



The Ethiopian Herald

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Protecting planet battle for Ethiopia's prosperity

• Premier confers with various leaders in Dubai

BY BILAL DERSO

ADDIS ABABA- For Ethiopia, the battle to protect and heal the planet is the battle for growth and prosperity, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

Addressing the 28th edition of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (Cop 28) in Dubai yesterday, the Premier stated that Ethiopia has taken bold steps to reduce emission and build environmental resilience.

Ethiopia launched the Green Legacy Initiative, -the powerful

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Adugna Bekele

Ethiopia to legalize support for religious institutions' peace building efforts

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-A proclamation and directive that legalize the government's support to religious institutions peacebuilding role is being drafted, the Ministry of Peace (MoP) said, mentioning the involvement of religious and community leaders

MoP Strategic Affairs Chief Executive Adugna Bekele presented the ministry's quarterly performance

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Ethiopia earns over one bln USD in four months

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia has secured over one billion USD exporting various items during the past four months, Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI) announced.

MoTRI Communication CEO Belaynesh Regassa told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the nation has earned more than one billion USD exporting cereals, oilseeds, chat, livestock, forestry and forest products over the past four months.

Among the exported items, pulses and oilseeds contributed greatly to the performance and efforts are being made to achieve the results in other sectors, he stated.

Accordingly, MoTRI is working on supervising chat exporters to act up on market regulations to save revenue that the country loses.

MoTRI has established a new system to solve problems facing chat product and to

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News

Nation to mark 31st IDPD tomorrow

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Preparation has been finalized for the 31st International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) that is set to mark tomorrow in Assosa town of Benishangul-Gumuz State, the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) said.

The Ministry in concert with various stakeholders would mark this year's (IDPD) under the theme "United in Action to Rescue and Achieve the SDGs for, with and by Persons with Disabilities" through carrying out events that involve PWDs and enhance public awareness.

At a press briefing she held here Thursday, MoWSA Minister Ergogic Tesfaye (PhD) stated that the major objective of the celebration is creating public movement to give PWDs equal opportunities in social, economic and political arenas.

According to the minister, the need for aligning PWDs inclusive strategies with sustainable development goals is to understand and identify the type of disabilities they have including those who need especial support. The celebration is also aimed to respect PWDs and promote their democratic and human rights.

Apart from attitudinal change, allowing PWDs equal access and opportunities through providing a variety of disability-focused technology solutions and accommodating their special needs should be the responsibility of all stakeholders. Similarly, creating a comfortable working environment that ensures PWDs inclusive participation is something worth equal consideration, the minister elaborated.

"Mainstreaming the PWDs issue should not be left to a single governmental entity and every stakeholder is expected to partake in activities that could change the former's livelihoods and empower them. The stakeholder's involvement in raising the public's awareness about the PWDs' cause is also of great significance."

Ergogic further noted that her ministry is undertaking several activities to ensure the proper implementation of designed policies, legal frameworks and programs concerning the PWDs and enforcing the accountability of violators.

Moreover, the executive body should incorporate the PWDs in their major agendas and respect and enforce the latter's rights which are stipulated in various legal frameworks. A lot is also expected from the executive organ to ensure the PWD suniversally-acclaimed equal right and participation in the public sphere translate reform policies into actions and allow the PWDs to contribute to the overall development of the country.

Abayneh Gujo, Executive Director of Federation of Ethiopian National Associations of Persons with Disability (FENAPD) on his part mentioned that the day is celebrated to ensure holistic participation of PWDs through identifying their gaps and echoing one voice.

It was learned that PWDS communities, higher government officials and pertinent stakeholders would take part at the celebration. The IDPD to be marked for the 32nd times globally and 31st times nationally.

MoFA says Diplomats Association crucial to advance Nat'l interests

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) announced that it has established the Ethiopian Diplomats Association that could potentially serve their country accordingly.

As to MoFA's official page, the Ethiopian Diplomats Association that includes former and veteran ambassadors, diplomats, and currently serving professionals of the Ministry, who have been serving their country in various positions for a long time, was established last Wednesday.

At the occasion for forming the association, MoFA State Minister Ambassador Mesganu Arga expressed that establishing the association is of significantly useful in bringing together veteran diplomats and experts currently serving, who can industriously serve the national interest and respect the honor of their country.

The State Minister also said that the association will contribute a lot to the Foreign Service by researching, showing policy directions, and training young people



with a view to transferring knowledge and expertise.

"Veteran diplomats who attended the General Assembly of the association said that the formation of such professional association would allow the country to foster diplomatic skills and wisdom as well as strengthen social ties between professionals," the minister added.

He further stated that the establishment of the Ethiopian Diplomats Association will enable professional to immensely contribute in a very good manner in due course of protecting the national interests of the country.

The General Assembly of the Ethiopian Diplomats Association was concluded by electing leaders to administer the association, it was learnt.



Rural transition centers bridge agri potential with market: OIPDC

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

MEKI- The establishment of rural transition centers including Meki Rural Transition Center would play a unique role to integrate Ethiopia's agricultural potential with available markets, the Oromia Industrial Parks Development Commission (OIPDC) said.

A team of journalists paid a visit to Meki Rural Transition Center, which is an affiliate of the Bulbula Integrated Agro-Industrial Park (BulbulaIAIP) on Thursday. Both facilities have been run by OIPDC.

Speaking at the occasion, OIPDC CEO Sanait Mebre stated that the center is capable of modernizing agriculture and bringing products to the market while maintaining

their quality. The center builds a system that provides equal benefits to all parties involved and it is of great importance to proper utilization of Ethiopia's agricultural potential.

The center would also help with the transition of agricultural production to industry, particularly with regard to raising production and improving agricultural efficiency and the quality of products. Similarly, the facility would play a due role to increase the value of the farmer's produce in the industry, and facilitate import substitution and foreign exchange earnings, she stated.

Center's CEO Mengistu Tadesse said for his part that the facility is ready to implement integrated initiatives for the

rural communities and help them to store, sort and grade industrial inputs. It also promotes inclusive rural development and serves as backward linkage to the IAIP in terms of raw material sourcing and supplying.

During the occasion, the Oromia Industrial Park and Oromia Tourism Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to bring together the investment and tourism sectors.

According to Oromia Tourism Commissioner Lelise Dhuga, agriculture is one sector of tourism that her commission is working to promote and develop. "It is possible to attract a large number of tourists through effective promotion of diverse culinary traditions," she remarked.

News

Ministry seeks joint efforts towards HIV elimination

• Commemorates 2023 World AIDS Day

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – The Ministry of Health (MoH) has called for stakeholders' joint efforts towards HIV elimination by 2030.

This was disclosed here yesterday while commemorating the 2023 World AIDS Day under the theme "Let Communities Lead" in the presence of global institutions representatives, Ambassadors, bureau heads among others were in attendance.

Speaking at the occasion, MoH Minister LiaTadesse (MD) said that Ethiopia has been exerting its significant efforts towards reducing mortality rate of the virus thereby registering a significant progress in this regard.

She further remarked that strong political commitment and combined involvements of diverse partners play a leading role to ensure our plan of eliminating HIV by 2023 and health and wellbeing of the entire community.

The minister said: "The challenge of addressing the maternal child transmission of HIV and restoration of services that are disrupted by displacement are among the ministries priority that requires much emphasis."

As to Lia, MoH managed to minimize the death toll rate of the virus by 52%.

"Lack of sufficient response mechanisms of leader's at all levels; awareness and manmade and natural disasters are the main impacting factors to halt the spread of the virus."

Therefore, the minister emphasized that it is critical to further strengthen innovative activities hand in hand with religious leaders,

Photo: Gebabo Gebre



media, civil society and other stakeholders to achieve a common goal.

UNAIDS Ethiopia Country Director and Representative Ethiopia Country Office Francoise Ndayishimiye (MD) said that empowering communities and exerting collective efforts of communities is crucial in ending the AIDS epidemic and bringing an AIDS free world.

Moreover, she said Ethiopia has strong community structures that can be considered to scale up the community led monitoring.

Francoise said: "This World AIDS Day is more than a celebration of the achievements

of communities HIV response, advancing progress toward the end of AIDS. Besides, it is a call to action to enable and support communities in their leadership roles."

It was indicated that in 2022, about 39 million people globally were living with HIV; 1.3 million people became newly infected with HIV, 630,000 people died from AIDS-related illnesses.

"Currently, Ethiopia has been leading the HIV/AIDS response and showing its commitment despite the different challenges the country is facing thereby managing to diminish to 0.91%."

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Country Representative, Koffi Kouame for his part said that they have been empowering the communities to design, implement and monitor tailored interventions to combat HIV/AIDS effectively.

"It is highly important leveraging the wisdom and expertise of community leaders and grassroots initiatives to bring about inclusive strategies that embrace the entire community. Also, Ethiopia deserves commendation for its outstanding efforts in combating HIV/AIDS spearheaded by the Ethiopian Government in collaboration with various partners," he remarked.

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before the House of Peoples' Representative Foreign Relations and Peace Affairs Standing Committee yesterday.

According to him, the ministry has tabled documents and legal frameworks including the proclamation and directive to stakeholders' discussions.

Accordingly, the MoP has held discussions with 158 religious leaders and some other scholars and received recommendations and

inputs to be included in the legal framework. The proclamation would be presented for further processes in a short time.

Adugna further noted that the Inter-Religious Council also presented its recommendation on how the government could support religious institutions' peacebuilding contribution.

About the peace and security concerns, he indicated that the ministry involved a large

number of people and exchanged views on ways to resolve conflicts in a lasting manner. Fruitful discussions were also held with the public to ensure enduring peace and control arms trafficking. "We conducted research that identified the root causes of the existing insecurities and the findings would be served as an input to the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission."

While briefing journalists, Peace State

Minister Taye Dendea said that the ministry conducted research on indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms. He however, mentioned the negative impacts of the unrest in various parts of the country in impeding the officials' movement to hold discussions with communities.

It was learned that the MoP trained over 3000 voluntary youth peace ambassadors in the first quarter of the current fiscal year.

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nature based solution, in 2019 and over the past five years, over 130,000 nurseries have been established in different parts of the country. "Yearly, millions of people have been mobilized in seedling planting and seedling management in Ethiopia."

The Premier also said Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative represents a proactive response to pressing environmental and socio-economic challenges. It reduces carbon emissions, preserves biodiversity, creates jobs and boosts sectors such as tourism. "I am proud to say that this initiative has reached remarkable success by planting 32.5 billion seedlings and our target is to reach 50 billion by 2026. When completed, this initiative will become the largest afforestation project in the world."

Earlier, he held talks with Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo and UK's Former Prime Minister Tony Blair at the Ethiopian Green Legacy Pavilion on the sidelines of COP28.

PM Abiy discussed with President Miguel

Díaz-Canel about global climate change responsibility, bilateral cooperation and national development issues. The two leaders also discussed ways to foster cooperation in the tourism and agriculture sectors.

Abiy and Alexander De Croo held talks on cooperation between their countries in climate change and the scaling up of the partnership in various areas of mutual interest.

The Premier's discussion with Tony Blair was concerned with ways of further implementing Ethiopia's greenery campaign.

It is to be recalled that PM Abiy conferred with the hosting country's President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the Ethiopian Green Legacy Pavilion about global climate change and other issues of mutual significance.

The 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference, aka Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC or COP 28 is being held from 30 November until 12 December 2023 at Expo City, Dubai.

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make sure sustainability of farmers' benefits, she noted.

In line to this, she further stated that an online service is being implemented in the marketing system.

MoTRI has made the execution of foreign contract registration and the granting of export shipping license time-saving and easy.

The ministry is supervising and supporting exporters to respect the agreement and to provide their products to the international market. Strong inspection was carried out to fight against illicit trade, Belaynesh indicated.

"Among others, the expansion of contraband, inadequate provision of oilseeds for the foreign market, imposing

unnecessary tax on export products and proliferation of toll booths are serious factors which are hindering to increase the revenue yet," she noted.

The CEO added that the ministry is undertaking a reform to solve problems in the trade sector and improve revenue thereby facilitating the service. Besides, encouraging the controlling activities on contraband, appreciating legal ability, expanding trade destinations, and increasing the existing market are the future priority areas of the ministry.

Likewise, modernizing online foreign market, improving the export licensing system, promising the international, regional, and bilateral trade ties are the other future areas of the ministry in the forthcoming period, she said.

Opinion

Measures, mechanisms to minimize budgetary deficits

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Developing countries including Ethiopia face budgetary deficits that require to be minimized if not removed. Such deficits involve a combination of fiscal discipline, effective revenue generation and strategic management of expenditure. Fiscal discipline refers to the practice of maintaining a responsible and sustainable approach to fiscal policies and management of public finances. In the developing countries this involves ensuring that the government revenues and expenditures are balanced. It means public funds have to be used efficiently, effectively and transparently. In other words, public expenditure should not be more than the revenues collected. Moreover, the expenditures have to be verified by the concerned authorities, internal and external auditors. The slightest imbalance of resources has to be reported to the PMO and to the Parliament with measures to be taken.

The budgetary process should be established with the objective of precluding ways and means that cause budget deficits. Unauthorized spending by executing and implementing agencies should entail penalties, suspensions and dismissal of officials responsible for the act. This is possible only if there is a clear and transparent budgetary process. Transparent and accountable budgeting process that involves comprehensive planning, realistic revenue projections and responsible expenditure allocations is vital. In the planning process in Ethiopia, the Ministry of Planning ensures if the budget is balanced. This means that tax and other sources of revenue are absolutely reliable for financing the expenditure of the government. Similarly, expenditures have to be checked for their reliability. Exaggerated expenditures lead to artificial budgetary deficits. Both the revenue and expenditure have to be checked and rechecked for their reliability based on past performances in the country.

Another measure of transparency is public disclosure of budgetary information. If Ethiopian citizens are allowed to understand how public funds are allocated and used, they would be in a position to follow up programs and projects that interest them. This also indirectly helps spotting project expenditures that are not related to the needs of the citizens of the country. It also assists in minimizing budgetary deficits in Ethiopia. This measure also enhances revenue generation in the country through tax reforms. The design and implementation of progressive tax reforms may broaden the tax base or the taxpayers. It also enhances public compliance with the tax reform. This may include reducing tax exemptions and improving tax collection mechanisms. To facilitate the tax collection process it is important to make the concerned agencies

in the country as efficient as possible. Strengthening customs enforcement, for example, helps to reduce smuggling through improving trading facilities that boost external trade revenue. The tax office may explore opportunities to raise non-tax revenues such as fees, licenses and fines.

To overcome budgetary deficits, it is very essential to have strong fiscal discipline. One of the means to manage deficits is expenditure control and public finance management. Implementing strict controls on government spending is also important. This includes setting realistic budget targets, enforcing expenditure limits and avoiding overspending. Unrealistic targets lead to unlimited expenditures and excessive spending. These open the door for corrupt practices where officials, directors, and managers collude in mismanaging financial resources.

To hide financial abuses, periodic reports are filled with fake data and unverified documents. In this process, public resources are directed to personal benefits. Purchases may be made using false receipts upon which misleading reports are produced. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to enforce fiscal discipline in all public and private enterprises. In short, fiscal discipline requires installing expenditure controls and transparency.

Minimizing budgetary deficits in Ethiopia requires appropriate system of debt management. Debt management presupposes debt sustainability and restructuring. Debt sustainability demands monitoring and evaluation of financial expenditures by concerned agencies. This contributes to sustainability of debt. This measure includes careful consideration of new debt issuance. It also requires refinancing existing debts when favorable terms and conditions are available. This depends on financial managers that are highly skilled and trustworthy in checking and controlling the manner in which debt is used. It may lead to exploration of options and choices for debt restructuring. This also requires monitoring of the current budget in order to check if there are challenges to manage it. This opens the options to negotiate with lenders and creditors to allow for more favorable terms and conditions.

One area where budgetary deficits may be minimized is public investment. Management of public investment requires prioritization of projects based on their economic impacts and contribution to long-term growth in Ethiopia. Projects may contribute to the generation of output, employment and income. They may also generate foreign exchange through export of agricultural and manufactured products. However, whatever its contribution may be an investment must be analyzed in terms of its costs and benefits. Obviously, if the costs are greater than the benefits,

investors would not be in a position to invest. They have to conduct thorough cost-benefit analyses to ensure that they benefit from the projects. These projects have to be aligned with the national development goals of Ethiopia. Moreover, their financial viability has to be tested by the concerned institutions before they are implemented.

These institutions are also responsible for enhancing efficiency with the goal of reducing wastage of resources. Among these institutions, the agency responsible for public administration focuses on the means of reducing the bureaucratic and operational costs and corruption. A very close study on the operations of the public services is a precondition for implementing and enforcing anti-corruption measures that minimize leakages. The minimization of financial leakages guarantees the efficient and effective use of public funds.

Proper use of resources promotes economic growth and development in Ethiopia. In this respect, the promotion and development of the privates sector is critical. This requires the design and implementation of policies that foster the environment for private sector growth. However, studies on the problems faced by the private sector have to precede policies approved and implemented. This process leads to increased economic performance by the Ethiopian private sector that generates output, income and higher tax revenues.

The sector creates jobs by focusing on initiatives that stimulate employment generation in the country. This reduces social and economic dependency by the unemployed job seekers in Ethiopia. Policies should, therefore, focus on economic growth, development, foreign exchange generation and creation of employment opportunities.

The promotion of social development in Ethiopia focuses on targeted safety-net spending. This presupposes redirecting social spending towards programs and projects that have a direct and measurable impact on poverty reduction and human development. In this respect, lessons have to be learnt from other developing countries that succeeded in promoting social development. There are also lessons related to relevant and applicable subsidies that ensure real benefits to those in need. However, these subsidies need not create a significant burden on the state budget. Follow up of the impact of the budget demands a realistic program of monitoring and evaluation. This, in turn, demands review of budget performance against planned targets.

Conducting activities based on planned targets primarily involves the monitoring of revenue collection, expenditure patterns, and overall fiscal health. Those responsible for revenue collection have to operate efficiently and effectively

without corruption and rent-seeking. Similarly, expenditure patterns have to be free from fraudulent and deceptive practices. Those who deal with purchases of goods and services have to operate openly and clearly. Internal and external audit services should be strengthened to ensure the fiscal health of enterprises. This presupposes an adaptive strategy based on the actual performance of the economic and financial sectors in Ethiopia. This strategy is designed by the agency responsible for planning and development in the country. This agency verifies actual sector performance and reports to the higher bodies of the government.

If the periodic review of economic performance is below targets set by the plan, there may be a need to look for external assistance. Performance may be low due to shortage of resources required by the sector agencies. In this case, international assistance is an alternative to address fiscal challenges in Ethiopia. This, however, requires diplomatic skills to positively engage global organizations and donors for financial and technical support. Seeking international assistance is crucial for enhancing economic development in the country. However, the terms and conditions of external assistance have to be in the interest of the country. They should reflect the country's macroeconomic policies. Foreign assistance has to be consistent with the fiscal and monetary policies of the Ethiopian government. These policies have to complement each other for achieving macroeconomic stability. Similarly, the impacts of exchange rate policies on inflation and debt servicing have to be analyzed in advance.

In conclusion, the minimizing of budgetary deficits requires an all-inclusive and comprehensive approach as briefly indicated above. It entails a cautious and careful balance between revenue generation, expenditure management, economic growth promotion, and effective fiscal policies. The sources of revenues have to be realistic for ensuring a guaranteed source of income for the state. Expenditure management is absolutely necessary to avoid over-spending above the collected tax and other available sources of income. At the moment Ethiopia has to keep a balance between its revenue and planned expenditure. This helps to promote economic growth in line with the economic policies, plans and programs of the government. Implementation of these measures should be accompanied by continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation to ensure their effectiveness in the economic environment of the country.

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

Editorial

Leading in green Legacy

Ethiopia's green legacy initiative received recognition in Dubai while portraying an exhibition alongside the COP28 summit. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan along with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) visited the Ethiopian Green Legacy Pavilion last Thursday in Dubai.

Premier Abiy said on his social media page, "I thank my brother Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan for visiting Ethiopia's Green Legacy Pavilion at COP28 where we are showcasing strong commitment to address climate change through concrete solutions."

Information from the Prime Minister's office indicated that Ethiopia is promoting its green development work at the 28th edition of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28).

The two leaders visited the Ethiopian Pavilion before the official opening of the exhibition. It is to be recalled that Ethiopia expressed its desire to make a meaningful participation in the COP28 and to work closely with the UAE on the green development and climate change arenas.

Indeed, the effort Ethiopia exerted to carry out the greenery project investing huge capital and human resource indicates that the government's commitment is high and the peoples' collaboration immense.

In line with this, the fact that the UAE President visited the pavilion earlier to the official opening of the exhibition tells that both countries have close relation to work conjointly in various ways including the green legacy initiative. This moment adds pride for Ethiopians participating in the greenery project as the president's visit witnesses his appraise for the effort Ethiopians made.

Truly, Ethiopia's effort and the success registered in this regard deserve recognition not only from the UAE, but from the rest of the world. This time, the global community everywhere is experiencing the adverse effect of the climate change. Global heat is rising, forest fire is being aggravated, flood is causing damage, and drought is leaving people and animals without food and water. All these consequences of the climate change are severely affecting inhabitants of our world even the pollutants couldn't escape.

Effects of the climate change are amidst the top stories in news whether broadcast, print or online media these days exhibiting loss of lives and property destruction. It is an alarming call for the international community to speak in one voice to the industrially advanced countries to pay attention to what they are doing against climate. Equally as they are responsible for pollution that resulted in climate change and agent for multifaceted loses, they have to be accountable for the damages the earth is experiencing to date that seem to continue unless curative measures are taken.

What Ethiopia is doing in its greenery project is of paramount importance for the climate change struggle. The country has planted billions of seedlings in the past consecutive years investing billions of dollar. If calculated in terms of money, one dollar for one seedling from nurturing station up to transplantation areas in a minimum cost, billions of the seedlings cost the country high amount of investment. Ethiopians feel pride for what they have done in the greenery project as it is not only for the sake of their own but for the benefit of the whole world and the posterity.

Thus, it should be assumed as green gift for all and the reward must compensate the expense both in recognition and in kind that is expressed in financial support particularly from those in the forefront when talking about polluting the atmosphere.

As a developing country, Ethiopia cannot afford the greenery project cost alone so that it is essential to call for action the concerned bodies to stretch hands in saving our world from the catastrophe it is passing through.

Opinion

Global collective action is in demand!

BY STAFF REPORTER

Global heat has seared to new extremes in recent months, and devastating climate disasters are providing powerful reminders of the costs of climate change, as governments around the world prepare for the 2023 United Nations climate summit that starts on Nov. 30.

While a small window of hope remains for meeting the goals of the 2015 Paris climate agreement, the world's greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.

This year's climate summit, COP28, needs to be transformative. What will it take to harness a spirit of international cooperation in today's complex, divisive and volatile world abounding in self-interest?

To slow climate change, the world must reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But oil producers have resisted phasing out fossil fuels, the largest emissions source. So have nations such as India that rely on fossil fuels to drive economic growth and development. Wars in Ukraine and the Middle East have further sparked fears about energy security around the world.

Climate change is characteristically more uncertain, global and longer term than other development issues. In today's complex global environment, that leads to short-term self-interests often prevailing over the longer-term collective action required to slow climate change. That's particularly true when countries also face energy insecurity, disrupted global supply chains, food shortages and increasing geopolitical instability.

Increasing economic interdependence among countries has also increased the complexity of international relations. So has the growing international clout of middle-income and emerging nations, among them India, Brazil, Indonesia and Nigeria, which adds to a divergent mix of influential voices in a changing political landscape.

At COP28, the first "global stocktake" of countries' efforts to deal with climate change will show that progress has been made on climate mitigation and adaptation, but it will also show that the progress so far isn't nearly enough.

The obstacle to reaching agreement is not about climate science but rather the potential to compromise countries' positions or expose them to unexpected repercussions.

For example, does agreeing to "phase out" fossil fuels expose those who would continue to produce or use fossil fuels – nearly all countries – to economic disadvantage, competition and new forms of political leverage involving resources during a complex energy transition? Is there a possibility that technological advances will allow for greater future flexibility on a phase-out?

Reaching a global agreement is a marriage of many partners, with largely good intent but fear of commitment. The foundation of solutions lies in understanding national drivers, origins of self-interests and consequent constraints and, hence, not boxing anyone in.

There are a multitude of ways to achieve this during negotiations.

Constructive ambiguity, which allows for agreement based on more than one interpretation, is one way. Finding a path is often more important than spelling out, or agreeing upon, a single reasoning.

The "common but differentiated responsibilities" inherent in climate commitments is an example. Subtle turns of phrase in an agreement – such as whether leading a global drive to cut emissions is seen as a developed-country responsibility or something simply within their greater capacity to

do – can allow multiple parties to move toward the same goal by reading their own self-interest into the language used.

Common ground can also often be reached incrementally by building trust, confidence, comfort and eventually clarity over time.

For example, at the G20 meeting of major economies in September 2023 in India, the participants agreed to triple their renewable energy capacity. They stopped short of agreeing to "phase out" fossil fuel use, but their agreement set the stage for future progress by a powerful group that operates 93% of the globe's coal power plants and is responsible for 80% of global emissions.

Linguistic gymnastics may be deployed at COP28 to translate the G20 agreement into a global agreement aimed toward "phasing out" fossil fuels.

Using phrases such as phasing out "unabated fossil fuels" or "emissions" has been floated as compromises. Each, however, allows the caveat that carbon capture technology could be used to cancel out emissions, meaning fossil fuel use could continue. Whether that technology can effectively be applied on a large scale is hotly debated.

Climate negotiations can also be used to pressure governments to act. There is huge international pressure on the president of COP28, Sultan Ahmed al-Jaber, who is also the CEO of the United Arab Emirates' state-owned oil company, to exercise his influence with other oil producers and businesses to edge closer to agreement on "phasing out" emissions.

Finally, should the words "phase out" still elude negotiators, it will be important to ensure a trajectory of progress. When words in an agreement won't (yet) work, officials can send those difficult issues to other forums to work out the details.

For example, the question of phasing out fossil fuels can be incorporated into the ongoing global stocktake discussion and the mitigation work program, where participants are exploring new pathways to bridge the gaps in progress.

These tactics illustrate a key dynamic balance between comfort and pressure when striving to find agreement within the U.N. climate talks, where decisions are made by consensus. A common thread is maintaining flexibility – whether operational or interpretative – so all nations can move forward.

True collective action on climate change requires those who govern, represent or influence to respond to universal values, including ensuring a healthy planet for all nations and future generations.

It requires separating climate risks and responses from economic, political and other immediate concerns, and appreciating that critical systems that keep the planet healthy are close to breaking points.

Getting all stakeholders to value the future may take incremental improvement, but there is progress. For example, soft diplomatic channels between the U.S. and China – currently the world's top two emitters – have been able to separate climate change from the far more contentious issues of trade, economic rivalry and shifting geopolitics.

To build collective action, the Paris Declaration also sought to capitalize on the potential of well-informed nonstate actors, such as issue advocates, business leaders and city mayors, to work across borders, emphasize ethics as they influence leadership, and fill gaps that governments and institutions remain ill-equipped to resolve.

The UAE has promised to create the most inclusive U.N. climate conference yet. It's up to the COP28 leadership to harness this potential and translate it into a decisive global shift to address climate change.

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



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The Ethiopian Herald

Art & Culture

The father of Ethiopian Jazz- Journey to creativity, recognition and fame

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

What makes an artist great? The answer to this question might be tough but one thing is clear. An artist achieves greatness at least by creating something that has not been created before him and keeps on improving it until the need of his career. This is true both for writers, painters, musicians and other artists. Recognition is gained through hard work, long efforts, great commitment and discipline to reach the summit. This is also true for any career.

What we call genius is nothing else other than the capacity to work 18 hours a day, seven days a week and forgoing personal pleasure and having no “time to kill”, as ordinary humans like you and me often resort to. Maybe we can add to this by saying that sleeping less than common mortals and working at high and sustained tempo might be the other secret of genius which develops through a long time of gestation, trials and tribulations.

The long journey Mulatu Astatke has taken from his early beginning back in Wales and then the United States testifies to the maturity of his genius. Some artists or musicians reveal their genius too early in life like Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart who presented his first music concert at the age of 14 and French romantic poet Arthur Rimbaud who wrote his greatest poems when he was only 19. Then he left his calling to become a trader in Ethiopia and died in Paris still young to name but a few of them. Others reveal their immense gifts later in their lives depending on the circumstances. As they say, genius in any field can be 98 % perspiration and 2 percent inspiration.

The great modern Ethiopian musician Mulatu Astatke has invented what is now known throughout the world as Ethio-Jazz music, a blend of Ethiopian traditional music with elements of Afro-jazz and jazz proper that is also the music of black America. “Jazz is a music genre that originated in the African-American communities of New Orleans and Louisiana, in the 19th and 20th centuries with roots in blues and ragtime. Since the 1920 Jazz Age, it has been recognized as a major form of musical expression in traditional and popular music.”

Mulatu Astatke is nowadays known as the Father of Ethio-jazz for nothing. He is one of the creators of the three branches of Afro-jazz or African Jazz. The first is the style of African jazz created band known as Le Grand Kalle et l’African Jazz, the second is known as South African Jazz sometimes called ‘African Jazz’ and the third branch is known as Ethio-jazz and created by Mulatu Astatke who is an “Ethiopian musician and arranger and considered the father of ‘Ethio-Jazz’”.

Born in Jimma, Mulatu was musically trained in London, New York City and Boston where he combined his jazz and Latin music interests with traditional Ethiopian music. Mulatu led his band while playing vibraphone and conga drums-instruments he introduced into Ethiopian



popular music -as well as other percussion music.

A brief biography of this great modern Ethiopian musician indicates that he was sent by his family to Wales to study engineering during the late 1950s. Instead of that he chose to learn music at the Trinity College of Music in London. He collaborated with jazz vocalist and percussionist Frank Holder. In the 1960s, Mulatu moved to the United States and enrolled at the Berkley College of Music in Boston. There, he studied vibraphone and percussion. It was there that he fell in love with Latin music and recorded his two Afro-Latin Soul, volumes 1&2. In the early 1970’s he introduced his Ethio-Jazz music back home while staying and working in the US.

In the 1990s Mulatu’s music was rediscovered by many record collectors who started to reissue his albums and add to this international fame and recognition. One of his prominent albums, namely Ethiopiques Volume 4: Ethio-Jazz and Musique Instrumentale played a prominent role in bringing Mulatu’s music to international audience. The Father of Ethio-Jazz continued to develop and produce additional albums in collaboration with local and foreign bands way through the 2000’s. He continued to perform at international jazz venues in Europe and America and collaborated with famous vocalists and composers. In 2012, he was accorded an honorary doctorate of music from the Berklee College of Music.

What is Ethio-Jazz and how can we define Mulatu’s brand or style of music? “Ethiopian jazz referred to as Ethio-jazz is blend of traditional Ethiopian music with jazz combining the pentatonic scale-based melodies of Amharic music with the 12 tone scale and instrumentation of Western music.” This may sound too technical to understand but the best way to savor Mulatu’s music is just to listen to his compositions.

Mulatu Astatke’s astonishing musical gifts also include his versatility and the talent he has for blending different styles to create something new. His versatility is expressed in his ability to play various instruments like piano, organ, vibraphone and percussion, his skills in composing and arranging new music. His influence on the music scene in Ethiopia spans many generations starting from the 1960s all through the present time.

Mulatu has worked with and has composed music for some of the greatest names in Ethiopian music, the likes of Tilahun Gessesse and Muluken Melesse, who are considered the ever shining stars of Amharic music. This was the first generation of musicians that shaped the taste of the local audience during the “roaring sixties and seventies” when Ethiopian music witnessed a real boom and the flourishing of new talents and the blossoming of older ones. His collaboration with composers and singers was not at all confined to the local artistic scene.

In a short biography of the iconic figure in Ethiopian music, critic Steve Leggett wrote that, “he (i.e. Mulatu) spent much of the 1970’s expanding the boundaries of Ethiopian music by collaborating both home and abroad, with artists like Mohamoud Ahmed and Duke Ellington and releasing critically acclaimed music on Amha Eshete’s Records. His popularity enjoyed a renaissance in Western culture in the mid-2000 after his music was used in Jim Jamushi’s film Broken Flowers.

Like soccer trainers, art critics too sometimes talk about possible successors of a certain celebrity when the latter approach retirement. Mulatu is the sole Ethio-Jazz celebrity who has dominated the scene for the last 40 years or more. No one has so far displayed talent comparable to the Ethiopian maestro. Younger talents are often attracted to other music genres such as hip hop, Afro-beat, dance hall or techno to name

a few of them. Jazz in general and Ethio-jazz in particular is a genre of music that requires deep imagination, serious thinking and maturity. It may also require a higher IQ on the part of the composers than those musicians who often resort to easy going styles mostly created with the assistance of technology and nowadays AI imagination that has just started to make inroads in the creative arts. Jazz is a deeply sentimental kind of music that can only be authenticated with human imagination. It is a language that humans feel and speak with instruments. That is why most celebrated jazz musicians are elderly people who have spent long years of research, discovery and creativity in this particular genre. Jazz is a black music articulated and born of the realities of life in black communities in America and Africa.

Girma Yefrasha is another music legend majoring in piano, far younger than Mulatu and still on the road to discovering his ‘musical personality’ or put his mark on the history of contemporary Ethiopian music. He might one day explode into the international music scene with something original and claim his deserved place as a legend. Serious music like jazz or music is not something you mature first and then prove your talent. You are either born with extraordinary talent or you mature through time and achieve greatness relatively late in your life.

Regarding Ethio-Jazz, it is a challenge for Mulatu to spot promising talents, train them and bring them into the limelight. Let us hope that he might one day decide to turn his attention to spotting the most promising future Ethio-jazz musicians that would not only continue his legacy but even add new dimensions to the genre. This would be another chapter of Mulatu’s life as an expert of Ethio-jazz. It now appears that the great Ethiopian jazz musician has neither the times to concentrate on training young talents because he has not yet finished exploring his own boundless creativity.

Law & Politics

Ethiopia and Kazakhstan strengthening their friendship relations and trusted partnership

BY BARLYBAY SADYKOV
(Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Ethiopia, Permanent Representative to the African Union)

On December 16, Kazakhstan will celebrate its 32 years of Independence. Kazakhstan is a young country, but the statehood of Kazakh nation goes back to 15th century when we established Kazakh khanate (or kingdom).

During its history, our people have gone through many challenges and managed to preserve faith in the creation of a sovereign state and just society, without wars and destruction.

Unfortunately, as we all see, today the world has entered a new period of geopolitical confrontation, the number of military conflicts is growing, mutual distrust between countries is deepening, and risks to the security of all states of the world are increasing. Kazakhstan firmly believes that it is necessary to seek diplomatic solutions to conflicts, based on the UN Charter and universally recognized international law. Diplomacy and dialogue should always prevail in the resolution of international disputes.

Kazakhstan will continue multi-vector and pragmatic foreign policy in a new geopolitical reality. We are committed to the basic principles of non-interference in internal affairs, territorial integrity and rule of law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We interact with all international partners in the spirit of constructivism, respect and mutual benefit.

Thanks to a peaceful and multi-vector foreign policy, we have established trusting relations with all countries of the world. We have successfully resolved the issues of delimitation of the state border with all neighbouring countries.

In order to strengthen peace and security and develop trade and economic cooperation, we attach special importance to multilateral cooperation within the framework of regional organizations. This year Kazakhstan celebrates the 10th anniversary of cooperation with the African Union. Over the years, Kazakhstan has implemented a number of humanitarian and technical projects and intends to continue to work closely with the AU.

As one of the founding states and current chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Kazakhstan put forward the Initiative of «World Unity for a Just Peace and Harmony». This initiative comprises a New Security Paradigm, a Fair Economic Environment, and a Clean Planet.

At the initiative of Kazakhstan, a Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building measures in Asia was established 30 years ago, bringing together about 30 Asian countries with



a population of 3.5 billion people. Last year, it was decided to start reorganizing the Conference into a full-fledged international organization.

Our country is one of the founders of the Organization of Turkic States, and as a current chair of the organization, this November Kazakhstan hosted a summit of the heads of State of OTS to promote economic, scientific and cultural cooperation.

20 years ago, Kazakhstan took the initiative to hold Congresses of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions (CLWTR). Today it is an important platform for promoting intercultural dialogue and makes a significant contribution to strengthening interreligious peace and harmony, promoting the ideas of tolerance. The policy of interethnic peace and harmony is successfully implemented in Kazakhstan. At the dawn of independence, forecasts included the possibility of large-scale interethnic conflicts and the risk of losing statehood. Clearly aware of such risks, in May 1993, the Leadership of Kazakhstan spoke about the key ideas of interethnic policy, the main of which was equality of people regardless of ethnicity, faith or language under the law.

The Kazakh Constitution affirms, protect, and strengthen the unity, peace, and harmony of our state. The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, established in 1995, plays an important role in the formation of a unique model of social unity for the nation that comprises more than 130 diverse ethnic groups. The main goal of the Assembly is to implement the national policy, ensure social and political stability in Kazakhstan and increase the efficiency of cooperation between state institutions and civil society in the field

We consider Ethiopia as one of our main partners in Africa. Kazakhstan is the only country from Central Asian represented in Ethiopia

of interethnic relations.

The philosophy we are implementing as an independent state is peace, cooperation and good neighbourliness. At the time of disintegration of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan had the fourth largest and most powerful nuclear arsenal in the world. We also had one of the largest nuclear test sites. But we made decision to abandon all this in the name of peace and development and with countries of the region of Central Asia we established a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Today, the example of Kazakhstan is distinctive in the world community. Modern scientific laboratories have been established in our country for the research and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Kazakhstan is one of the seven countries in the world that has developed and uses its own QazVac vaccine. We now work with partners to establish an International Organization for Biological Safety under the auspices of the United Nations. Kazakhstan is one of the few

countries in the world that in cooperation with partners successfully implements the national space program.

Kazakhstan has achieved tremendous success in economic development, becoming one of the leading and largest economies in Central Asia. Kazakhstan is among big exporters of oil, uranium, metals, grain and other products. Our country is becoming a major exporter of IT technologies.

Being the world's largest LLDC country, Kazakhstan was able to become a Land Linked country. Our infrastructure development program, launched in 2012, is associated with the Chinese «One Belt One Road Initiative» and today about 85% of all land transit traffic from China to Europe passes through Kazakhstan. We are working closely with partners from Azerbaijan, Turkiye, Georgia, China, Russia, Iran, the UAE, Oman and other countries to ensure access to sea routes.

Our relations with Ethiopia are at their initial stage of development. It has been only 12 years since we established diplomatic relations. But we have achieved a lot in this short period of time. We believe that trusting relations between countries play most important significance. Kazakhstan and Ethiopia have very similar positions on many international and regional issues and we cooperate closely on the international arena, primarily within the framework of the UN. We consider Ethiopia as one of our main partners in Africa. Kazakhstan is the only country from Central Asian represented in Ethiopia.

This year, the second round of political consultations was held between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries and we outlined areas of further cooperation. We had productive meetings of parliamentarians of two states, and established parliamentary friendship groups. Cooperation has been established between the institutes of foreign policy studies of the two countries.

In June this year, Former President of Ethiopia Dr. Mulatu Teshome took part in the Astana International Forum, and held a special session on the future role of Africa in the world. The visit of the Ethiopian business delegation, B2B meetings with Kazakh partners took place and there are good perspectives for cooperation in trade and investment. We are interested in expanding the trade turnover between the countries. Ethiopian businessmen have visited Kazakhstan several times and are making plans to export, process and sell Ethiopian products in Kazakhstan and further in Central Asian countries.

Therefore, Ethiopia and Kazakhstan are strengthening their friendship relations and trusted partnership. We are optimistic about our future cooperation and wish to the friendly Government and people of Ethiopia peace, prosperity and success in achieving their goals.

Ethiopia's National Dialogue unrivaled in involving all sections of society

Ambassador Mohamed Dirir

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

There had not been a national consensus or common understanding among Ethiopian intellectuals, especially on national issues. The mistrust and skepticism between them were a challenge to democratic transition. Many have been consulted to resolve the accumulated political predicament through discussion and national dialogue.

According to some documents, the sources of conflicts observed throughout the country are historical narratives that are still there and polar political attitudes. However, as no immediate measures were taken to address these differences, local conflicts are still arising here and there.

In order to resolve extreme political attitudes and get sustainable solutions, much of the society agreed to participate in the national dialogue. These days, the people are awaiting the launch of the national dialogue platforms.

As the accumulated political quandary in Ethiopia could not be resolved by election alone, the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission was established and is doing various tasks. The commission is a legal entity and a politically independent institution. It is accountable to the House of People's Representatives. It is expected to establish a political system that everyone trusts.

The appointed commissioners have also started to be activated as of February 2022. They are also sorting out various problems that contributed to national dissonance.

The national dialogue process has its own principles. In order to have effective consultation, it is necessary to have a coalition of varying tasks. In this regard, taking lessons from other countries that have applied the same principles is of paramount importance. As some studies conducted at the national level depict, the national dialogue process conducted in any country should be governed by the following principles:

One of the clearly defined principles of the national dialogue process is inclusiveness. In the national dialogue process, inclusivity can be applied in two ways. The first is to enable community groups, whose voices have not been heard in decision-making for various reasons, to participate in the process. On the second level, inclusiveness is to ensure diversity of ideas and to enable new and perhaps previously unpublished ideas to be reflected in the national dialogue process.

Another principle is shared ownership. In the process of national dialogue,

every stakeholder should feel a sense of ownership. The stakeholders should be part of the solution for the process to be successful, and when there are problems, they should be humane and allow one to understand the problems of others. This is one of the principles that deserve attention.

In the process of national dialogue, one should not only listen to the other to give a response but also understand the problem of the other side, put oneself in that person's place, and forward the idea that it is better to be a mediator.

The fourth principle is to ensure that solutions are sustainable. This means that the solutions proposed in the process of national dialogue should not only solve problems for a short time but also provide sustainable solutions. However, it should be a process in which citizens renew their social contracts by generating solutions suitable for the problems of their country.

The Commissioner of the National Consultation Commission, Ambassador Mohamed Dirir, believes that the commission's work can bring results when all sections of society work together in a sense of belongingness. The Ethiopian press agency made a short stay with Ambassador Mohamed Dirir to learn more about the activities and other points about national dialogue in Ethiopia. Have a nice read!

What is the status of the National Dialogue Commission's activities so far?

The public should know the way the National Consultative Commission works, the things it goes through, and the costs to be paid to do effective work. About 17 months have passed since the Ethiopian National Consultative Commission was established as a legal entity.

During these times, the commission traveled a long distance in order to implement the tasks expected, considering the present situation in the country. At present, it is on the verge of completing the preparation phase. It tried to answer questions such as what should be done throughout our country. Who should be involved in the national dialogue? how different sections of society will participate in the national dialogue process.

The commission will be inclusive and engaging for all parties. For example, the communities that have their own dialects—farmers, herdsmen, the business community, women, youth, teachers, private and public workers, elders, and prominent people—and marginalized



segments of society, as well as all their voices being heard and their problems being addressed, will be part of the dialogue. Everyone should be included, as their opinions and ideas on a national issue should be heard.

Another is the work of facilitating all the platforms where people who have been displaced from their villages due to conflicts and sheltered in different areas of our country can present their ideas and agendas on basic and national issues as citizens.

As you know, the process of national consultation is healing in and of itself. It is where citizens meet face-to-face and talk about their basic problems, not to defeat them but to understand and find the truth and bring peace. The commission is carrying out this task.

Before the commission, when there were disputes between the people in our country, the process of resolving them peacefully was minimal, and we have tried all the ways to get rid of them. We have paid a heavy price in order to solve our problem with the armed struggle. As a result, many of our citizens have passed away.

People have been displaced from their villages. Infrastructure was destroyed. Human life is tragically lost. Therefore, we all have to go into the national dialogue process knowing that non-peaceful or turbulent means will not work.

On the other hand, the way we have come destroys the country. We realize that there is a lot of bankruptcy.

Interestingly, among the things that forced us to come to this national dialogue is that we have seen many African countries that were doing what we are doing now and then failed to continue as a country. There is no citizen who wants this fate to happen in Ethiopia.

Therefore, it is possible to get our country out of this problem, overcome it, and save the country only through national dialogue.

Now that the present status of the commission is in identifying the participants, efforts have been made to involve the community members we trust in the process. These bodies that help us are the Council of Civic Associations, the Alliance of Political Parties, the Assembly of Religious Institutions, teachers, and others who are working with us and closely monitoring the process." The process is inclusive and participatory. We say that by holding these facts.

How do you measure the participation of the community as you have gone so far?

The biggest thing we realized is that there is a lot of enthusiasm in society. Some say that this is the last chance for our country,

Continued to Page 9

Herald Guest

Ethiopia's National...



and it is something that we should not lose.

As our country is ancient with a long history and culture, it is difficult to conclude that the national dialogue commission will solve all our grievances overnight. However, it works on the fundamental problems that cannot be addressed by the present policies and regulations of the country. On the other hand, there are many differences among the community on basic national issues. This has caused a huge gap between us. A national consultation is needed to get out of this.

According to the ideas we have seen and heard in all the areas we have visited, we have been able to realize that it is the people's desire for this national dialogue to succeed. Of course, we went to Tigray region recently because of the unrest. Even so, when we left, we took part in the first dialogue with Tigray leaders. Next, we will involve all sections of society. In any case, it can be said that everyone believed in the work and process of the National Dialogue Commission and participated in it voluntarily.

You said that the national dialogue will be effective and exemplary in East Africa as well as in Africa as a whole, so what does this mean?

The National Dialogue Commission is traveling with a great vision. If we look at Ethiopia from the perspective of history, we have lost many opportunities. The main reason for this was our failure to consult one another. Problems have been repeatedly tried to be solved by conflict, force, and power. Despite some trials for process dialogue, they have failed.

This national consultation that is currently being held in our country is the first of its kind to involve all sections of society, which is credible and accepted by the people. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is the biggest dialogue process in Africa. Ethiopia has a large population. When we look at the history of the country, it is self-explanatory.

The other thing is that some of the dialogue processes that have taken place in Africa have been conducted on substantive issues. For example, Kenya's Bnaya Dre election was held to stabilize the situation and strengthen the rule of law. On the other hand, in the case of Ethiopia, there are no agendas left untouched by the dialogue in Ethiopia. By the way, we, as a National Dialogue Commission, have no right to say whether the agenda should be that or this. The law does not allow this to be done by the Commission.

In terms of conflict resolution, the Rwandan process is said to have been very successful. It is true because it has transformed the country into a democratic process. However, the conflict was between two clans. How many ethnic groups have problems in our country? Therefore, it means that there will be a process in which our fundamental differences will be resolved through advocacy and the participation of the people themselves.

It is good to take lessons from other countries national dialogue experiences; however, there are a number of conflict resolution processes; is there any effort to learn from those?

It is an issue mentioned in the proclamation

of the establishment of the National Consultation Commission. Proclamation Number 1265/2014 states that indigenous knowledge should be used. Therefore, conflict resolution, consultation, and listening to one another are evident across our vast nation. However, we have only used them in very limited cases so far. So, how can we bring this knowledge to the national consultation? How do we use them? It is being considered, and I think we will implement it when we enter the context of the dialogue process.

Some parties say that the dialogue process is a political tool of the government, so what is your opinion on that?

National dialogue is not a political tool; it is the process we use to solve and overcome any political problems. But for those who say and believe that it is a political tool of the government, it is better to leave them, as it is their idea.

However, the owner of a national dialogue is the public. And when we say it is the public, the people will send individuals whom they believe will bring their agenda to the government. And those representatives bring agendas and are shaped.

This agenda is sent not only from Ethiopia but from all over the world, where there are citizens. After the agendas are collected, the council and the advisory council will prepare them and make them public. In this way, the people will announce that the consultation commission will conduct the process around these agendas.

It means there will be nothing hidden. The agenda originates with the people and is retransmitted to the public. In this process, the participation of the media is very important. After the dialogue takes place, the recommendations that come out after the dialogue are not just sitting there. They give the government the power to implement them. The National Dialogue Commission will not disband if the government simply asks them to implement them. How many were implemented? How were you treated? He asks, and I will follow. Therefore, the national consultation will succeed. It is for these reasons that we declare that it will be the first from Africa.

How is the participation of political parties in the dialogue commission defined?

So far, many efforts have been made, and results have been recorded. But this effort will be strengthened in the future. When we say it should be inclusive, it is not only the political thinking that the government wants to hear but also the thoughts that the government does not want to hear, as long as they are in our country. There will never be a process where these parties are not part of the dialogue. Until now, we have been working closely with various political parties. There are those who are skeptical of the process. As this is their position, nothing can be done about it. But

constant efforts will be made on our part to get them out of this doubt. However, the Ethiopian National Consultative Commission does not want to exclude these people because of their position.

What is the main challenge in your work as a dialogue commission?

The breach of peace in the country is our biggest challenge. Of course, national dialogue is not only conducted in a peaceful and calm situation. There is an incidence where the dialogue is conducted in conflict zones. Moreover, the actors in the conflict are also required to put down their weapons and be part of the dialogue. There are situations in other countries that have gone this way. Through combining countries' experiences, the efforts will continue to bring those who are undergoing armed struggle to the national dialogue.

There are political parties that have polar or extreme ideas; will it not be a challenge for the commission to bring them together? How do you manage it?

The biggest task of the national dialogue process is to create a national consensus. In order to bring about this national consensus, it is necessary to have a discussion openly and not focus on individual groups, but focus on the problems and be positive and enthusiastic about solving them. Therefore, the result of the national consultation is to start a new political phase, build a sustainable government system, and establish national consensus. However, we do not believe that all problems will be solved by the national dialogue. But if the basic problems are solved, there is no reason why others cannot be solved.

What is expected of this national dialogue process to be effective?

Participation from all sections of society is expected. The people are required to get out of the old mindset that has been leading us to conflict and anger for centuries, enter into a calm and stable context, join the dialogue, and choose the participants who claim to represent them properly.

On the other hand, participants should be independent of internal and external pressure. They should be the ones who think about and put their country before their personal interests. They are expected to be citizens who work day and night to free their country from its tribulations. We believe that if we are seen in this way, we will be able to identify the problems of our country and solve our disputes.

If you want to convey any message or express the wish you had, please take this chance.

Ethiopians inside and outside should use this opportunity to free our country from its troubles, and the legacy of peace has moved us to develop and build a country. May God help us not to be blamed by history!

Thank you very much for our stay.

Society



HIV/AIDS Response Desk COE Fikadu Yadeta . State Minister Dereje Duguma Relation and Communication CEO Dr. Tegene Regassa

Efforts to address HIV impact on progress

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

It is clear that Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) is one of the major public health burden creating impacts in a numbers of social and other sectors of countries. Through its broad economic impact, it is becoming an issue for social and macro economic analysis, and policies to prevent the spread of the virus.

The impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic has been experienced in many countries attained to the level of scorching the economy and, even more broadly, on societies, wellbeing and created huge burden creating scarcity of resources in providing services to the victims.

World HIV/AIDS Day was marked yesterday all over the world. Here in Ethiopia, the day was observed with creating awareness regarding the Virus and means to avert the challenges.

As indicated by Ministry of Health, the 36th World HIV/AIDS Day is an important global event that raises awareness about HIV/AIDS and shows solidarity with those affected by the disease. HIV/AIDS is one of the public health problems. The virus transmission is keeping on among key communities and mobilization for awareness creation is not at the level it used to.

According the Ministry, over eight thousand fellow citizens become positive and eleven thousand deceased per annual.

State Minister Dereje Duguma on his briefing in connection to the 36th World HIV/AIDS Day said that concerted efforts are under way to end epidemic by 2030. The Ministry along with pertinent stakeholders is planning 95 percent of all people living with HIV (PLHIV) should have a diagnosis, 95 percent of those should be taking lifesaving antiretroviral treatment (ART) and 95 percent of PLHIV

on treatment should achieve a suppressed viral load for the benefit of the person's health and for reducing onward HIV transmission.

Within the Ministry HIV/AIDS Response Desk COE Fikadu Yadeta for his part said that of the PLHIV is over seventy percent are below thirty years of age, where age groups 15-20 take the lion share and the prevalence of women is high.

The prevalence rate is now 0.9 and over 610 thousands of fellow citizens are living with the virus. The number of people with HIV/AIDS diagnosed receiving antiretroviral therapy is five hundred thousand and 11300 fellow citizens are deceased per annum.

The prevalence rate varies from State to State and communities to communities. Gambella States is leading with the prevalence rate of 3.69, the second leading is Addis Ababa City Administration making 3.47, Harerie 2.97, Diredawa 2.9 and the Ethiopia Somalia with least rate of prevalence 0.18. In general urban prevalence rate is 2 and the rural remains 0.4

The aggregate national HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is 0.9 that makes it below epidemic WHO alert standard one percent. This figure was 1.26 in 2017.

Of the venerable prostitutes take the highest rate, lethal drug addicts, citizens in the correction facilities need more focus than any victims of HIV/AIDS. Communities in priority high way distance drivers, widows, community areas affected by human and natural disaster, victims of sexual assault and adolescents are among the list.

Partnership with people living with and affected by HIV is critical to the sustainability and ultimate success of the HIV response. Ministry also stands with global partners to applaud the role of the communities in closing the testing, treatment and care gaps for those left behind and in driving progress towards

The impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic has been experienced in many countries attained to the level of scorching the economy and, even more broadly, on societies, wellbeing and created huge burden creating scarcity of resources in providing services to the victims

ending AIDS as a global public health threat.

According to him when HIV/AIDS was at the scale of epidemic in the old day's prevention and treatment was targeting the mass community, but now more focus will be given to the vulnerable communities.

Ministry will continue to work with partners through prioritizing the needs of affected populations, and enhancing prevention and testing as well as treatment endeavors.

Many communities, such as key populations sex workers, people who use drugs, and adolescents, still lack access to the prevention, treatment, and care services that they need and deserve. "Unless address

this inequalities it could continue to drive the uneven progress on HIV, he underlined.

Speaking on the occasion Public Relation and Communication CEO Dr. Tegene Regassa calls for rigorous awareness creation platforms and trigger comprehensive behavioral change among the communities in various parts of the nation. He also calls on religious leaders and media houses as well as schools to discharge responsibilities accordingly and enhance awareness creating among communities in urban and hinterlands.

World AIDS Day is an opportunity to reflect on the progress made to date, raise awareness about the challenges that remain to achieve the goals of ending AIDS by 2030 and mobilize all stakeholders to jointly redouble efforts to ensure the success of the HIV response. The Ministry is working with pertinent stakeholders in address the impact of HIV/AIDS through collaboration nationwide. It was learnt that this year World AIDS Day 2023 motto is 'Let communities lead.'

Since the discovery of the first HIV infection case in 1981, the global impact of HIV/AIDS has been significant. Approximately 85.6 million people worldwide have been living with HIV/AIDS since 1981.

World AIDS Day aims to educate people about HIV/AIDS, promote prevention measures, support those living with the disease, and remember those who have lost their lives to AIDS.

The red ribbon is the global symbol for solidarity with HIV-positive people and those living with AIDS. World AIDS Day is observed by all United Nations Member States and is recognized as an international event. By raising awareness and promoting understanding, the 36th World HIV/AIDS Day plays a crucial role in combating the spread of HIV/AIDS and supporting individuals and communities affected by the disease.

Verbatim and Caption



Ethiopia, Czech to establish joint economic cooperation commission

Ethiopia and the Czech Republic have agreed to establish a joint economic cooperation commission following the discussion between the two countries leaders in Czech aiming at elevating the existing cooperation in various spheres.

Prime Minister Abiy and his Czech counterpart Petr Fiala have vowed to strengthen cooperation in tourism, especially in heritage protection and research, military, agriculture and economic sectors.

The establishment of a joint economic cooperation commission that has been agreed by leaders of the two countries is vital to integrate the sectors together and quickly translate into action.

Selamawit Kasa, State Minister of Government Communication Service

Ethiopia working to unlock mines' economic potential

The mining sector has become one of the critical economic sectors of Ethiopia. The government has been making consolidated efforts to render the mining sector the engine for national economic growth and a dependable source of foreign currency and employment.

Tapping the mining potential is vital to registering economic growth. Producing agricultural minerals and soil fertilizer would help Ethiopia to ensure food self-sufficiency. So far, some 170 local and international companies are engaged in mining sector in Ethiopia and following the attention given by the government, the sector is attracting more investors.

Suitable policies and strategies are applied in the sector.



Mines Minister Habtamu Tegegn (Eng.) during the second Mining and Technology Expo

As COP28 begins, where are Africa's climate crisis priorities?

What hope is there of a favourable outcome for African countries at COP28? This as already low expectations have dwindled even further, for a COP hosted by the United Arab Emirates, a major oil producing country. The talks are being led by Sultan Al Jaber, the head of the national oil company Adnoc. It has also been reported that Al Jaber "was briefed to advance the interests of the businesses he leads before dozens of bilateral meetings about the climate summit". In other words, the country was reportedly hoping to conclude new oil deals during the talks. This as we face a global crisis that experts say means no new oil and gas deposits should be developed if we want a livable future.

Where does this leave the most vulnerable countries, such as those on the African continent?

Brock Hicks writes for African Arguments that following the African Climate Summit

convened by Kenya's President William Ruto, more than 500 civil society organisations said that the Summit's concept note, - reportedly written by U.S.-based consultancy McKinsey - "reflects the interests of the U.S., McKinsey and the Western corporations they represent, while Africa's priorities are missing.

He writes that the proposed solutions, pushed under the banner of green growth, ... "relies on the destructive paradigm of consumption-driven development".

"Ever more intricate market fixes are not substitutes for robust economic and environmental regulation and enforcement. Nor do they replace our need for more radical systemic transformations. Technological innovation cannot exist in a vacuum - we must pair it with social and cultural innovation".

Source: allafrica.com



Uganda, Kenya urged to lift visa restrictions to boost tourism

In a significant push for enhanced tourism collaboration, private sector leaders in the tourism industry from Kenya and Uganda have jointly called for the removal of visa restrictions and the harmonization of industry laws between the two nations.

The plea was made during the Kenya-Uganda private sector tourism engagement held in Kampala, where over 30 industry players convened to address challenges and explore solutions.

Stephen Asiimwe, the Executive Director of the Private Sector Foundation Uganda, emphasized the potential benefits of addressing these issues, stating that it would

significantly contribute to boosting the number of tourists traveling between the two countries.

Asiimwe's remarks highlighted the collaborative spirit needed to propel the tourism sector forward.

"While Kenya remains Uganda's leading source market for travelers, harmonizing visa restrictions and laws governing the two nations is crucial for unlocking the full potential of tourism collaboration," Asiimwe said.

Sam Mwandha, the Executive Director of Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), echoed the sentiment, calling for increased partner-

ships between the two nations.

Mwandha emphasized the importance of collaborations that enhance connections and pool resources to build knowledge about products and exchange industry trends, fostering a more robust tourism landscape.

Clara Ningome, the County Executive Committee Member for Trade, Tourism, and Cooperative Development, further underlined the significance of unified efforts in the tourism sector.

The call for harmonization comes as a strategic move to create a seamless experience for tourists and promote a shared understanding of industry regulations.

A recent report from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs revealed a positive trend in tourism between Kenya and Uganda.

The number of Kenyan tourists visiting Uganda saw a notable increase, reaching 376,294 by the end of December 2022, up from 336,294 in 2021--an upswing of 40,000 visitors.

The private sector's united appeal for collaborative measures reflects a commitment to fostering a conducive environment for tourism growth, emphasizing the need for streamlined regulations and enhanced connectivity between Kenya and Uganda

(Source: Nile Post)

Verbatim and Caption



Ethiopia follows multi-sector growth approach

Ethiopia's pathway to prosperity follows a multi-sectorial growth approach to enable equitable development, while manufacturing remains a priority for its close linkage with other sectors. Ethiopia is taking meaningful reforms to make the private sector the engine of growth.

We have strengthened our adaptive industrial policymaking by establishing a free economic zone in order to be more agile in the face of a changing world. Second, we have been investing extensively in multi-sector growth sources under our homegrown economic reform pillars of agriculture, industry, tourism, ICT and mining.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said while addressing the 20th General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

Inflation shows decline

Inflation has been declining during the past six months, declined from 29.3 % by the end of last June to 27.7 % during the first quarter of the current Ethiopian budget year.

NBE targets to reduce inflation to below 20 % by June 2024 and below 10 % by June 2025. Despite encouraging achievements registered during the first quarter of the ongoing budget year, reducing inflation significantly is still a priority in NBE's macro-economic stability initiatives.

Mamo Mihretu, Governor, National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE)



Ethiopia on track to launch Capital market

Ethiopia is on track to launch capital market during the current Ethiopian year with a view to supporting the development of the national economy. Ethiopian Capital Market Authority is finalizing preparations to kick off the operation of capital market in Ethiopia.

Several foreign and domestic investors have shown keenness to engage in Ethiopia's capital market. Five public enterprises have been making preparations to take part in the market while companies from Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa are interested to participate too.

Solomon Zewde, Ethiopian Capital Market Authority Senior Legal Adviser



Solomon Zewde, Ethiopian Capital Market Authority Senior Legal Adviser