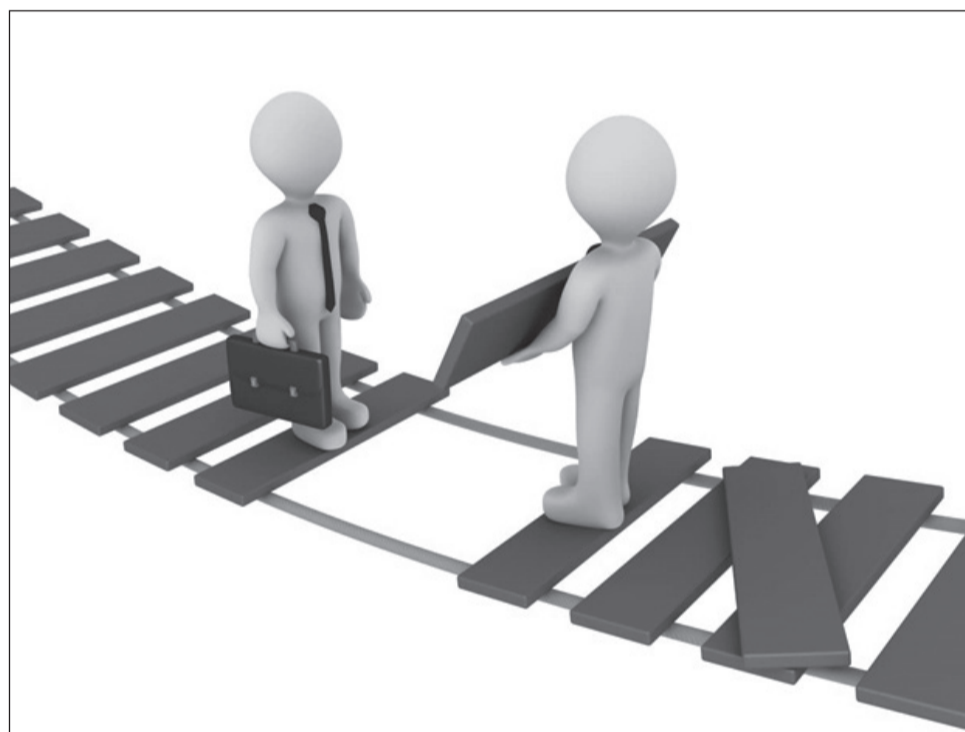
Mainly, joining hands with nongovernmental organizations and development partners that are working to address the challenges of the youths, mainly reducing the level of unemployment, the country is striving to secure the benefits of young people in every possible way. In return, the country has taken important steps and achieved considerable outcomes.

However, for the reason that success cannot be achieved overnight, there are still unresolved challenges that sought the concerted hands of all, including nongovernmental organizations, development partners and the public at large to fully realize the rights of children.

As part of this effort, within the framework of the set policy and strategy, a number of nongovernmental organizations and development partners are working to address the challenges joining hands with the government - to satisfy their basic needs, enhance their access to education and healthcare services and to help them to live a better life and achieving their dreams.

Recently, Dilla Polytechnic College in collaboration with Care Ethiopia, Reach The Needy- Ethiopia, (RTN), the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, Ministry of Labor and Skills, graduated teenagers who took short term training in food preparation, beauty and hairdressing and Agro-food processing, mainly focusing on fruits and vegetables.

These trainees, as it was learnt, were once out of school for different reasons and selected from their areas by the organizations to enable them take short term training. And throughout the training



time, the organizations have been provided accommodations and meals for the trainees.

Tesfaye Bedecha is a Trainer at Dilla Polytechnic College. According to him, the project was designed to support teenagers who completed their schooling but could not further pursue their ambition, for those dropped out of school at any stage as well as for those who are too far behind academically for various reasons to help them acquire knowledge and skills thereby enable them to generate their own income and bring about positive change in their lives. In view of this, the college has exerted efforts to equip trainees with the needed knowledge and skills because such kind of skill development training can close skill gaps and empower trainees to establish their own small businesses.

According to him, graduates after they return to their respective areas are expected to receive financial support in the form of loan, and workspaces to enable them start their own small businesses and turn their vision to life.

Martha Amene is one of the trainees and the resident of Kochere Woreda Gulolcha Kebele of Gedeo Zone. As she stated, in earlier times, she was leading her life by preparing and supplying 'Kocho'- an

Ethiopian indigenous food made from the scraped leaf sheath fiber and pulverized corn of the Enset plant- to the market.

The training is beneficial in terms of helping trainees to acquire new knowledge and skills that are basic to be engaged in income generating activities.

"I had no idea how to make juices and marmalades from fruits and vegetables. However, after I took the training, I can easily prepare different types of juices and jams with local ingredients such as lemon and sugar."

She also expressed her gratitude for all actors who arranged the training.

Biruktawit Muluneh is a trainer at Dilla Polytechnic agro-food processing department. Students who dropped out of their education and those who are interested to get short term training in the agro processing sector and food preparation receive the training.

"The training has practically demonstrated that young people, if they are provided with the required support, can develop their entrepreneur skills, start their own business, generate income and contribute to their community and the country meaningfully

Not only that, but the training has also brought about behavioral change among the teenagers. It has boosted their self-confidence and motivated them to be engaged in certain income generating activities. Most importantly, it has created 'I can engage in productive works' sentiment within them."

While responding to questions regarding the opportunities available in the Zone and the challenges they encountered, Biruktawit said that Gedeo Zone is blessed with diverse natural resources; and different types of fruits and vegetables are produced in the Zone. Thus, there are sufficient resources and well-equipped trainers. These can be considered as good opportunities.

With regard to the encounters, any kind of training, aside from having skilled trainers, needs significant capital, and materials that can be used as training inputs to support teenagers to realize their full potential and make the training a success.

"In this regard, because the department is at its infant stage, there are limitations in terms of supplying the desired training inputs. For instance, we do not have food packaging materials; trainees do not have hair nets or hats to keep hair from contacting the food during food preparation. There is also scarcity in equipment and utensils," she said.

She also stressed the need to make training inputs more accessible to achieve the desired effect and make the training a success.

On the occasion, trainees showcased their works to attendees.

These trainees, as it was learnt, were once out of school for different reasons and selected from their areas by the organizations to enable them take short term training

From the words of PM Abiy at the 4th...

is a great lose for Ethiopia and its people. We must use this opportunity to solve our problems.

Gov't never starts any conflict

The current and past conflicts within Ethiopia are initiated by other actors, not by the government. The federal government has never started a single conflict. Conflicts started by other actors and the federal government is taking actions to defend the national sovereignty, peace, and security of Ethiopia.

The federal government wants to maintain peace. We are working for peace and always ready to solve problems through negotiation and discussions. Those who carrying guns here and there, I advise them to choose peaceful way than violence and chaos.

Give opportunity for unifying narration

Divisive narration dominates the current narration in Ethiopian politics. This narration is destructive and aggravating the problems of Ethiopia. Instead of extreme and divisive narration, Ethiopians have to focus on grand and unifying narration to promote unity, togetherness and

diversity.

A unifying narration promotes harmonious coexistence and brings Ethiopians together. But, the divisive narration that excludes others and promotes self-centered narrations affects the smooth and peaceful relations among the peoples with diversified languages, cultures and beliefs.

Ethiopia is the outcome of its citizens from all sides of the country. We have to understand the power of unity. Together we can build a strong and prosperous country.

Ethiopia plans to create 3.9 million jobs

Ethiopia plans to create over 3.9 million job opportunities in this budget year. The Ministry of Labor and Skills is working to create more job opportunities. The plan shows how government gives due focus for job creation for the youth generation.

During the first quarter of the budget year, over half a million job opportunities were created. In addition, through legal way, over 100 thousand overseas job opportunity were created during the first quarter of the year.



Ethiopia's principled-based access to the sea aspiration

Ethiopia's desire to have access to the Red Sea is principle-based, not to harm the rights and benefits of any of its coastal neighbors. Ethiopia has no intention to

violate sovereignty of its neighbors. We need to make a business law to resolve the issue, through diplomacy.

Ethiopia's neighbors are expected to take its pursuit for sea access positively as the country could not manage such a large population without reaching an agreement on port use.

Verbatim and Caption

From the words of PM Abiy at the 4th round parliamentary session

While responding to the questions of the members of the parliament (MPs) during the 3rd year 4th round parliamentary regular session, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) touched the political, economic, social, diplomatic issues of current affairs of Ethiopia and the activities of the government. Here are among the important points from his briefing to the legislators.

Ethiopia's GDP registers double growth

For the first time in its history, Ethiopia's GDP doubles during the past five years. Ethiopia's GDP has increased from around 84 billion USD in 2018 to 164 billion USD at this time, which is a milestone achievement. The GDP's progress is an outcome of multi-sectorial economic approach applied by the government.

The per capita income has also increased to 1549 USD. Five years ago, the per capita income was 882 USD, almost doubling within five years. Though various internal and international man-made and natural challenges remains a serious challenge to the economy, Ethiopia builds a resilient

economy amid the challenges.

Ethiopia plans to harvest 800 million quintals

Ethiopia has secured over 600 million quintals of product from the agriculture sector by cultivating over 20 million hectares of land in 2023. By cultivating over 22 million hectares, Ethiopia targets to harvest more than 800 million quintals of grain in 2024 harvest seasons.

The agriculture sector, especially the crop sector is marking a significant development in recent years. Last year, the agricultural sector grew by 6.3 percent, with crop production rising 7.1 percent.

Efforts are also underway to cultivate over three million hectares of wheat in the summer season to sustain the local wheat production development that helps Ethiopia to fully substitute wheat importing.

Resolving differences through National Dialogue

During the past three decades, politicians were frequently asking for National Dialogue. Now with the goal of solving differences and disagreements through negotiation, Ethiopia has established a National Dialogue commission.



Per the report of the commission, the National dialogue Commission is working with great diligence to realize the plan. All Ethiopians should support the commission so as to make the dialogue real and achieve its target. The commission is striving using

its maximum capacity to make the process credible and inclusive.

All Ethiopians have to collaborate with the commission. Missing this opportunity

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