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## Gov't annual subsidies for industries over 6 bln Birr

• *Local products exhibition kicks off*

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Envisioning the manufacturing industry to be the engine for national economic growth, the government

annually subsidizes over six billion Birr to the sector while more support is in stock, the Industry Minister said.

Industry Minister Melaku Alebel made the above remark yesterday while opening

the Ethiopian Enterprises Development's exhibition whereby locally manufactured products were on display.

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Mathiwos Ensarmu

## Expert outlines imperatives of diversifying port access for Ethiopia

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The plan to diversify Ethiopia's port alternatives would help to boost

See Expert outlines .. Page 3



## MoLS pins hope on stakeholder's role for TVTI invigoration

• *Institute establishes Nat'l Think Tank group*

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## UK to strengthen mutual partnership with Ethiopia

• *Launches White Paper on int'l dev't*

BY YOHANES JEMANEH

ADDIS ABABA – The government of United Kingdom (UK) has announced that it would consolidate support and mutual partnership with Ethiopia to accelerate the progress of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UK has recently launched a white paper titled "International Development in a

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Efforts to increase productivity through capacity building in partnership

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Restitution of Africa's cultural bounties and art market's criminal networks

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COP28: Deal to 'Transition Away' from fossil fuels agreed

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## Ethiopia, Brazil to further boost trade, investment relations

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

ADDIS ABABA-Ethiopia and Brazil trade and investment seminar, which is being held today is expected to serve as a bridge to strengthen government and investors ties in the two nations, so stated a press release.

The two governments and private sectors are expected to discuss the bilateral trade and investment challenges and opportunities, according to the press release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald* in connection with a 'Brazil-Ethiopia Trade and Investment Seminar,' organized by Brazil Embassy.

The Seminar will provide the two governments with unique privilege to foster close dialogue thereby leveling bridges between their respective private sectors.

"As there is room for trade expansion and keen interest to grow together, the seminar will help come up with possible solutions to address geographical distance and enhance mutual market knowledge."

It was learnt that Ethiopia has been a fast-growing African country since recently and Brazil can be a valuable partner to Ethiopia and well back the latter's path towards development. Brazil, at its rate, has a complex and diversified industry; and is one of the ten largest economies in the world.

The release stated that Being a global leader in agriculture, beef, poultry, and pork production, as well as other industrial fields, from machinery to regional jets, Brazil is willing to increase its trade, investment and cooperation relationship with Ethiopia. Brazilian technical cooperation with Ethiopia is already a reality in areas such as forestry-agriculture management, soil and cotton-growing improvement.

Ethiopia's admission as a full member of the BRICS, as of 1st of January 2024, will certainly offer more opportunities for substantial dialogue and information exchange between Brazil and Ethiopia, and both countries should make the most of it.

The Head of Trade, Investment and Agriculture of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Ambassador Alex Giacomelli, representatives from the Ethiopian Minister of Trade and Regional Integration and the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the Vice-Minister for Trade and International Relations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil, Julio Cesar Forte Ramos are attending the seminar.

Brazil and Ethiopia have a combined population of almost 400 million people and boast an aggregate 4.4 billion USD GDP in purchasing-parity terms. Despite their economic might, bilateral trade is still unconsolidated.

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Different international companies exhibiting products in the 14th edition of Addis Chamber International Agriculture and Food Trade Fair have expressed keenness to penetrate Ethiopian market and establish business here.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald* Turkey based ESSERRA Liquid Organic Fertilizer Representative Neshat Mansur said that his product is efficient for using less fertilizer and minimizing pesticides expenses by resisting crop diseases.

Ethiopia's trade fair promotes the working environment in the country and introduces local and foreign companies each other, he indicated.

He expressed that ESSERRA set a plan to establish an organic liquid fertilizer plant in Ethiopia.

Although the company exports its products to more than 16 countries, the special focus is given to Ethiopia because of population size and high number of farmers among others, he stated.

"We are looking for a way to manufacture the products in the country. However, the effort to officially join the Ethiopian market had taken over ten years' process. Establishing the factory would take its own time and processes," he said.

There are already started processes to install a factory here as the USAID has shown interest to financially support the work to manufacture the products in Ethiopia, he stated.

For his part, Moges Admas MOJEG International Business Managing Director and ESSERRA Liquid Organic Fertilizer Ethiopia Representative for his part said

that the ESSERRA has been restoring the damaged land and treating acidic soil.

The company has been supplying the organic fertilizer at an affordable price for farmers, he said, adding the company is committed to restore more chemically damaged land by supplying additional organic liquid fertilizer as the company planned to establish a plant here.

The demand of farmers to the organic fertilizer is increasing from time to time for improving soil fertility and crop yielding, he expressed.

Kenya's Rok Industries Chief Financial Controller Hiten Savla said that taking part in the exhibition is important to build a good bonding, create awareness and improve quality, as well as expanding the product to other countries specifically to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) countries.

A Saudi Arabia based High gate Plastic Company Marketing Manager Wasin Murad stressed that the exhibition would greatly contribute to promoting the packaging products.

"It is my first time participating in Ethiopia and the response is good. So, we hope we will get a good business in Ethiopia in the future," he said.

His company works in accordance with the demand of customers by creating any design in line with their requirements. "As per our study the Ethiopian market is very big for a packaging industry. As a result, we try to focus on Ethiopia."

These days, the Ethiopian packing industry market is booming, thereby High gate has planned to penetrate the booming market as well as to establish business in Ethiopia, he noted.



Neshat Mansur



Wasin Murad



Hiten Savla

## MPs, academicians call for swift Nat'l Dialogue

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA –Members of the Parliament (MPs) and Academiacalled for the immediate implementation of the national dialogue to ensure lasting peace and sustainable development.

Having a stay with local media, MP Teshome Wale said that the main purpose of the dialogue is to encourage solidarity and ensure national interest.

It is the right time to conduct the dialogue to bring fundamental changes to promote peace, unity and protect sovereignty in a sustainable manner, he stressed.

MP Mubarek Elias said, "The dialogue will help address differences, ensure brotherhoods and sisterhoods, and bringing holistic changes across the country. Hence, all stakeholders should be engaged in the process to realize the expected outcome."

According to Teacher and Writer Tatek Kebede, the national dialogue helps to end distorted narratives, address differences, and ensure national consensus and



reconciliation.

Tatek also noted that the dialogue is useful for repairing political rifts, overcoming problems and resentments, filling legal gaps, ensuring social justice, and so on.

Therefore, he urged that a genuine national

dialogue has to be conducted and it has to be done as fast as possible as a number of conflicts, fabricated and distorted narratives are challenging the wellbeing of the nation.

He perceived the national dialogue as a key to maintain peace and sovereignty of the country.

# MoLS pins hope on stakeholder's role for TVTI invigoration

## • Institute establishes Nat'l Think Tank group

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) said stakeholders' collaboration is crucial to transform the Technical and Vocational Training (TVTI) and invigorate the sector.

Yesterday, it was announced the establishment of the first-of-its-kind Think Tank at the national level under the theme "Empowering Divers Skills; Ensuring Sustainable Development."

Speaking on the occasion, MoLS Minister Muferihat Kamil noted that the combined effort of all relevant actors is a timely and

crucial measure to bring fundamental change in modernizing the TVTI sector.

Despite its immense potential, Ethiopia has not yet properly benefited from the TVTI due to limited capacity to coordinate and manage the sector. In contrast, a number of countries notably Germany have been using the technical and vocational sector wisely and ensuring adequate benefits and bringing rapid progress even in times of difficulty.

Muferihat, who mentioned the TVTI is an institution where millions of citizens have been engaging each year, indicated the gap that persists on the job seekers and the market demand. "Therefore, policy makers,

universities, private sector, researchers, and other concerned bodies should make meaningful contributions to address the problems through joint effort."

According to her, creating behavioral change among the job seekers and creating a link between training institutions and hiring companies are worth equal consideration.

TVTI Director General Biruk Kedir (PhD) on his part said that the Think Tank brings together policy makers and stakeholders from industry and other areas who have the understanding of technical and vocational policy and strategy. The Think Tank would contribute a lot to generate ideas, share knowledge, fill skill and

experience gaps and the like and help efforts to build a globally- competitive TVTI in Ethiopia.

"The TVTI plays an indispensable role in producing competent, educated, and ethical youth while it requests collective effort, quality, and commitment. Of course, there is a glimmer of progress in the sector following a reform that has been implemented over years. For instance, the present government established MoLS to help TVTI activities. However, lack of integration and attitudinal change are yet serious challenges in the sector," he remarked.

In Ethiopia, there are over 2,000 public and privately-owned TVTI and short training centers.

## Expert outlines...

its bargaining power in business activities, a noted logistics expert said, calling the government to uphold the existing cooperation with coastal neighbors.

Approached by FBC Addis Ababa University (AAU) Vice President Matiwas Ensermu (PhD) said Ethiopia's port development cooperation with Kenya, Somaliland, Eritrea and Djibouti should be strengthened and expanded.

Matiwas, who is a logistics expert by profession, noted that the Ethiopian government adopted the logistics sector policy in 2020 and has been working on port diversification in collaboration with neighboring countries since then.

"Sovereign access to sea ports is also one of the major issues compiled in the policy and in this regard the government is expected to complete the ongoing projects and to seek additional outlets."

The scholar further stated that Ethiopia is now ranked below countries with low logistics index. "Low competency in the logistics sector is making investment difficult and foreign companies are complaining about the high cost

of logistics. Hence, the government should diversify import-export routes by investing in port development."

Owing to the rapid increase in Ethiopia's import-export trade volume, implementing the Mutual Port Development Policy has become the order of the day, he stressed.

Domestically, the Ethiopian Airlines as well as the Ethiopian Shipping and Logistics Enterprise are expanding cargo stations and dry ports' accessibility. Despite these progresses, the development on port constructions remains below from the expected.

Since the logistics sector would never be better if the port issue continues unresolved, due attention should be given to Ethiopia's aspiration to port diversification and ensure direct access to the sea. "Of course, Ethiopia's quest for direct port access may seem a policy shift from the usual business, but it does not necessarily mean that the government will stop its negotiation for port diversification," the academician emphasized.

## Gov't annual...

Speaking at the occasion, Melaku said that subsidizing and incentivizing manufacturing industries is a core part of the government's Ten-Year Development Plan.

The Homegrown Economic Reform is being implemented with genuine reformative measures and the government has prioritized the manufacturing sector and it has been inducing attractive incentives. Several industries which were partially or fully halted due to financial and technical problems have been put back to operation, the Minister elaborated.

The Ethiopian government has also upgraded credit services and financial support to the manufacturing sector.

He added, "Currently, Ethiopia generates over 400 million USD from industrial exports and when the performance compared with the nine billion USD potential, it is evident that the sector is largely untapped and needs more engagement.

The manufacturing industries' production capacity is also expected to grow from the current 47 percent to 85 percent within ten years. Likewise, the number of employees in the sector is projected to be about five million in the reported period.

"The national economic transformation could not be realized unless we use new and feasible strategies and the rationale to launch the *Let*

*Ethiopia Produce* campaign is to make the manufacturing industry an engine for holistic progress. After a full implementation of the campaign, the manufacturing sector is expected to have a 60 percent share from Ethiopia's total GDP."

The Minister further noted that the opening of locally manufactured products aimed to create the platform for manufacturing industries.

In his opening remark, the House of Peoples Representative (HoPR) Speaker Tagesse Chaffo stated that Ethiopia has abundant resources that could transform the economy to industrial-led. Hence, the government will offer attractive initiatives and ensure a conducive business climate to anchor companies' involvement in the manufacturing industry.

According to the Speaker, the House is undertaking several legal reforms aimed to create an enabling environment for both foreign and local investors in the manufacturing business.

Ethiopian Enterprise Development Director General Alebachew Nigussie (PhD) also said that more than 26,000 manufacturing enterprises are now operating in the country with a growing capital and job creation capacity.

The government's annual subsidy to these enterprises also hits six billion Birr, he added.

## UK to strengthen...

Contested World: Ending Extreme Poverty and Tackling Climate Change."

During the launching ceremony at the British Embassy in Addis Ababa, Second Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Nick Dyer said that his government has planned to strengthened mutual partnership with Ethiopia and other partners in order to accelerating the progress of SDGs despite challenges.

The reason for preparation of the white paper is that the world finds itself at a critical juncture caused by COVID 19, growing global conflicts and climate change, he indicated.

He disclosed that only 15% of the SDG indicators are due to be met while the world is at mid-way point slated for the goals to be achieved.

Achieving the SDGs is only possible if all countries achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth, the paper said.

Moreover, the crisis in Ukraine has affected many developing countries like Ethiopia in terms of increasing cost of living and food process, Nick stated.

Therefore, he pinpointed that it requires a new policy to achieve SDGs and bring development for UK and its partners.

According to him, the document contains three key points which are curbing climate change, mobilizing resources, and improving partnerships.

It elaborates ways to properly utilize existing resources and unlocking additional finance from various bodies including the UK government and WB, he indicated.

He expressed that the UK government has unlocked six billion pound additional guarantees to countries around the world.

"We spend 200 million USD underpinning investment fund in Ethiopia. We are also working on knowledge exchanges, policy and regulation changes to achieve mutual

development," he said.

In a fragmented and contested world, it requires to follow new approaches that is also another reason for the preparation of this document to consolidate mutual partnership with countries like Ethiopia for development, he mentioned.

According to the Second Permanent Under-Secretary, mutual understanding and accountability are the basis of UK partnerships in accordance with the white paper.

At the event, Finance State Minister Semereta Sewasew stated that Ethiopia is striving to achieve peace, economic reform and building resilience which needs a strong support from partners including civic society and private sectors.

This cannot be done without the right partnerships that enable the country to utilize local capacities, she noted.

The country is working on mitigating poverty, supplying humanitarian aid and carrying out activities regarding the sustainable development goals, she said, adding this needs synergizing roadmaps and having similar views so that such panel helps to share ideas and forward better mechanisms to achieve the SDGs in a collaborative manner.

For Semereta, the occurrence of conflict and natural shock triggers a natural tendency to fall back on the gains of decades of hard work.

The country has an upcoming education program which intended to expand early childhood, primary and girls' education in which WB and FCDO are partnering with Ethiopia, she expressed.

There are problems related to mental health, gender based violence, drought, displacement of people in which the government need to solve through mobilizing resources at home and abroad, she stated.

UK supports Ethiopia in humanitarian aid, the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) and education, and manufacturing investment among others.

# Opinion

## Ethiopia's demand for sea outlet is based on a win-win approach

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa next to Nigeria with more than 120 million people. Its economy is one of the fastest growing in the world and the largest in the Horn of Africa. To keep up the economic growth momentum, more investment is needed and in addition, diversifying and increasing the volume of export is essential.

Economic growth increases the nation's importing demand such as capital goods and inputs to enhance production and distribution. The growing of production and export also requires viable logistic system, transportation and ports because they determine the export products competition capacity in the world market.

Currently, most land locked countries use rail way and truck transportation system for their import and export trade. Ethiopia also rendered great efforts to improve its logistics system to facilitate its import and export trade. The stretching of new electric powered rail transport from Addis Ababa to Djibouti can be mentioned as the case in point.

Ethiopia transacts 90% of its import and export business through port of Djibouti and when congestion occurs in the port, loading and unloading work the Ethiopian trade transaction will be delayed and this by itself brings negative consequences on the trade and the economy at large. As a sovereign country, Djibouti imposes additional port service price and when this happens, Ethiopia's ability to compete in the world market faces challenges.

Ethiopia needs very vital inputs used for agriculture such as fertilizer, herbicides and pesticides and selected seeds. In addition, it has to import chemicals used in industries and iron and still, finishing materials and others for construction.

The delay of the imported or exported goods due to congestion on the port incurs additional cost to the country and such circumstances have its own demerit on the nation's aspiration tackling poverty. Ethiopia experienced such economic havoc several times and paid heavy price to that end. It also has its own impact on the purchasing power of Birr.

According to some sources, due to the port congestion, some exporters are hampered to export their products in the neighboring countries which inhibited them not to penetrate to the international market. They are also forced to engage in illegal trade to obtain hard currency. It is imperative that land locked countries are economically disadvantaged as compared to the port owner countries.

Land locked countries pay additional tax and port services and these make them incompetent in the world market. In addition, they are less capable to attract foreign investment because of the heavy transaction cost when they are doing their import and export business.

In fact, there are some land locked countries in Europe and Asia but reached to the level of economic advancement. Unlike Ethiopia and some other land locked developing countries, they are industrialized and have huge and sophisticated air service which enabled them to conduct their export-import business smoothly. Austria and Switzerland, though they are land locked, lack of port did not hamper them to reach to the highest economic development. For the poor countries such as Ethiopia, however, doing import-export business through air transportation is expensive and unaffordable.

Actually, it is undeniable that the Ethiopian airline plays pivotal role in exporting flowers, fruits and vegetables through its cargo and contributes to the nation's foreign currency earning but it is impossible to transport the bulk of the nation's export through air transport. Therefore, it is a better option for Ethiopia to access its own port through dialogue via give and take approach in addition to using the neighboring countries' resorted ports.

Land locked countries also face challenges when they need to import strategic military equipments through the neighboring countries' ports. Because in case conflict erupts among the neighboring countries, the weapon might be used against the port owner countries. If relation between the neighboring countries becomes unfriendly, importing such materials will be hard.

It was vividly seen in history when fascist Italian occupied Ethiopia in 1936, all its sea outlets were under the control of European colonizers and the situation made importing weapon very hard but through paying heavy price and steady fighting the patriots could liberate Ethiopia from Fascist occupiers.

Historically, Ethiopia had not been barred from having access to sea outlet. Up to the last quarter of the 19th century, there was no country neighbored Ethiopia. The opening of Suez Canal in 1869 which connected Mediterranean Sea with Red Sea motivated European explorers and colonial adventures to eye on the East Africa and showed ambition to create new countries by annexing territories from Ethiopia.

Before the advent of colonialism, Ethiopia had access to sea water through Red Sea through port of Massawa, Asseb, to Gulf of Aden through ports of Tajura, Obock, Djibouti, Zeyla and Berbera. It had also access to Indian Ocean through port of

Djibouti.

The colonial powers in the Horn of Africa struggling for territorial annexation were Great Britain, France and Italy (which was the late comer). The Hewett agreement between Emperor Yohanes IV and the British Admiral William Hewett for Britain and Ras Alula, also acting as host, for Ethiopia was conducted in Adwa on 3 June 1884.

According to the agreement, Ethiopia was required to dispatch its forces to eastern Sudan to the place known as Kufit and to liberate the trapped Egyptian forces by the Mahadists of Sudan forces. On its part, the British army which was a backer of Egyptians while they attempted the invasion of Sudan and Ethiopia agreed to evict Egyptians from port of Massawa and return back the port to the legitimate owner to Ethiopia.

Based on the agreement the Ethiopian army led by Ras Alulla marched to Kufit eastern Sudan and defeated the Mahdist forces and liberated the Egyptian forces and escorted them to Massawa and ultimately left for their country. However, the British failed to keep their promise and gave the port of Massawa to Italians instead of returning it to the original owner.

In 1887, the Italian forces tried to invade the high land parts of the then Bahirenegash province which was part of the Ethiopian territory but Ras Alula rebuked them and 500 Italians were killed.

Later in 1891, the dervish forces invaded Metema, and in order to defend the country, emperor Yohannes left to the war front and lost his life. Taking the power succession gap as a good opportunity to realize their colonial ambition, Italians invaded the Ethiopian plateau and created Eritrea and until Ethiopia is federated with Eritrea in 1955 it had been land locked.

In 1991, again when Eritrea was separated from Ethiopia, our country again became land locked. The creation of Northern Somali by British forces in 1883 and Southern Somalia in 1889 also bared Ethiopia from access to ports such as Zeyla, Berbera and Mogadishu.

Now, time is changed and all the neighboring countries are attained sovereign status but they live as neighboring countries. They have cultural, religious and ethnic ties with Ethiopia. People move from one country to the other neighboring countries without visa.

They have also developed economic relations through trade. Their trade relations are manifested by supplying of energy and basic commodities. They have also created political bond through regional organization such as IGAD. Ethiopia also deployed its

forces for peace keeping mission in Somalia and Sudan and paid sacrifice for ensuring stability of these countries. The neighboring countries such as Eritrea and Somalia have thousands of kilometers of sea territories which Ethiopia is only 60 kilometer away from the Red Sea but did not get access to the sea yet.

Therefore, cognizant of the established good relation, demanding sea outlet is based on the win-win approach is legitimate to Ethiopia. Recently, Melaku Alebel, Minister of Industry said that Ethiopia's request for access to the sea is based on a win-win approach and mutual economic benefit is essential.

In an exclusive interview with the local media, the Minister noted that the economic perspective should weigh much more than its political perspective in Ethiopia's legitimate demand for access to the sea. The neighboring countries with access to sea should consider the country's request as economic benefit, not a threat and get ready for discussion.

Ethiopia will of course benefit from access to the sea to further accelerate its economic growth; but this will not only develop Ethiopia. Certainly, the per capita income of the other countries will also increase as a result, the Minister stated.

"The direction set is on win-win basis and in ways that ensure mutual economic benefit of all the countries. This option should (therefore) be taken as a priority by the countries; and I don't think they should see it as a threat."

Noting that access to sea is important for Ethiopia not only for now but also for the future, Melaku said; "These countries can benefit more than Ethiopia by providing port access."

According to the Minister, Ethiopia's GDP has been doubling within a short time, and countries that provide port services (for Ethiopia) should consider it as a blessing because the countries can get economic benefits which they cannot achieve in other means.

He underscored that "The objective (of Ethiopia) is not war, it's not about politics. The objective is peace and sustainable economic development based on fair mutual benefit."

The Red Sea coastline has the potential to adequately accommodate ports for 40 countries, the Minister said, adding that the issue then should be ensuring mutual benefit through concession.

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

# Editorial

# Opinion

## Ethiopia's commendable stance to ensure peace in Sudan

Ethiopia has expressed its firm stance for resolution of the long overdue conflict in Sudan through peaceful means. It has also reaffirmed its belief that the peaceful solution for the problem must be brokered under the regional umbrella organization IGAD. This is mainly because durable solutions for conflict in the continent are more likely to come as a result of African solutions for African problems.

Ethiopia walks the talk based on its own experience of resolving the deadly conflict in its northern province through peaceful means under the mediator role of AU. The conflict that raged for two years had devoured thousands of lives, huge sums of property and caused traumatic experiences on residents before the two sides came to agree that peaceful dialogue is the best and effective way to settle differences.

It is one of the many instances of conflicts that were clinched through peaceful dialogue after they claimed lives and damaged properties. Therefore, conflicting parties should not wait until they come to a standoff before they decide to resort to peaceful means to address their differences.

They should give due value for peace and be sincere enough to seek peaceful means as the best and only solution to address conflict.

If at all conflicting parties have to try before coming to the round table, they should also notice that the people of Sudan have already suffered more than what it takes to say 'enough is enough and now let's try dialogue'

Indeed, it's undeniable that both sides do not want to see the suffering of the people. Hence, this is the right time to make the final decision to sit and discuss. While doing this they should keep in mind that they don't have to wind up their dialogue without agreeing to work together for the good of their people and to do all these through peaceful means. As one of the famous sayings goes "If there is a will there's a way"

Concerning the issue of a reliable mediator, the two sides should revamp their confidence in the regional bloc, Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). First and foremost, they have to take into account that IGAD is the regional umbrella organization in which their country Sudan is a vibrant member. Sudan has also played a big role for decades in seeking peace and development among member states under the framework of IGAD. Furthermore, IGAD is also playing active role in ensuring peace and stability in the region including Sudan.

In addition to IGADs commitment and experience to broker lasting peace undergoing all the possible challenges, ups and downs, it is also important to note that member states of the bloc, among others have also expressed their readiness to provide any support to the efforts geared towards bringing peace in the country. This is a good opportunity that can add momentum to the peace process. In this regard Ethiopia has expressed its keen interest to assist the efforts of peace brokering under IGAD.

The leaders of the two sides should also consider the need to shorten the suffering of their peoples and engage in peaceful dialogue now that all the necessary steps are at hand.

## Africa's top six priorities at COP 28

BY STAFF REPORTER

Africa and the wider developing nations community will be asking for more "adequate and predictable finance" at the ongoing COP28 in Dubai.

According to the Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change (AGN), Ephraim Mwepeya Shitima, the continent's six main priorities at the negotiations will revolve around Climate finance, Global stock take, Strengthening adaptation actions, Operationalization of the Loss and Damage fund, Just energy transition and Africa's quest to be granted the special needs and circumstances status.

These priorities, which crystallized into the African Common Position on Climate Change for COP28, were fine-tuned and endorsed after a flurry of continent-wide consultative meetings over the past 10-months, including the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN), Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa and the Africa Climate Summit.

Studies by the Addis Ababa-based African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) indicate that "the increasing frequency and severity of climate change impacts resulting in disproportionate effects on African economies and societies, with countries estimated to be losing on average 2- 5% of GDP and many countries diverting up to 9% of their budgets into unplanned expenditures on responses to extreme weather events."

James Murombedzi who heads the ACPC, says that, even as Africa demands for enhanced and predictable climate financing at the COP28, it will need to explore other innovative financing mechanisms including private sector investments, such as debt-for-nature and debt-for-climate swaps to bridge the financial gap and fast track the implementation of initiatives like the Great Green and Blue Walls, promoting climate action, sustainability and job creation.

"We acknowledge the challenges posed by climate change in the continent, but at the same time we are proactive in finding effective climate smart pathways and sustainable solutions," says Mr. Murombedzi.

At the African Climate Summit, African leaders expressed their frustrations with the industrialized countries' inability to honor their commitments on providing adequate climate finance.

With support from the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS), G77+China, newly-industrialized economies of the BASIC group (Brazil, South Africa, India and China), as well as the Like-Minded Group of Developing Countries' and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Africa alongside other global South economic blocs will be pushing for the overhaul of the global financial architecture and multi-lateral development banks so as to "deliver meaningful climate and development financing" including the operationalization of the loss and damage financing facility at the COP28.

And there are innovative financing options under development.

According to the UN Economic Commission for Africa's Deputy Executive Secretary Antonio Pedro, African countries could mobilize up to US\$82 billion annually by participating in well-functioning carbon markets. Besides, more income could be generated from value chains around non-renewable resources such as critical minerals crucial for battery production.

"Our renewable and non-renewable resources must be harnessed to secure the continent's human, energy, food, mineral, environmental and climate security, meeting basic needs and fostering sustainable structural transformation," Mr. Pedro said.

At the just-concluded fourth Transitional Committee meeting on the scale of the Loss and Damage Fund, Amb. Adao Barbosa, the Special Envoy on climate for Timor-Leste, said at least \$100

billion a year streaming from industrialized nations to all developing countries is required to address the losses and damages associated to climate.

Just like the islander's bloc and the African Group of Negotiators, the ministerial declaration by the 46-member Least Developing Countries Group indicates that the bloc will be championing for the full operationalization of the loss and damage fund as an "operating entity to the Financial Mechanism of the Convention serving the Paris Agreement and that the Fund assists the vulnerable developing countries to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change."

Of the 46-members that make up the LDC Group, 33 member countries are in Africa.

The LDC Group also reiterated their call for an "ambitious outcome of the first global stock take at COP28 that captures the progress towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement."

On finance, the LDC Group will be asking for the industrialized nations to "scale up climate finance to make up for the shortfall caused by failure to deliver \$100bn per year by 2020 and through 2025."

The Africa Group, on the other hand, is asking the rich nations to provide between \$200-400 billion a year by 2030 for loss and damage and \$400 billion a year for adapting to climate change. This is, in addition to funding efforts geared towards emissions reduction.

Other than the doubling of adaptation finance the AGN's will be seeking for the finalization of the New Quantified Goal on Climate Finance at COP 28.

According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), climate change affects developing nations disproportionately strengthening the quest for enhanced climate financing.

Estimates by the UN showcase that both developing and emerging economies will need up to \$2 trillion annually by 2030 to cope with climate change.

Alongside increased climate finance flows, loss and damage financing concerns for the developing countries is the Strengthening of Adaptation Action.

"As far as we are concerned, adaptation remains the priority for Africa because for us, it's a matter of life and death. We cannot wait to bring down emissions, which is not even happening quickly enough, before helping those suffering from the adverse impacts of climate change," said Mithika Mwenda who heads the umbrella Pan Africa Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) said.

With over 600 million people in Africa lacking electricity, the quest for affordable clean energy sources including increased investments, will be the hallmark of African negotiators focus when haggling over just energy transition.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), expensive capital to invest in green growth alternatives has seen less than 2% of global investments in clean energy flow into Africa. Findings by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) indicate that to drive green growth on the continent, investment needs of at least \$2 trillion by 2050 will be needed in the power sector alone.

According to Hanan Morsy, the chief economist at ECA, the continent has abundant renewable energy resources and accounts for 40% of global solar irradiation.

In addition, the region is endowed with potential for 20,000MW from geothermal power, 30,000MW from hydropower and 110,000MW from wind power.

"The continent's just energy transition cannot be identical to the rest of the world and requires pragmatic solutions. The transition must be just, inclusive and equitable," said Ms. Morsy.

Source: UNECA



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### Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22  
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62  
email- epa@press.et

### Advertisement and Dist.

Department  
email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com  
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15  
Telegram :- 0976084707 - press

### Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew

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

### Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama

Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

### Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu  
Elizabeth Mengistu  
Zekarias Woldemariam  
Desta Geberehiwot  
Daniel Beyene

### Website: www.press.et

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

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# Business & Economy

## Efforts to increase productivity through capacity building in partnership

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

The development of industrial parks is one of the activities that have been given attention to contribute to the realization of structural economic transformation. Industrial parks have three main basic missions. Their missions are to attract foreign direct investment, expand job creation and carry out technology transfer.

The parks will make a great contribution to the national economic development by creating jobs for the community living in the areas where they will be built and creating an environmentally friendly working atmosphere. Among the things that make industrial parks preferable are the fact that they provide many services in one place, build appropriate infrastructure and connect them with other manufacturers.

From this point of view, efforts have been made to encourage large international companies to open their factories in Ethiopia by establishing many industrial parks as well as providing manpower and electricity supply with reasonable payment, tax-free importation of machinery, credit provision, one-center service and infrastructure construction.

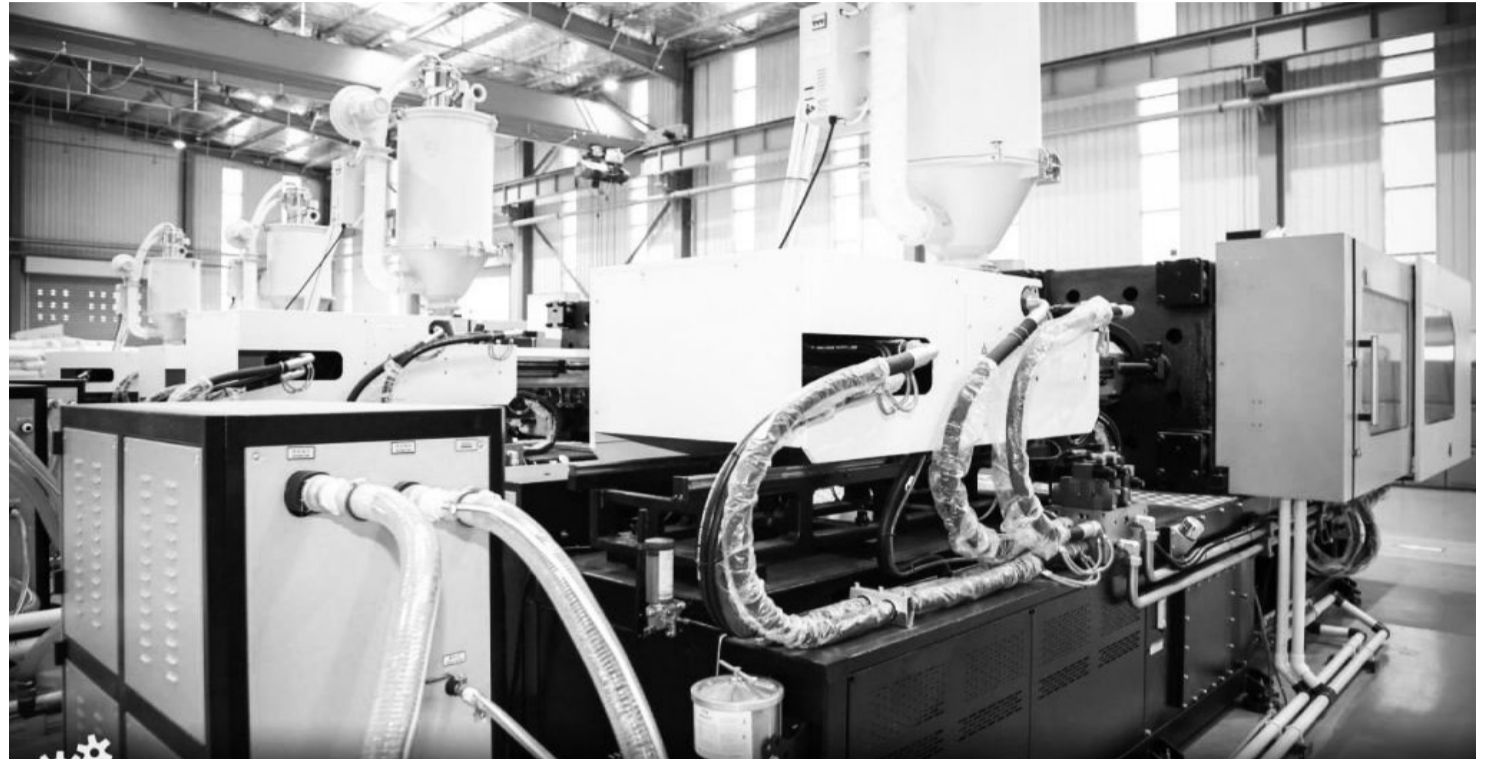
Currently, there are 13 industrial parks built by the government all over the country, and they are contributing significantly to the growth of the national economy through job creation, foreign direct investment attraction and technology transfer. Since the parks have better infrastructure provision and service delivery, the number of companies operating in these industrial parks is growing by combining their resources in joint ventures.

EZM Trade and Investment, a local company, has 27 years of experience in producing plastic pipes in a joint venture with China's Foshan Rifeng Enterprise Limited Company. A factory that enables the production of plastic pipes in the country has recently started operations in the Adama Industrial Park. The partnership of "EZM" and "Refo" is said to enable the two companies to manufacture "Refo" products locally and supply them to the Ethiopian and international markets.

The factory, which was built on a three thousand square meter land in the industrial park, was built at a cost of 14.5 million Dollar. It is also said that the factory is working with a plan to substitute the imported plastic pipe product in the country and to supply it to the foreign market. The partnership between the companies will enable the production of modernly designed, high quality and environmentally friendly drinking water and sewage pipes.

The factory annually produces up to two million metric tons of Polypropylene Random Copolymer (PPR) pipes, one million nine hundred thousand PPR joints, one million metric tons of Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) drainage pipes, nine hundred thousand PVC joints and it has the capacity to manufacture three point five million meters PVC Conduit Pipes.

The CEO of "EZM" Trade and Investment Company, Esmelalem Zewdie Mergia, pointed out that the company started working in a short period of time. He said that he trained workers and installed machines



*EZM plastic factory*

within six months of renting a shed from the industrial park.

According to his explanation, the products of the factory are pipes used as a resource for construction work, and they will enable to achieve the goal of substituting the imported plastic pipe with domestic production. The factory can completely substitute imported plastic pipe with domestic production at its current capacity. The factory produces products worth 17 million Dollar a year, and plans to export 50 percent of the products.

The CEO said that the factory produces plastic pipes that meet international quality standards. Adding he said that the products produced in the country are the same as the products produced in China and offered to the foreign market and has the same quality assurance. Esmelalem also explained that the company's move to Adama Industrial Park has brought many benefits.

"The factory operates 24 hours a day in three shifts and has created permanent employment for 200 people. It has provided more job opportunities for 400 citizens through business linkages and other options. The factory is expected to create more job opportunities as its production capacity increases. The company has the potential to become a reliable and preferred plastic pipes and fittings manufacturing company in Africa.

"Refo" International Manager Jason Chan, on his part, mentioned that the company has many years of experience in producing plastic pipes and is expanding its operations in many countries around the world. He said Ethiopia is the company's second destination in Africa after South Africa. He pointed out that the country is one of the preferred investment destination countries and is the company's choice. The company will produce and market high-quality products in partnership with "EZM".

Gulilat Abebe, Manager of Adama Industrial Park, said that the factory installed machines and trained workers in a short period of time. He added that the products of the factory are very important resources for the sector as Ethiopia's construction sector is growing rapidly.

Gulilat also said that in the past four years, more than 50 million Dollar has been earned from products produced in the park and offered to the foreign market. "Income from the products offered to the foreign market can be combined with the income from the products offered to the domestic market, and it can be seen that the industrial park is generating significant economic benefits," the manager said.

As he said, the Park has created job opportunities for more than eight thousand citizens. There are now 13 manufacturers in the park; when all these start production, the income from foreign currency and domestic transactions and the job opportunities will increase.

The general manager said that apart from the production, job creation and technology transfer activities that manufacturing companies in the park regularly perform, they are also performing various activities in fulfilling their social responsibilities. "The companies have the necessary understanding that they should pay attention to fulfill their social responsibilities," Gulilat said, and in order to benefit the local community, the investors have renovated schools and provided educational materials for students.

Aklilu Tadese, CEO of the Industrial Parks Development Corporation, said, "The joint venture between EZM and REFO is an indication that the business model in which foreign and domestic companies work in joint-venture is showing growth." He also stated that the increasing interest of local companies to enter the industrial parks and engage in production indicates that the companies' production capacity has increased and their ability to be competitive with international organizations is achieving results.

He said that in addition to the contribution of the companies that enter the industrial parks and create employment opportunities for many citizens, their role in realizing the transfer of technology and knowledge will be greater. As to him, companies that enter and develop industrial parks will ensure that there is technology transfer and that production activities are supported by

technology, while maintaining the benefit of creating employment opportunities for citizens. Thus, they help production operations to be efficient and effective.

According to the CEO, in the last four years, more than 1.1 billion Dollar was earned from the products produced by the industrial parks and exported to foreign countries. Through import substitute products, 550 million Dollar was saved. From the industrial parks built in different parts of the country, textile, agricultural, plastic and other products are being offered to the foreign market.

In addition to this, the CEO said, "In order to augment the investment sector, high-quality and internationally competitive services are being provided in the industrial parks", and adding that the corporation will provide prudent monitoring and support for local and foreign companies to enter and produce in the industrial parks. He called upon investors to enter the industrial parks that have many advantages and opportunities and engage in investment activities.

In order to achieve the structural economic transformation that Ethiopia is making towards industrial economy by using its potential in industry and increasing the income from this sector, it is necessary to amplify and improve the manufacturing sector many times over the current performance. The growth of the manufacturing sector can be improved along with the expansion of investment.

Industrial parks create favorable conditions for the expansion of investment by implementing one stop service center. Therefore, it is necessary to achieve the structural economic transformation by solving the problems faced by the industrial parks and improving their performance.

It is necessary to prepare and effectively implement post-war investment stimulation strategies that can guarantee the revival of the investment sector so that the industrial parks that were in the war zone can return to their production activities at their full capacity. In this effort, it should not be forgotten to give special support to local investors and local organizations working in partnership with foreign companies.

# Art & Culture

## Restitution of Africa's cultural bounties and art market's criminal networks

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

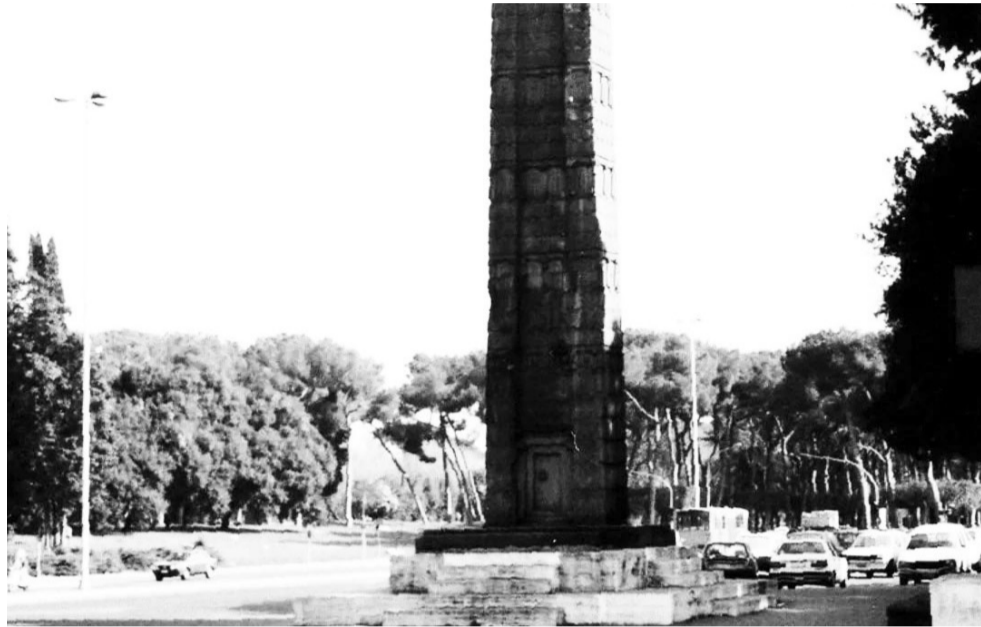
To the superficial observer or the uninitiated art lover, ancient artifacts may be good for the eyes only. However, aesthetic appreciation of arts and artifacts is one thing, while their historic and cultural value quite another thing. If you stand before the famous Leonardo Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" painting, you may wonder what the artist was trying to convey to the audience through the young woman's enigmatic smile and enjoy the search for meaning. Or let us take an example closer to home.

A European art lover or dealer may see only the facial features of the men and women depicted in wooden or metal masks without, however, trying to know where, how and by whom the masks were made and what purpose they served in the past or serve now. The superficial meaning and deeper understanding of art are worlds apart. An artifact has meaning beyond its mere surface appearance and conveys enigmatic meanings like Mona Lisa's smile.

Art work is a physical object that may have an aesthetic and or conceptual value. Art has also a deeper meaning, including the production, expression or realm, according to aesthetic principles of what is beautiful, appealing, or of more than ordinary significance. The modern criminal art dealers for instance, see only the superficial aspect of African artifacts and sell them to the equally ignorant second or third dealer until they land in the hands of people who see in the artifacts deeper meanings or utilitarian functions. The second meaning of art includes, "the class of objects subject to aesthetic criteria works of art collectively, as paintings, sculpture or drawings." Criminal art dealers must have this meaning in mind when they engage in illegal transactions.

The significance of historical and artistic objects therefore varies with who is in their possession. To the art keeper in the Pompidou Centre, the main job maybe to safeguard African objects of art as old prizes from the colonial era that need to be kept as objects of appreciation and sometimes wonder or amusement so that tourists may see them as visual mementos from their Paris days. But to Africans living thousands of kilometers from the Paris gallery, they represent their identity as people of a unique geographic and social milieu, charged with symbolism meaning and dimensions that include political ones. The said artifacts landed in the Pompidou Centre because they were, sorry to say it, stolen from African colonies by dehumanizing and alienating African identity and philosophy and putting them as objects of exhibition to be seen by non-African people who often laugh at the sight of the objects rather than appreciate or explore their symbolisms or meanings to the original creators of the objects.

In the first place, this kind of alienation is a criminal act like abducting someone's baby by force and selling it to foreigners in a distant land. The second crime may be



the complicity in the transfer and sale of the art objects in the clandestine market by depriving the true owners of the opportunity to sharing the in comes from such a transaction. So, African artifacts are often stolen twice and sold several times while the genuine owners are unaware of such actions.

The safe return of Africa's artistic and cultural bounties is still a hotly debated issue whenever symposiums, workshops or exhibitions are staged inside or outside of Africa. This is also one of the open wounds of the African "collective psyche" that is still festering in European metropolises since the end of colonialism. The barons of the clandestine art and culture markets and their accomplices sitting in comfortable offices in Paris, Brussels, Berlin or Rome are simply ignoring the plights of hundreds of millions of Africans.

It is as if African heritages do not matter at all or have no owners or claimants and thus can be sold or bought like any commodity in the market. Worse still, the lucrative nature of the deals in stolen artifacts makes it almost impossible to trace back and arrest the guilty parties at every step along the road. The criminal networks of the global art market are not only deaf and dumb but also invisible and the networks are also very complex. This is because the stakes are very high and the actors are well organized, like the Mafiosi.

Within the labyrinthine world of the criminal networks, there is an uninterrupted flow of money and power while Africa is bleeding white. Meanwhile, Africa is losing its historical and cultural gems that could otherwise be used as inspiration for creativity and as sources of pride and symbol of mental emancipation. During colonialism, Europeans sold Africans as slaves while they are now stealing and selling their heritages that are more expensive than the slaves of the past.

Meanwhile the black market in African arts objects or artifacts is not small time business. The objects that make the rounds of the internet in the online art market are not only numerous. They are also unseen by

the public so far, because once they change hands these objects tend to disappear together with their aesthetic and market values. They change hands in the dark tunnels of the global art market that have no names but only signs or numbers.

According to the latest information, there are an estimated 70000 African objects at the Museum of Quai Branly in France, 69 000 at the British Museum, 37 000 at the Welt Museum in Austria, and 75 000 objects at the future Humboldt forum in German, as well as 180 000 at the Royal Museum in Belgium. Looking at these impressive figures, one has the impression that the colonial powers stolen and taken away African slaves rather than inanimate objects. According to these figures, more than 90% of Africa's cultural heritage is believed to be located in Europe.

That is why the African art market is huge by any comparison. While the size of the African art business is estimated to reach something like 1.8 billion USD, the black market must be tenfold bigger than this one. How many criminal dealers are involved and how they built their empire is something that can baffle the mind and anger those who see in the African artifacts, the alienation of the entire African continent.

Some of Africa's artifacts and cultural heritages have also global significance and the most famous African artifact is known as Tomb of Tutankhamun, dating back some 3300 years to Egypt's New Kingdom. The tomb of King tut was discovered in 1922 by a team of archeologists led by Howard Carter, a British Egyptologist. It is quite amazing to note that Europeans are not only engaged in the original alienation of African artifacts but also in the discovery and now in the illegal transactions of the same African heritages.

Discussions regarding the negative impacts of European colonialism are often limited to the conquest of territory and the exploitation of rare minerals or the deportation of slaves. The illegal art market does all this plus the alienation of the mental and imaginative products of Africans that took place at a time when Europeans were living in caves.

How to reclaim the lost African art objects with historic significance is something that has always captured the imaginations of Africans who see in these objects the theft of the products of African imagination, African identities and African legitimate properties that were taken away from them through sheer brutality and deception. There are several campaigns waged in many parts of the world and mainly in Europe to reclaim Africa's lost treasures. They call the process or the efforts to reclaim these objects, "the repatriation of African lost artifacts".

Restitution or repatriation of artifacts is generally defined as, "the return of the cultural property, often referring to ancient or looted art, to their country of origin or former owners or their heirs. In the American Foreign Policy magazine published in May 2022, and entitled "Africa's Struggle for its Art: A Debate Frozen in Time", it is stated that intellectuals.

After African countries achieved independence in the 1960s, efforts have been made by African institutions as well as by prominent academics and intellectuals to secure the safe return of the tens of thousands of ancient artifacts that have been taken to Europe during the colonial era. Although some positive results have been achieved, their efforts have not still produced the desired impacts largely because of the resistance of authorities in many European countries. "Most recently, Nigeria and Germany signed a deal for the return of hundreds of artifacts known as the Benin bronzes."

Although Ethiopia largely avoided the colonial loot of precious objects, it has been able to secure the return of some of the treasures taken to Europe during the 19th and 20th centuries when the British and Italians set foot in this part of Africa for one reason or another, as well as historical pieces taken during the British expedition back in 1868 have been returned to the country thanks to the spirit of bilateral cooperation for the return of the artifacts.

More recently, pieces from the obelisk of Axum which was taken to Rome by the Italian fascist authorities was returned to its original site in northern Ethiopia. Italy had agreed to return the Axum stele in an agreement it signed back in 1947. The monument to the Lion of Judah was returned in 1967 and most recently another stele from Axum was returned on 22 April 2005 and the final piece was returned on 25 April 2005.

The complete return of African historical treasures has proved very slow and difficult to achieve because of an estimated half a million historical and cultural pieces are still languishing in European museums as they are being exposed to continued thefts and illegal trade. Whatever the challenges, Africa will certainly continue to reclaim its lost treasures. The rightful owners of these treasures are bound to continue the struggle as part of Africa's efforts to reclaim its spiritual and material identities without which its history remains incomplete.

# Indepth

## COP28: Deal to 'Transition Away' from fossil fuels agreed

It was an extraordinary COP Summit in a year characterized by record-breaking temperatures combined with El Niño, producing a climatic carnage in Africa—deaths from fatal floods in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, and Libya, where floods wiped out a quarter of a city.

Deadly cyclones in Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe; a severe drought in Kenya, Niger, Somalia, Ethiopia, Mauritania, and Djibouti; and a months-long winter heat wave in southern African countries—the need for COP28 to deliver the highest ambition on all items.

In the end, a deal that will secure the transition away from fossil fuels was accepted.

The United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres, welcomed the deal.

“To those who opposed a clear reference to a phase-out of fossil fuels in the COP28 text, I want to say that a fossil fuel phase-out is inevitable, whether they like it or not. Let’s hope it doesn’t come too late.”

COP28 president Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber said “Let me sound a word of caution. Any agreement is only as good as its implementation. We are what we do, not what we say. We must turn this agreement into tangible action. If we unite, we can have a profound effect on all of our futures. Inclusivity kept us going in the difficult days. Everyone has been heard, from Indigenous peoples or youth to global south.”

The final stretch of COP28 was dedicated to the most contentious item: fossil fuel, to phase out or cut back. More than 100 countries have pledged to phase out fossil fuels that contribute to global warming.

Fossil fuels—coal, oil, and gas—account for over 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions and nearly 90% of all carbon dioxide emissions, pushing Africa’s poor and vulnerable to the brink of survival. The Paris Agreement’s global goal of keeping global warming to no more than 1.5°C served as the COP28’s compass. To cut greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible by 2050, emissions must decrease by 45% by 2030 and reach net zero.

“While this is the first time in the history of COPs that a goal to reduce fossil fuels formed part of the final deal, it is not ambitious enough and will not get us to net zero. We will need a bigger global adaptation fund and a larger Loss and Damage Fund,” Amos Kaggwa, a Ugandan-based climate activist, told IPS.

Kaggwa says the planet could reach global average temperatures of up to 3°C, “and there will be even more severe losses and damages from climate-related disasters. Africa’s climate-adaptive capacities will also be seriously compromised. Today, high-polluting rich countries are reluctant to pay for loss and damage and to provide sufficient funds for the least polluting poor



COP28 president Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber during the final plenary. Credit: COP28 / Christopher Pike

countries to adapt to climate change.”

Thus far, 130 countries have agreed to triple renewable energy capacity and double energy efficiency by 2030. A total of 2,456 fossil fuel industry lobbyists participated at COP28, up from 636 last year, according to the Big Polluters Out coalition.

Africa emits an estimated 3.8% of global greenhouse gas emissions, but only two percent of the proportion of renewable energy investment went to the continent in 2023.

Mary Robinson, Chair of The Elders and former President of Ireland, commented:

“The Cop28 agreement, while signaling the need to bring about the end of the fossil fuel era, falls short by failing to commit to a full fossil fuel phase out. If 1.5C is our ‘North Star’, and science is our compass, we must swiftly phase out all fossil fuels to chart a course towards a liveable future. World leaders must continue to urgently pull together and find ways forward to tackle this existential threat. Every day of delay condemns millions to an uninhabitable world.”

Bavon Christopher, Action Aid Tanzania Country Director, spoke of the landmark delivery of the Loss and Damage Fund at COP28: “On the first day at COP28, we were very pleased with the pledges and thought the money would keep coming. We have USD 700 of the USD 400 billion per year needed to pay for losses and damages. The pledges are far from enough—not even enough for one African country. For instance, a few days ago, floods and landslides killed 60 people in Tanzania,

injured more than 100, and destroyed at least 100 homes, not to mention livelihoods.”

Experts such as Kaggwa say the COP28 Global Goal on Adaptation did not build on the previous goal, stressing that it is weak and unlikely to deliver adaptive capacities and resilience and to reduce vulnerability to climate change in developing countries battered by climate-induced disasters.

“The Global Goal on Adaptation’s weakness is the glaring lack of mention of existing finance gaps. Current financing for adaptation does not match the needs on the ground. Even if we double the adaptation financing outlined in COP26, the needs on the ground will still be five to 10 times greater than the COP28 adaptation fund package. That is how wide the adaptation financing gap is,” he emphasizes.

Christopher wades into a conversation that has dominated climate talks among developing nations—climate financing and debt: “An estimated 85% of countries in the global South are in debt distress and are unlikely to spend funds on climate solutions due to competing needs. To repay the debts, they are likely to invest in extracting fossil fuels, further exacerbating the climate crisis. Africa should be given grants, not loans or debt swaps. On loss and damage, we expect no bureaucracy, as is often the case with multilateral financial institutions; funds for climate damages should flow to affected countries smoothly and with speed.”

Fadhel Kaboub, a Tunisian economist based in Nairobi and a senior advisor with Power Shift Africa and also the President of the Global Institute for Sustainable Prosperity,

says “climate finance requires a minimum of USD 2.4 trillion of transformative grant-based investment and transfer of technology for climate adaptation and mitigation by 2030. We are nowhere near that target at the end of COP28. The historical polluters of the Global North owe a climate debt to the nations of the Global South, who are most affected by climate change. The Global North is in default and is refusing to pay its debt.”

Kaboub, also an Associate Professor of Economics at Denison University, says, “If you owe me USD 100, you are supposed to pay me. Instead, you give me a USD 10 loan with conditionalities to control how I use my money. You give me another USD 10 in exchange for having control over my forests and carbon markets. You invest another USD 10 in green electricity that I must export to you on favorable terms. You outsource another USD 10 worth of low-value-added manufacturing to produce cheap consumer goods for you. None of this should count as climate finance. It is a climate debt default green washed with neocolonial debt traps.”

Azerbaijan, a nation that receives 60% of its government budget from oil and gas and 90% of its export revenue, will host the following COP Summit. Oil and gas also supply 98 percent of Azerbaijan’s primary energy and at least 90 percent of the country’s electricity and are largely responsible for improved living standards over the last three decades. It will be the third time in a row that an oil and gas producer will be hosting a COP Summit.

(SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE)



# Law & Politics

## Relying on a single port: Tantamount to putting all eggs in one basket

BY EYUEL KIFLU

Of the 44 landlocked countries in the world, Ethiopia is the most populous and developing country. According to the IMF's recent report, Ethiopia's economy is expected to achieve a 6.1% real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate by the end of 2023, with a 6.2% growth rate predicted for 2024. The economic growth and its population have recently greatly increased the question of searching for alternative ports by different means of cooperation.

The agenda became a media sensation soon after the agenda was echoed by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed as he briefed lawmakers. It is known that being a landlocked country has a lot of disadvantages; its impact on the socioeconomic and political aspects of the country is enormous. However, Ethiopia has overcome these hurdles and continued to forge ahead with its economic growth and remain an anchor state in regional politics. Moreover, the country is the pride of Africa for its notable service provider companies, such as Ethiopian Airlines.

So, to exploit the country's full capacity to change its citizens' lives as well as those of the region, the nation necessarily needs direct sea access. Because of the country's unstoppable economic demands, the need for more alternative port access is timely move. Relying only at a single port has a huge disadvantage and is nothing less than putting all your eggs in one basket and result in wide ranges of menaces. It seems like the current Ethiopian government understands the need for access to the sea for the country and its time to end depending on a single port, so it raises the notion.

For the last three decades, the country's use of around 90% of its imports and exports has been through Djibouti port, and the country's dependence on this single port and its potential risks are immense.

Jemal Mohammed (Ph.D.), an economist at the Policy Studies Institute, told *The Ethiopian Herald* of the potential risks and disadvantages of relying solely on a single port for a landlocked country. He commented that depending on a single port exposes the country to insecurity and makes it vulnerable to the demands of the port service provider beyond the high harbour expenses, which often hinder the development of landlocked countries.

According to him, the port service provider country may exercise control over the products entering and leaving the port, possibly increasing service fees and undermining negotiation power for the user country.

Ethiopia's dependence on the Djibouti port prevents competition, limiting options for the best prices and services. He emphasized the importance of seeking alternative ports and fostering competition to benefit Ethiopia.



**The issue should have the attention of every nation or entity... it might be an opportunity for Europe to turn from its sins in Ethiopia and other parts of Africa**

Jemal explained that any possible disruption or change in Djibouti's government or business environment could have severe consequences for Ethiopia. Damage to Ethiopia's assets or delays in securing a new port through negotiations with other countries could occur. He likened this reliance on a single port to putting all the eggs in one basket.

Ethiopia's geographical proximity could be an advantage for the country's access to the sea. He stressed the significance of finding alternative ports to alleviate the burden of transit taxes and harbour fees on Ethiopia. These fees comprise a significant portion of Djibouti's GDP, and if they increase, it would impact the former.

Jemal cautioned that without alternative ports, Ethiopia would be unable to deny any increases in harbour fees, potentially leading to inflation.

He commented on the use of Port Sudan to export agricultural products from the northern part of Ethiopia. While the Kenyan port could serve as an alternative

for southern Ethiopia, he emphasized the importance of finding the nearest port for each region's product destinations.

Jemal suggested that the use of the nearest port to Ethiopia, Aseb, would require negotiations with the Eritrean government to establish access and foster peace between the two nations. Additionally, diplomatic and political relationships with other countries would be crucial to mutually beneficial agreements and the utilization of their port services.

He highlighted the distance between Ethiopia's economic center, Addis Ababa, and the ports, emphasizing the need to establish economic centers in different regions to facilitate exports from the origin or nearby areas of production.

Also, he argued that Ethiopia's unfair loss of port access necessitates negotiations, cooperation, and unity among citizens and the government. High harbour expenses often hinder the development of landlocked countries, and Jemal called for concerted efforts to address this issue.

Jemal urged professionals, politicians, and economists to address the port issue, which has previously received limited attention, and actively seek national and international engagement.

Also, in his recent stay with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Alemayehu Erkihun (Ph.D.) Wollo University History and Heritage Management Lecturer stated that securing the right to access the sea should not be left to the government, adding that individuals, institutions, think tank groups and others have their own roles.

In order to achieve economic growth, the government is currently making a lot of effort to control the rising cost of living

and unemployment. Erkihun therefore recommended that the government revisit the aforementioned issues in light of the lack of a port and address the international community and nations, particularly those that have established military bases in the Red Sea.

One of the most important factors for economic growth is having access to the port; since it lowers living expenses, boosts employment, and makes export and import trade easier. The historian thought that having a port contributed to the nation's political stability.

According to Erkihun, Ethiopia has a historical foundation for regaining access to seaports. Since the formation of the states in the region, the country has played a significant role in controlling the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea. Ethiopia rented the ports to Europe, Asia, Latin America, and other nations during the Axum era, he said. He made reference to the country's historical right to sea access being challenged by European involvement in the colonization of the continent, adding that Ethiopia's sea access was ultimately cut off for nearly half a century.

Thus, for the sake of regional and national development as well as peace, the two academics advise that the nation secures sea access. The issue should have the attention of every nation or entity. Also, it might be an opportunity for Europe to turn from its sins in Ethiopia and other parts of Africa.

Even distant nations utilize the sea, but the nation itself is still cut off from it. The country's exclusion from the Red Sea Forum is unacceptable, and it is recalled that the Ethiopian government criticized the exclusion of the country from the forum.

# Women in Focus

## Roman Tewolde-Berhan: *An icon of altruism, unwavering determination*

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

She was raised in a vibrant household with over thirty family members, where they cherished the traditions of Ethiopia, sharing their blessings and savoring life's abundant offerings. Although her mother was a citizen of England, Roman was nurtured in a manner that upheld and honored Ethiopian culture and traditions.

Her mother embodied remarkable motherhood and leadership, guiding her children towards success, while her father, Dr. Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egzaabheer, hailed from a rural village named "Adi-Islam" near Adwa city in the Tigray region.

After obtaining his bachelor's degree from Addis Ababa University in 1963, he pursued further education, ultimately earning his master's and doctorate degrees from the University of Wales.

Dr. Tewolde held significant positions, including serving as the Dean of the Science Faculty at Addis Ababa University and as the president of Asmara University from 19783 to 1991.

Additionally, he contributed to his country's governance by serving as the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Culture in Addis Ababa and later as the Director General of the Environmental Protection Authority, where he made a lasting impact.

Dr. Tewolde and Sue Edwards, an English couple, met while teaching at Addis Ababa University, embodying a love that transcends race and color, cherishing their shared humanity and embracing tradition. Their daughter, Roman Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egzaabher, is a beacon of hope, known for her altruism and unwavering determination.

Sue Edwards, renowned for her tenure as a teacher at Addis Ababa University, extended her passion to charitable work, notably founding a charitable organization, which empowered farmers with sustainable natural fertilization techniques by improving production and productivity.

Roman fondly reminisces about her upbringing, characterized by love and equality, where household chores were mandatory for all children, fostering a harmonious environment devoid of differences.

Sue Edwards, having embraced Ethiopia and its traditions, embodies the essence of an Ethiopian mother, exemplified by her warm hospitality to her husband's family in the Ethiopian tradition.

Roman, deeply influenced by her mother's tireless nature, reflects on the nurturing environment they shared, where everyone, regardless of relation, grew up as equals within their family, under the care of their beloved nanny, Ata.



***Reflecting on my life philosophy, I firmly believe in perseverance as the cornerstone of success, viewing it as an ongoing journey of surmounting challenges. I encourage Ethiopian women to embrace diverse opportunities while fulfilling their essential role in nurturing and raising children. I emphasize the importance of women not remaining idle, asserting that it signifies a relinquishment of their rights***

Born in Addis Ababa fifty years ago, Roman's early education took place at Addis Ababa *Hizbawi Serawit* and *Meskaye Hizuunan* primary schools until the age of eleven.

Following her father's appointment as the president of Asmara University, Roman was able to move Asmara. However, due to the unrest in Asmara she returned back to Addis Ababa and pursues her education. She excelled in her studies and obtained her first degree in economics from Addis Ababa University before relocating to England, her mother's native country.

Growing up in an intellectually stimulating environment, Roman developed a strong passion for books and social interaction, which significantly contributed to her educational achievements and personal growth.

In England, she pursued a Master's in Business Administration and delved into editing to complement her love for writing and publishing. Additionally, she honed her professional skills through studies in secretarial science and various computer courses.

Following her education, Roman held administrative positions in England, gaining experience in case management and various administrative tasks. A decade ago, Roman returned to Ethiopia and assumed the role of a school administrator, also contributing as a senior official in charity organizations until the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, I revitalized neglected poetry books and delved into writing children's literature and composing English poems for publication. Additionally, I devoted three years to the publication

and distribution of works by other authors, aligning with my enduring passion for books and commitment to promoting high-quality works by young writers.

Moreover, I am currently employed at the Institute for Women's Safety and Peace, a non-governmental organization founded by prominent ambassadors, dedicated to advocating and ensuring peace and security for women.

Reflecting on my life philosophy, I firmly believe in perseverance as the cornerstone of success, viewing it as an ongoing journey of surmounting challenges. I encourage Ethiopian women to embrace diverse opportunities while fulfilling their essential role in nurturing and raising children. I emphasize the importance of women not remaining idle, asserting that it signifies a relinquishment of their rights.

Furthermore, I challenge the notion of women's inherent inferiority over men, advocating for collaboration and mutual understanding instead of engaging in a competition for equality. I emphasize the significance of recognizing and respecting individual differences, fostering a harmonious coexistence.

In her assessment of societal norms, Roman expresses surprise at the idea that men not participating in kitchen activities is as astonishing as suggesting that women are incapable of driving. She advocates for acknowledging the fundamental equality of all individuals based on their shared humanity as a means to avoid unnecessary arguments.

Furthermore, she articulates her commitment to dedicating the rest of her life to activities that foster personal and collective success. Roman emphasizes the importance of Ethiopian women enhancing their financial independence, expanding their knowledge, and strengthening their self-confidence, not only for their own benefit but also for the well-being of their children, families, and the wider community.

As an Ethiopian woman, Roman shares that during her time in England, her mother's native country, she never felt like anything other than a native, dispelling the sense of being an immigrant. Reflecting on her experiences in England, she acknowledges feeling somewhat overlooked.

Roman also remarks on the pronounced conservatism of Ethiopian society, particularly addressing the challenges posed by the tightly-knit nature of Ethiopian culture for women. She contrasts this with the more equitable treatment of men and women in British society. Additionally, she emphasizes the need for societal support for young girls facing pregnancy and stresses the absence of institutional mechanisms to address their mistakes, calling for collective action to tackle these issues.

# Society

## Real platform for togetherness

BY MENGESHA AMARE

It is really a fabulous trend to any onlooker to observe and divulge the opulence and depth of the Ethiopians culture, norms, and values, among others. Ethiopia has been annually marking Nations, Nationalities and People's Day with a view to consolidating people-to-people ties, cultural exchange, experience sharing thereby building stable and peaceful nation.

Taking the significance of celebrating the Day into account, *The Ethiopian Herald* approached Alemu Tizasu, a sociologist graduated from Addis Ababa University, to have professional insight about the significance of commemorating the Day.

He said, "Celebrating the Day is of paramount importance in cementing citizens together, developing fraternity and promoting amicable way among/between citizens. Yes, living together in peace is all about accepting differences and having the ability to listen to, recognize, respect and appreciate others ideologies, as well as living in a peaceful and united way."

As to Alemu, living together with others in Peace is significantly useful in promoting peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity. The Day also aims at upholding the desire to live and act together, united in differences and diversity so as to build a sustainable world of peace, solidarity and harmony.

As to Alemu, the Day invites citizens to further promote reconciliation to help ensure peace and sustainable development, and one of the purposes of celebrating the day is to achieve collaboration, regardless of race, sex, language or religion, by promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction.

The Day is also helping the nation to promote a culture of peace and non-violence that benefits all of humanity, including future generations.

He said that peace is not merely the absence of conflict, but also requires a positive, vibrant participatory process, in which dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are resolved in a spirit of mutual sympathetic and cooperation.

The Day also helps citizens recognize the need to eliminate all forms of discrimination and intolerance, including those based on sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, ethnic or social origin, he added.

According to Alemu, the Day is significantly useful in saving future generations from the scourge of war and making them the main actors for creating a stable nation.

"Ethiopia is the home to all citizens, i.e over 120 million people. If we cannot create a situation where we can flourish and do well together in the country, none of us will be able to live in a state of peace and security," he stated.

"The Day would be of instrumental in fostering the culture, history, heritage, value, wealth and common pride of all Ethiopians, and we all have to learn that we are all very



*Our diversity is manifestation our unity*

**The conviction Ethiopians made in every special event on the day every year has contributed to bring Ethiopian together and stand hand in hand for the resurgence of their country**

important to Ethiopia and our beauty will be bedecked with patriotism," he said.

He said all nations and nationalities together show the great and beautiful Ethiopia, just as the country, and the celebration of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Day plays an important role in further strengthening unity and brotherhood among nations and nationalities in the country.

It has also played a crucial role in promoting co-existence, solidarity and brotherhood among nations and nationalities, and it is very important to create common understanding among nations and nationalities as well as promote their cultures, traditions and values, he opined.

Noting the presence of challenges facing the country from inside and outside, he stressed that it is important to strengthen national unity and brotherhood among nations and nationalities to overcome all sorts of challenges. That is why the day is celebrated with various events that promote the values of equality and solidarity in due process of bolstering national unity.

He said, "Yes, the difference we have had is a beauty and source of potency, indeed! The celebration serves as a platform to honor the diversity and equality of over 80 ethnic groups of Ethiopia, and the day is marked by various cultural and musical performances by ethnic troupes, each displaying their respective unique cultural and traditional identities."

The Day reflects Ethiopia's commitment to recognizing and respecting the rights of all its nations, nationalities, and peoples under the framework of its federal democratic governance, he said.

He further noted that the celebration of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Day contributes to reinforcing the unity and harmony of Ethiopians while calling for the consolidation of multi-national federalism to accommodate the diversity among its people.

"Being a country with strong groundwork, Ethiopia should never fail to accomplish what it has started at a time. If Ethiopians try to use their diversity for a purpose, the unity of the country will be wonderfully built upon all our values," he added.

The celebration has also become an engine to boost tourism and investment in the host regions as all nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia gather to showcase their rich cultures. It is also a Day when the Constitution of the land was adopted and, the Constitution too belongs to the Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, he opined.

According to Alemu, the Day is also a demonstration of unity that embraces diversity, an expression of cultural religious, linguistic and ethnic multiplicity and where all Nations, Nationalities and Peoples bring the assets of their culture to one place. It is also an expression of freedom accommodating diversities between and among people to further strengthen unity in diversity, enhance national consensus, empower them and enlarge the awareness of people towards the constitutional system.

He called on various Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia to scale up their support for the growth and transformation of the country. The Day has brought equality

of language, religion, culture and history for all nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia. He noted that celebrating Nations, Nationalities and People's Day has played a great role in sharing experience, promoting culture and above all harmonizing unity in diversity.

The Day is celebrated annually to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution that enshrined the rights of nation, nationalities and peoples, which they have been deprived of by the previous regimes.

Many Ethiopians believe that the celebration of the Nations, Nationalities and People Day has been adding a significant value in enhancing the unity of the people to its summit. The conviction Ethiopians made in every special event on the day every year has contributed to bring Ethiopian together and stand hand in hand for the resurgence of their country.

The Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia have used the celebration as an opportunity to renew their commitment to strengthen the bond among them and work hard to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development in the country.

It is undeniable that Ethiopians have already identified poverty as their arch-foe, and unless all citizens work together to get rid of this arch enemy, their effort to create a strong nation will be compromised. The celebration of the day has also contributed a lot to effectively carry out the shared vision of citizens. Pulling their country out of the quagmire of poverty, enhance democracy, good governance and justice, and to make the country one of the middle income generating nations within the shortest time possible. It could also help strengthen and consolidate cultural tolerance among the people and initiate them to work together so as to ensure Ethiopia's renaissance and realize the efforts to weaken poverty.

He said, "The Day has also has become a symbol of peace, democracy, justice, tolerance, love and affection between and among Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia. Besides, it is a demonstration of unity that embraces diversity, an expression of cultural religious, linguistic and ethnic multiplicity and where all Nations, Nationalities and Peoples bring the assets of their culture to one place."

In sum, he concluded, "The purpose of celebrating the Day is beyond festivity. It is developing infra-structures, enhancing culture and tradition, strengthening citizens association and reinforcing tolerance amongst people, respecting the rights and responsibilities guaranteed by the Constitution and most importantly, strengthening the understanding, love and respect between and amongst all Ethiopians.

This fascinating and breath-taking day has exemplified the harmony of the Ethiopians at good and bad times entertaining unity in diversity. The Day is an actually remarkable and simply memorable merrymaking to give a clear message to everyone that the Ethiopians are as all the time united and strong.



## Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

### HU's AWERPAS longstanding and unyielding commitment gets recognition

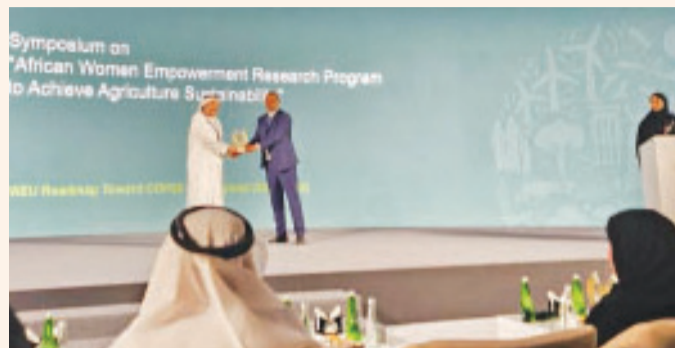
BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Haramaya University (HU) has been honored for its unwavering dedication to collaborating with the African Women Empowerment Research Program to Achieve Agriculture Sustainability (AWERPAS). The University was recognized in the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, also known as COP28, which was held from November 30 to December 12, 2023, at Expo City in Dubai.

In collaboration with the United Arab Emirates University, HU has been executing projects aimed at empowering women and guaranteeing agricultural sustainability. The projects are focused on climate change and the use of artificial intelligence in agricultural research.

Indeed, the AWERPAS is a comprehensive project intended to solve the challenges encountered by women in Africa's agricultural sectors. The projects aim to empower women via research, education, and advocacy to promote sustainable agriculture practices and improve livelihoods.

In addition, AWERPAS seeks to provide women with the tools, know-how, and resources they need to succeed as autonomous and successful agricultural entrepreneurs. This includes having access to financial aid, mentorship opportunities, and training programs. The program also works to address gender disparities in the agricultural sector by advocating for policies that promote gender equality and women's empowerment.



AWERPAS, through research and data collection, seeks to identify the specific needs and challenges faced by women in agriculture and develop targeted solutions to address these issues. This may include improving access to land, credit, and technology, as well as promoting sustainable farming practices that benefit both women and the environment.

Recognizing the significance, HU has been an important collaborator in AWERPAS. As Africa's foremost agricultural research institute, it is dedicated to assisting women in the agricultural sector through knowledge, resources, and networks.

After receiving recognition for HU's longstanding and unwavering commitment to partnership, HU president Dr. Jemal Yousuf praised the current collaboration's practical usefulness and emphasized his university's longstanding experiences and success records of efficient and loyal partnership implementation.

He also named other universities and development groups throughout the world with whom HU has networked and collaborated. HU, in particular, is actively committed to conducting research that

tackles the specific difficulties encountered by women in agriculture through AWERPAS.

HU researchers and students are gathering data, evaluating trends, and proposing creative solutions to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment in the agricultural sector. In addition to research, HU is committed to offering education and training opportunities for women in agriculture. The institution also provides specific programs, workshops, and capacity-building initiatives to provide women with the skills and information they need to flourish as agricultural entrepreneurs.

Mr. Mohammed Aman, Assistant Professor and Doctoral Candidate at the University of Greenwich, also delivered a concept paper titled "Agricultural Sustainability and Climate Actions: Experience from Ethiopia and the Role of Haramaya University" during the conference.

In his presentation, he highlighted, among other things, the positive effects of Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed's environmentally conscious leadership in general and his Green Legacy Initiative in particular

for combating climate change challenges and building a green and climate-resilient economy.

The recognition and symposium were attended by high-profile dignitaries. Prof. Ghaleb Ali AlBreiki, Acting Vice Chancellor, of United Arab Emirates University, and H.E. Sultan Al Shamsi, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for International Development Affairs, are among those who have been named.

In general, AWERPAS seeks to establish a more inclusive and equitable agricultural sector in Africa, where women contribute to long-term development. By empowering women in agriculture, the project aims to increase food security, alleviate poverty, and promote environmental sustainability across the continent. As a result, HU's full commitment to the aims of AWERPAS is critical in empowering women in agriculture, encouraging sustainable practices, and boosting the growth of Africa's agricultural sector.

