



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## Somaliland rebuffs foreign meddling on MoU



- Forms technical, international groups to speed up process

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

**ADDIS ABABA:** Somaliland slammed foreign interventions regarding its sea access deal with Ethiopia while assuring the process will not be altered or halted by external parties.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Somaliland, Dr. Essa Kayd Mohamud who took part in the recently held AU Summit told *The Ethiopian Herald* exclusively that Somaliland is not concerned about statements either from the Arab League or Egypt on the MoU.

“Egypt is the major player in the Arab League, but the MoU cannot be altered or interfered by third entities.

*See Somaliland rebuffs ...page 3*



Photo: Berihun Tadele

## Ethiopia finalizes preparations to trade under AfCFTA

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA-** Ethiopia has set to exchange goods under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) following endorsement of country’s tariff line, Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced.

In a presser held yesterday, Foreign Affairs State Minister, Ambassador Misganu Arega expressed that leaders of the African Union member states have endorsed Ethiopia’s tariff line for goods to be traded under the AfCFTA.

“We have now the opportunity to join the nine countries which are implementing the AfCFTA,” he said.

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## Mayor underscores safeguarding peace to accelerate dev’t

- Nation commemorates 87<sup>th</sup> Martyr’s Day

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** –The noble sacrifice Ethiopian martyrs paid to freedom and sovereignty could only be enshrined by the current generation’s commitment to peace and development, Addis Ababa Mayor said.

Delivering a speech at the 87<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Martyr’s Day yesterday, Mayor Adanech Abiebie stated that the martyr’s sacrifice will get a proper place when today’s generation becomes a patriot of peace and development.

The mayor also said that many forefathers and mothers gave their blood and bones to enable Ethiopia to get its today shape, emphasizing the need to stand together for unity and development to return the patriots’ favor. “Our predecessors stood together and made us live today with freedom and pride. The new generation should continue this great history by repeating it through development and togetherness.”

According to her, February is the month when many lives were sacrificed for Ethiopia and a victory was achieved that could proclaim equality and freedom on the

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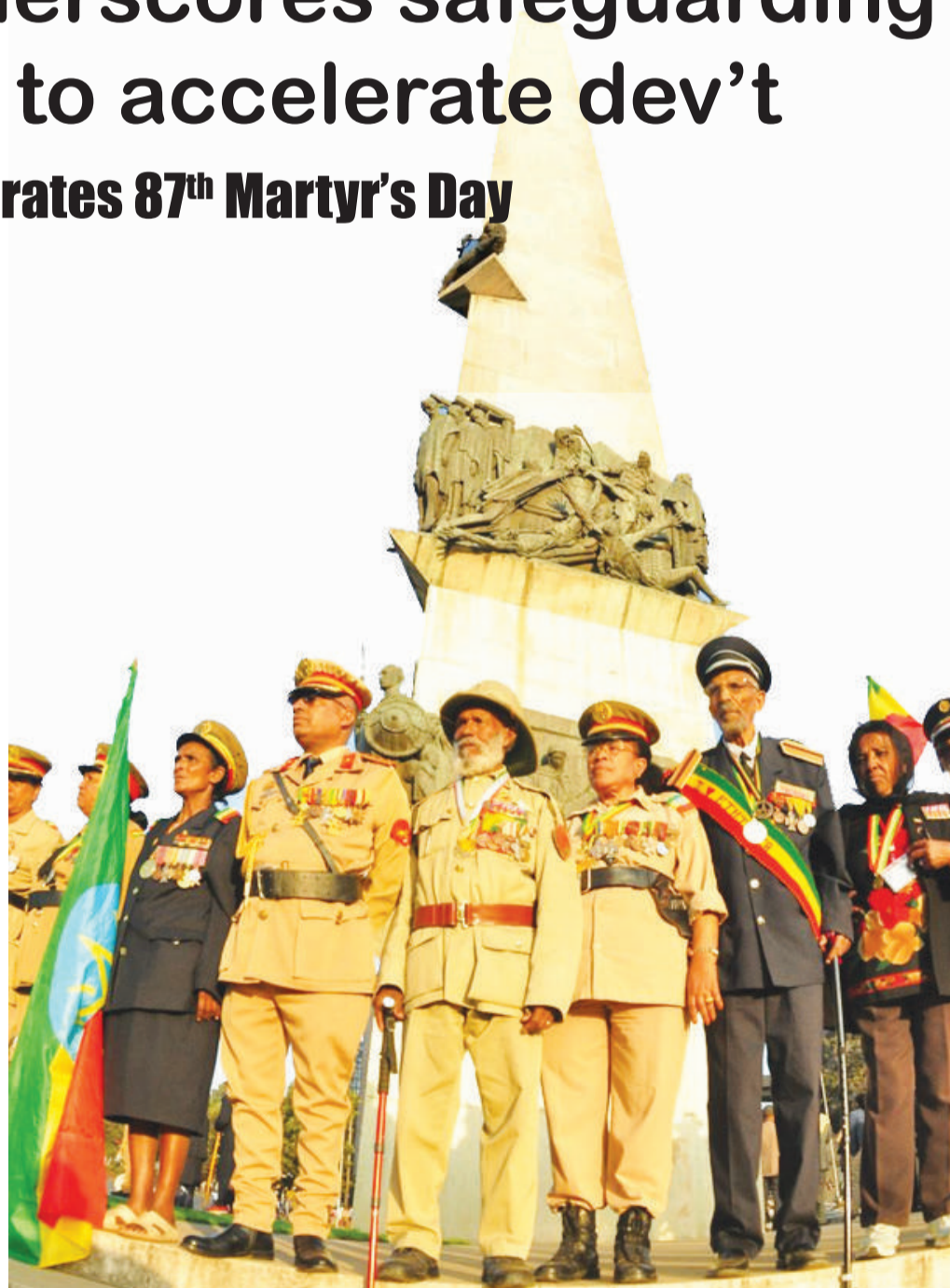


Photo: Dagne Abera

## New board to set minimum wage in industries

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA-** The Ethiopian Employers’ Confederation disclosed the establishment of a board that would set up a minimum wage floor for employees in flower farms and industries.

Confederation President Getahun Hussein (Eng.) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the government is considering setting a minimum wage floor that will serve as the starting point of employment but does not apply to those who are currently recruited and will receive annual and bi-annual increases in the collective bargaining agreement.

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# News



## UN backs Ethiopia to conduct successful census

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

**ADDIS ABABA** - UN Under-Secretary-General pledged continued support to Ethiopia for the achievement of the 4<sup>th</sup> census which is expected to be held shortly.

In a presser, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Natalia Kanem, who had been participating in the 37<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit that held between 17 and 18 February 2024, said that her agency supports Ethiopia's population censuses.

"We are supporting population and house census in this country in 1984, 1994 and 2007 and continue to work in the 4<sup>th</sup> population and housing census and the 5<sup>th</sup> demographic and health survey round," she said.

Listing the three priority areas that UNFPA has been mandated for which are bring contraceptives, work on pregnancy and child birth as well as end gender based violence, UN Under-Secretary-General added: "as everything is based on data, we give special attention and back tasks related to census."

"Over the past four years, we invested almost one million dollars for the preparation of the census which includes the procurement of computer tablets considering that the census is undertaking digitally and apply modern technologies. In order to raise the awareness of people working in the central statistics authority, we assist the effort sharing best experience from other countries in the horn."

As the census is yet to be finalized, the Under-Secretary-General expressed that her organization would continue supporting the process.

For this to happen, she said, UNFPA stands ready to assist the next phase of the census. Kanem mentioned that the agency is in conversation with the government on the planning purposes.

With regard to Demographic Health Survey (DHS), she said, "my office is working with the Ministry of Health and the planning part of the government to be able to assess how are we doing in terms reflect on the manner of very important statics including those related to hanger."

Recently, the government announced that the fourth national population and housing census that has not been conducted since 2007 due to various reasons will be held in 2025.

## Foundation offers training on expediting AfCFTA's implementation

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA**- The training of African Ambassadors and Diplomats will help accelerating the execution of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and unlocking its enormous potential for economic integration.

Moreover, it is a key to trade facilitation and sustainable development throughout Africa.

According to the Press Release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald* by the African Capacity Building Foundation, the training, which is designed explicitly for African Ambassadors and diplomats currently posted at Permanent missions to the African Union, aims at enhancing their understanding of AfCFTA and equip them with the knowledge and skills to accelerate its implementation effectively.

It would also generate valuable insights and policy recommendations that can drive the African Continental Free Trade Area forward, significantly increasing intra-African trade, improving regional integration.



Moreover, enhancing economic growth, job creation, as well as providing better livelihoods for the continent's people are amongst the major impacts that the training would highlight.

By engaging African Ambassadors and diplomats, this training provides the perfect opportunity to promote collaboration among member states and enhance the coordination required to speed up the implementation of the AfCFTA.

This will ultimately lead to the realization of the African Economic Community as outlined in the Abuja Treaty. Their

involvement can assist in building consensus and mobilizing support for the necessary reforms and policy adjustments at both national and regional levels.

Thus, governments are encouraged to take advantage of the AfCFTA to promote inclusive and structural transformation in African countries to increase the volume of intra-African trade, it stated.

The training which is scheduled for two days, on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2024, focused on tackling challenges, exchanging best practices, and synchronizing strategies, it was learned.

## University says working down road for societal change

BY HIZKEL HAILU

**DIRE DAWA**- Dire Dawa University announced that it is attempting to improve the lives of underprivileged individuals and elderly citizens through community services and STEM initiatives.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), University's Community Service Director Wondifraw Dejene (PhD) said that his office is making remarkable strides in uplifting the local community through implementing various initiatives including community services and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) projects.

As to him, the university successfully renovated four houses for vulnerable segments of the community, amounting to an estimated value of 1.3 million Birr over the last six months.

In addition, Wondifraw stated that the University has been providing community members with free health and legal services.

Approximately 25,000 individuals have benefited from the university's healthcare program, which aims to improve access to medical services and promote the well-being of the community, he mentioned.

Furthermore, he noted that the university's legal services have assisted 1,500 individuals, ensuring that they have access to justice and legal support over the past six months.

The Director sheds light on the university's commitment to quality education, showcasing its dedication to holistic community development.



Photo - Dagne Abera

The university's efforts in this field have been recognized, as it achieved an impressive second rank in a nationwide competition in science, technology and innovation conducted by the Ministry of Education, surpassing numerous other higher education institutions in Ethiopia, Wondifraw expressed.

He explained that this achievement reflects the institution's dedication to promoting science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education thereby producing skilled graduates in these fields.

Highlighting the vitality of education for community development, the Director said that the university is striving to provide students with an enriching and inclusive learning environment.

The university is equipping future generations with the knowledge and skills

necessary to drive positive change in society via emphasizing the importance of edification, he added.

He highlighted the university's commitment to fostering partnerships and engaging with local stakeholders to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the initiatives.

Wondifraw stated that his directorate would continue bringing a profound impact on the local community through volunteer activities, STEM projects, and other essential services.

As the university's dedication to quality education remains unwavering, it is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the city administration in particular and the nation in general through empowering individuals to be drivers of sustainable development.

# News

## University makes bold actions to wheat productivity

BY FIKADU BELAY

**BALE ROBE** –Madda Walabu University (MWU) has made consolidated efforts to enhance wheat productivity and partnered with relevant stakeholders for the sake of the local community's benefit, the vice president said.

The university hosted a national research symposium to seek ways of increasing wheat productivity and ensuring food security.

MWU Academic Affairs Vice President Bezabih Wendimu (PhD) mentioned the collaboration with Chemtex PLC and various research entities as the manifestation of the institute's commitment to increase wheat productivity.

Bezabih further highlighted the university's active involvement as a key partner in implementing cluster wheat farming



Photo: Hadush Abraha

methods and providing improved seeds, fertilizers, and other agricultural inputs to nearby districts and local farmers.

In the current harvest season alone, MWU has supported farmers organized in clusters for wheat farming in over 140 hectares of land in seven districts of Bale, West Arsi,

and East Bale zones.

“The university is also actively engaged in providing professional support in different areas including crop disease management, pesticide usage, and fertilizer application to local farmers, Bezabih noted.

For his part, MWU President Ahmed Kalil (PhD) mentioned the university's active engagement in different areas including agriculture, tourism, biodiversity, health and others to the community's benefit. “In the field of agriculture, we have been working hard to enhance productivity and ensure the supply of farming outputs.”

According to him, the symposium aims to support the university's aspiration to becoming farming center of excellence. “Additionally, we will offer capacity- building training, monitoring, and technical support to assist farmers and agricultural specialists in utilizing technological advancements.”

The symposium presented more than a dozen research findings and it provides an opportunity to identify possibilities and overcome challenges faced by the sector, the president remarked.

### Somaliland rebuffs...

It is not something we are paying attention to,” he added.

Speaking on the current status of the MoU, the minister stated that the MoU is an ongoing process, yet to be an agreement; adding “It is in the first phase that we agreed on something and will be followed by technical teams who will be working on changing the MoU to an agreement.”

“The President of Somaliland has already nominated the technical group and international lead experts who will be looking at the rights and laws of the process. It is going well and it will be for the great good of the two people,” the minister noted.

There is a people-to-people integration between the two sides as they have a common border. The relation between the two people is not started after the MoU; rather, it is a co-existence that stands for long.

The Berbera Port and the Corridor that connects Ethiopia will be better for both sides in terms of promoting trade and the economy in general; adding “Our bilateral investments and other agreements including within the context of the Ethio-Somaliland MoU are consistent with international laws and the conduct of business between nation states.”

Delivering his presser, the minister said, “It is within this premise that we entered into the multi-million dollar investment project with the UAE's Dubai Ports World (DP World) for the expansion and modernization of the Berbera Port facilities and the Berbera Corridor connecting Ethiopia and Somaliland and to other landlocked countries in the greater Horn of Africa.”

“Our ability to enter into the deal with Ethiopia is perfectly within legitimate and legal discourse, the minister stated on its presser.”

The Foreign Minister finally called on the people of Ethiopia to back the bilateral cooperation.

### Mayor underscores safeguarding...

world stage. “Based on this, it is important to make new history by building up the values that connect yesterday with today, today with tomorrow.”

It is necessary to enrich the country through development so that the pride and freedom that the current generation has gained through the struggle of forefathers and mothers can be complete. In addition, they said that it is appropriate to leave a mark that can be remembered tomorrow, the mayor emphasized.

For his part, Ethiopian Patriots Association President Lij Daniel Jote Mesfin the commemoration of the martyrs' day is not to prepare for revenge by remembering past

wounds. The next generation should be able to continue Ethiopia through development and solidarity by following the wishes of fallen heroes.

Lij Daniel pointed out that it is expected of all to inform the new generation about the historical background of the commemoration as well as the reason for the victory.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald* at the venue, the Patriot Seyoum Tekelbirhan called on parents to educate the youth in order to ensure lasting peace and development in the country. Ethiopia has blessed with immense resources while its historical enemies have been working tirelessly to deter its attempts to prosper.

“Therefore, Ethiopians should focus on encouraging unity and peace to make their country a respectable member of the international community.”

The 87<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Martyr's Day was commemorated in the presence of patriots, senior government officials, representatives of various international and regional organizations.

The Martyr's Day commemorates the Italian Fascist forces' indiscriminate massacring of over 30,000 civilians in Addis Ababa in February 20, 1937 to avenge an assassination attempt by two Ethiopian patriots Abreham Dobocho and Moges Asgedom on the Italian Viceroy Rodolfo Graziani.

### Ethiopia finalizes preparations...

Tariff concessions have been made on commodities on aggregate, he noted.

With all countries, including Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria, Ethiopia has agreed to lift 90 percent of tariff from AfCFTA goods while the rest seven and three percent of commodities are under sensitive and exclusive products list respectively, according to him.

Among others, the AfCFTA was mainly established by the AU to achieve creating a single market for goods and services facilitated by movement of persons in order to deepen the economic integration of African continent compliance with the Pan-African Vision of “An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa.”

Meanwhile, asked about Ethiopia's further engagement in the AU ordinary sessions, the State Minister said that the country has informed leaders of the Union clearly about Somalia's case appertained to the Ethio-Somaliland MoU.

“Ethiopia's foreign policy underlines the need of regional integration, cooperation and mutual benefits. We have no history of invading or annexing others. In case, we need to work on boosting the people to people integration since we both have same people,” he said.

His associate, Foreign Affairs State Minister of Resources and Services, Ambassador Birtukan Ayano also briefed journalists that Ethiopia



Photo: Berihun Tadele

Ambassador Birtukan Ayano

welcomed over 8000 AU guests during the recent past ordinary session.

Ethiopia welcomed more than 8,000 African Union guests with better hospitality, 54 charter flights were also arrived at Bole international airport. While performing its regular task, the airport was receiving AU Guests without interruptions, she said.

Considering the international protocol, Ethiopia has accorded hospitable services to all guests and the positive reflection of the attendees also shows that they are treated well, according to her.

However, the accusation of Somalia's President against Ethiopian security personnel is unassociated with the service which had been received, she said, adding that the president's delegate was disrupting the international protocol by rejecting Ethiopian securities' escorting duty.

### New board to...

However, the government is working to establish a minimum wage floor when a worker is employed in flower farms and industries. The Ministry of Labor and Skills, together with different relevant bodies, has established a board and is in the process of starting the work, he added.

Getahun further highlighted that setting a minimum wage floor is an extensive task that takes into consideration different aspects including climatic conditions and it should be supplemented by appropriate study to ensure proper payment for employees. “The fee should be determined based on the industry environment. As an employers' confederation, we are negotiating for immediate use and push for its sooner operation.”

Noting some investors' misconception of the abundance of cheap labor in Ethiopia, the president insisted on the investor-oriented minimum wage implementation as a tool to address such misconception.

“The Ethiopian government assured foreign investors the availability of a competitive labor force, not cheaper labor force and it does not want its citizens to sell their knowledge and labor for cheap and to be exploited. Hence, employees need to get fair payment for the knowledge and energy they contribute in the workplace.”

Setting the minimum wage should preserve dialogue and understanding among all involved stakeholders to avoid the pressure on employers and to ensure mutual benefits, he emphasized.

# Opinion

## Beacon of African diplomacy: A preferred host for conferences

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Addis Ababa, the vibrant capital city of Ethiopia, stands as a shining example of African diplomacy and cultural richness. With its rich history, stunning landscapes, and burgeoning tourism industry, Addis Ababa has the potential to become a premier destination for international conferences and events. In particular, Addis Ababa's track record in hosting the African Union (AU) Summit and the First Ladies Conference showcases its exceptional capabilities as a host city. In this article, we will explore the unique characteristics that make Addis Ababa an ideal location for hosting such significant gatherings.

This year's AU summit showcased how the city is suitable conference center for guests from the continent. This weekend and in the earlier days, it welcomed more than 8,000 African Union guests with better hospitality, said the Foreign State Minister, Ambassador Birtukan Ayano. According to her, 54 charter flights arrived at Bole International Airport. While performing its regular task, the airport was receiving AU guests without interruptions.

Ethiopia has served AU guests those arrived in Addis to attend the 37<sup>th</sup> AU Summit and related conferences considering the protocol it deserves and to make guests feel comfortable, she said. Guests were also feeling the good service that the government of Ethiopia was delivering, according to her. Ethiopia, as a host country of the AU Ordinary Sessions, will continue to make good-faith guest welcomes, she added.

Historical significance and cultural heritage enables the city to be diplomatic hub and suitable tourism destination. Being part and parcel of the inception of African independence, the metropolis grabs the attention of leaders from all over the world.

One cannot discuss Addis Ababa without acknowledging its profound historical significance. Serving as the headquarters of the African Union, the city symbolizes the unity and aspirations of the African continent. Hosting the AU Summit in Addis Ababa reinforces the city's position as a hub for political and economic discussions that shape the future of Africa.

Moreover, Addis Ababa boasts a wealth of cultural heritage that is sure to captivate visitors attending the First Ladies Conference. The City is home to numerous museums, such as the National Museum of Ethiopia, which houses the famous fossilized remains of Lucy, one of humanity's oldest ancestors. Exploring these cultural treasures allows participants to delve into Ethiopia's rich history, fostering a deeper appreciation for Africa's diverse heritage. For instance, the construction of Adwa Victory Memorial Museum and other recreational centers at the heart of the city grab the attention of leaders from across the continent.

Recently according to reports of *the*

*Ethiopian Herald*, Participants made a visit to the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum which depicted history of the black man independence.

The historical building that recently inaugurated in Ethiopia is belonged to all Africans as it commemorates African freedom victory, Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

The remark was made by MoFA Minister Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie on last Wednesday's evening while hosting a state dinner for the participants of the 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of African Union (AU).

As to the Foreign Minister, the resistance movements and the victory of Adwa played a pivotal role in promoting Pan-Africanism.

The Adwa victory was a historic triumph that ensured equality among human beings. "It is truly remarkable how this victory continues to inspire and unite African peoples all over the world. The Adwa Victory Memorial Museum belongs to all Africans; it belongs for all of us," Amb. Taye said.

The victory of Adwa is indeed a magnificent revival of the spirit of unity and an embodiment of patriotic leadership, celebrating and recalling Adwa. The special monument is intended to understanding the past, remaking the present and shaping the future of Africa, as to MoFA.

The Adwa victory is an epoch defining moment in the African history, the FM said, adding the triumph of Ethiopian forces against the colonizer marked the first time an African country has successfully resisted foreign aggression.

By the same time, there were freedom movements in other parts of Africa such as in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Libya and so forth, according to Amb. Taye.

Addis Ababa's rapid development and investment in modern infrastructure make it an ideal host for large-scale conferences. The city's Bole International Airport serves as a major aviation hub, offering excellent connectivity to various international destinations. Accessibility is crucial for events of this magnitude, ensuring smooth travel arrangements for participants from across the globe.

In recent years, Addis Ababa has witnessed significant growth in its hospitality sector, with world-class hotels and conference venues catering to the needs of international visitors. The city boasts a range of accommodation options to suit different budgets, from luxurious five-star hotels to boutique establishments. The availability of state-of-the-art conference facilities, complemented by top-notch services, ensures a comfortable and productive environment for delegates.

Addis Ababa's long-standing political stability and commitment to security make it an attractive destination for high-profile conferences. The Ethiopian government

has consistently demonstrated its ability to provide a safe and secure environment for both local citizens and international visitors. Such stability is essential for hosting events of this magnitude, ensuring that participants can focus on the conference's objectives without concerns about their well-being.

Breathtaking Natural Beauty is also one of the manifestations of Addis Ababa that is becoming botanic garden of Africa. The initiative of the greenery legacy and the construction of parks and river side projects add a lot to healthy weather along with sensuous beauty.

While Addis Ababa may be a bustling metropolis, it also offers a gateway to Ethiopia's breathtaking natural landscapes. The city's proximity to stunning destinations like the Simien Mountains National Park and the Rift Valley Lakes provides conference attendees with the opportunity to explore the country's natural wonders during their stay. This blend of urban sophistication and natural beauty makes Addis Ababa an alluring destination for those seeking a multifaceted experience.

Integrity and hospitality of the public mesmerize various visitors and guests as the wide section of the citizenry are humble, descent and proud especially for guests and strangers. For chronologies, both leaders and the people have developed the culture of welcoming even fugitives. Hence, visitors feel a sense of good haven and consider Ethiopia as asylum.

To make Ethiopian cities more attractive and vibrant hub as tourism conference centers, the Ethiopian government can take several steps:

**Infrastructure development:** The government should invest more in improving the infrastructure of cities, including transportation systems, roads, airports, and public facilities. This will make it easier for tourists and conference attendees to travel to and within the cities.

**Conference facilities:** The government should promote the development of modern conference facilities with state-of-the-art technology and amenities. This includes convention centers, exhibition halls, and meeting rooms that can accommodate a large number of participants.

**Accommodation options:** The government should encourage the development of a range of accommodation options, such as hotels, resorts, and serviced apartments, to cater to the needs of conference attendees. These accommodations should offer comfortable rooms, conference facilities, and business services.

**Business-friendly environment:** The government should sustain a business-friendly environment by simplifying administrative processes, reducing bureaucracy, and ensuring a favorable tax and regulatory framework for conference organizers and businesses in the tourism sector.

**Marketing and promotion:** The government should actively market Ethiopian cities as conference destinations through targeted advertising campaigns, participation in international trade shows and conferences, and collaboration with tourism industry partners. This will help create awareness and attract conference organizers and attendees from around the world.

**Safety and security:** The government, as it has been doing, should prioritize the safety and security of tourists and conference attendees by implementing effective law enforcement measures, enhancing security infrastructure, and providing adequate medical and emergency services.

**Cultural and recreational activities:** Ethiopian cities, following the footsteps of Addis Ababa, should offer a range of cultural and recreational activities to enhance the overall experience for conference attendees. This can include guided tours of historical sites, cultural performances, traditional music and dance, and opportunities for outdoor activities such as hiking and wildlife safaris.

**Collaboration with the private sector:** The government should collaborate with the private sector, including tourism and hospitality industry stakeholders, to develop and implement strategies for promoting Ethiopian cities as tourism conference centers. This can involve public-private partnerships, incentives for private investment, and engagement with local businesses and communities.

By implementing these measures, the Ethiopian government can create an enabling environment for tourism conferences, attract international events, and boost the overall tourism industry, leading to economic growth and development in the cities.

In conclusion, Addis Ababa, with its rich history, modern and progressive infrastructure, and commitment to security, stands as an exceptional host for the African Union Summit and the First Ladies Conference. The city's ability to seamlessly blend cultural heritage and modern amenities creates an environment conducive to productive discussions and memorable experiences.

By choosing Addis Ababa as the venue for such significant gatherings, Ethiopia showcases its potential as a tourism powerhouse and reinforces its position as a beacon of African diplomacy. As Addis Ababa continues to grow and develop, it is poised to become a leading destination for international conferences and a testament to Africa's progress and aspirations.

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

# Editorial

# Opinion

## Reaffirmed commitment ought to produce desired results

The 44th Executive Council Meeting and the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union that was held from 14-18 February 2024 and deliberated on a range of continental matters concluded by reaffirming commitment to address the continent's challenges, prioritize key areas, and solidify international diplomacy.

Among the topics discussed thoroughly by the leaders were accessibility of quality education, peace and security challenges, AU's reform initiatives, human rights, good governance, sustainable development and the implementation of Agenda 2063.

Concluding the Session, the Summit renewed commitment to enhance efforts and address the most pressing challenges of the continent and to realize the continental vision. To tackle the challenges and secure a brighter future for Africa, the need for concerted actions was also highlighted.

Africa as a continent is struggling with myriads of challenges and has been entangled with numerous unresolved matters which in turn delaying its growth and development. Even though the continent is blessed with abundant natural and human resources, multitudes of its peoples still live in poverty. Poor educational and health system, underdeveloped and inadequate infrastructures, the adverse impacts of climate change and food security coupled with weak institutions and governance as well as peace and security threats among others are casting a shadow over Africa's development endeavors and its growth. It time for African leaders to change these circumstances through cultivating Africa's natural resources.

In fact, addressing Africa's major challenges and building a strong Africa does not fall on the mercy of any foreign forces; rather, it is in the hands of its own children. And, no one else but it is only Africans who can develop Africa. In this regard, the role and responsibilities of the African Union Commission (AUC), the continental bloc, is multidimensional. Confidently, the African leaders have carefully realized the commitment the current situation demands so that they can contribute their share to transform the continent.

As part of this mission, the Commission in its most recent session has reaffirmed commitment to find solutions to the continent's most demanding problems, prioritize key areas, and solidify international diplomacy. It has renewed commitment to fend off peace, security and instability challenges, democracy, good governance and unconstitutional government changes, to invest in and work on continents' educational matters, and the like many concerns that remain hindrances for Africa to achieve its peace and development aspirations- Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Commission should exert more energy and work diligently to bring tangible outcomes; going far beyond making promises.

Mainly, by building strong partnership with member countries, creating resilient institutions and exploring new ways, it should follow up, assess and evaluate the progress and implementation processes of agreed commitments to achieve the needed outcomes.

More importantly, as one hand cannot clap; it takes two to tango, African leaders should show political will and take bold actions in supporting the Union's efforts. Similarly, policymakers, analysts, researchers, academics, and development professionals should put the right policy and strategy in place to facilitate Africans' future development. They must take a long and hard look at the continent's development problems and on the ways of improving Africa's poor economic performance by devising practical policies and strategies to let Africa stand by its own feet at all means.

## Pan African zeal that Africans should always maintain

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

About 83 years ago thousands of residents of Addis Ababa were brutally massacred by fascist Italian invaders in retaliation to the grenade attack by heroic figures named Abraham Deboch and Moges Asgedom against the fascist commander Graziani.

The sacrifice they paid is a continuation of the resistance against foreign pressure and subjugation ... that was sparked at Adwa in 1896 (4 decades back). These heroic deeds and all the other anti-colonial struggles and victories of Africans were at the moment geared towards realizing the political liberation of their respective nations. Yet, people of the continent should always cherish the motives and resilience of the past as their continent still has to liberate itself from the post-colonial injustice that it is facing.

No human society wants to be subjugated by others as everyone has the freedom to exercise their rights in their land. As much as Europeans want to have their freedom, they should have also respected the rights of Africans. Yet they resorted to conquering other parts of the world like Africa, Latin America and Asia under their colonial rule.

This led to the economic and political subjugation of the stated part of the world. Many countries of the world suffered from the colonial rule. In addition to the loss they sustained during colonization, the one after colonization is tantamount.

Even after colonization, many of the countries have continued to face the aftermath of it. Africa can be mentioned as the best example here. Many of the countries have fallen into protracted wars of power rivalry, ethnic and sectarian violence, coup d'etat ... etc that are the main outcomes of the conspiracies brewed by colonialists.

The main reasons for the resumption of war and conflict in the countries are the design by former colonialists to maintain the benefits they had during their rule. As a result, they support puppet governments that favour their benefits. Any resistance would meet confrontation from not only the puppet governments but also from the long and hidden hands of the former colonialists who are the enablers of the dictatorial, puppet regimes. Other outside forces that have lusted for the rich natural resources of the countries also meddled in the internal affairs of the countries to have a stake in the illegally exploited resources.

These are but a few of the scenarios that unfolded in the continent after the hard-won independence was achieved. This post-colonial crisis has been very challenging to the countries no less than the times of anti-colonial struggle. It has cost them the lives of millions of people, property and resources that would have tided them over to a better socio-economic development.

It has also caused the migration of human resources to the developed world while exposing the countries to poverty and exploitation of its resources.

In light of all these crises, one can see the value and magnitude of the anti-colonial struggle and victory of Ethiopian rulers and the people both during the scramble for Africa in the 1890s and also the aggression of the fascist Italians in the Second World War.

On the two occasions, Ethiopians fought with

what they already had mainly to safeguard the sovereignty of the nation. The fact that they maintained their independence and sovereignty has enabled their nation to be a founding member of international organizations like the League of Nations, United Nations and Organization of African Unity (now African Union). It also joined other international movements like the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1960s.

Indeed the fact that Ethiopia was an independent country during the foundation of these International organizations especially the League of Nations has enabled it to be a founder and member of these organizations and has remained only a symbolic history as the league failed the nation when it was attacked by the fascist Italians in 1935.

One of the main reasons is that as an African country, it was alone in the league. This called for the unity of African nations and voice their agenda in unison. This means the victory that each country scores per se must also merge to bear a better outcome. Especially at this moment, several factors call for the solidarity of Africans in the global arena to put political and economic pressure.

Africans are still facing challenges from the rest of the world which they have to stand together and fend off. One of the issues is political sidelining in which the continent's voice is not heard at UN forums. Therefore, the leaders must push ahead to secure a permanent seat at the UN Security Council. This step will empower the continent to fend off the attempts of coercion against member states. Furthermore, it can add its bargaining power in global economic and political forums.

The other important agenda that Africans should wage a strong struggle on is the issue of securing the necessary financial and technical support to withstand the impacts of climate change. As repeatedly indicated Africa is facing the brunt of the global environmental catastrophe for which it is not a significant contributor or accountable. However, due to the lack of a strong voice, it still cannot receive even the promised amount of funding that is geared towards overcoming the impacts of climate change.

Furthermore, Africans still have to collaborate on securing their interests on global issues like restructuring the global financial regime. The existing financial and economic rule which is dominated by few Western countries and their institutions have not favored the continent and are rather the means of coercion and interference in the rights and sovereignty of the countries. Therefore, Africa should revamp its post-colonial struggle on this vital issue by actively engaging in emerging global economic blocs like the BRICS +.

All these challenges that are facing the continent at this moment may seem an uphill battle only until the countries pursue them with endurance as they did during the times of colonization. The countries are not new to such struggle as they have passed through the decades of anti-colonial movements as well as the post-colonial struggles that followed.

The sacrifice paid by Ethiopian martyrs 83 years ago as well as that of all Africans who fell while fighting colonialists always remain as sources of both pride and endurance for the current and future generation to stand strong in the face of injustice and subjugation.

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



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The Ethiopian Herald

# Business & Economy

## Transforming water supply for economic growth: Dire Dawa's ambitious project

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Water is a fundamental resource that plays a vital role in sustaining life and fueling economic growth. Ethiopia, as a rapidly developing nation, recognizes the vital role of water supply in driving economic growth. The government has prioritized the expansion and improvement of water and sanitation infrastructure across the country. Access to clean water is essential for agriculture, industry, and human consumption. By investing in water development projects, such as the one in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia aims to enhance productivity, attract investments, and improve the overall standard of living.

The Dire Dawa City Administration, through its water and sewerage authority, is taking significant strides to address the rising water demand. The ambitious project, funded by the City Administration, is set to be completed next year. Its primary objectives include improving and expanding water and sanitation infrastructure throughout the city. The project encompasses various aspects, such as the construction of new water storage reservoirs, the expansion of distribution networks, and the implementation of advanced technologies for efficient water management.

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Authority's Water Supply and Distribution Directorate Director Eng. Remedan Musa said that the ambitious project, which is funded by the City Administration and expected to be completed next year aims to improve and expand water and sanitation infrastructure across the city.

Ethiopia, a country known for its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty, is also working hard in order to provide access to clean water and adequate sanitation facilities to its growing population. The Dire Dawa water development project is part of a wider effort to address this issue and harness the economic benefits associated with a reliable water supply.

"Access to clean water is a prerequisite for economic development. It enables communities to lead healthier lives, reduces the incidence of water-borne diseases, and increases productivity. With improved water and sanitation infrastructure, Dire Dawa can attract more businesses and investments, creating a favorable environment for economic growth. The availability of clean water is not only important for individuals but also crucial for industries, such as the free trade area, industrial park, and dry port surroundings, which rely on a steady and sufficient water supply to operate efficiently," Remedan said.

Noting that the project would revolutionize the water and sanitation sector in Dire Dawa, he noted that the project's significant budget indicates the seriousness of the authority's mission to ensure clean water access and proper sanitation facilities for all residents.



*Supplying potable water to Dire Dawa people*

The development project encompasses various aspects, including the construction of a new water storage reservoir, the expansion of distribution networks, and the implementation of advanced technologies for efficient water management, Remedan added.

The completion of the water development project will result in increased capacity to meet the growing demand for clean water. With a monthly water supply capacity of one million cubic meters, the Authority will be able to provide uninterrupted services to approximately 50,000 customers, benefiting around 300,000 individuals. This reliable water supply will not only enhance the quality of life for the residents but also attract more investors and businesses to the region, stimulating economic growth and job creation, he noted.

Moreover, the economic benefits of this project are multifaceted. Firstly, it will meet the growing demand for clean water in the free trade area, industrial park, and dry port surroundings. These areas are vital economic hubs that attract local and international businesses, create job opportunities and stimulate economic growth. A reliable water supply will ensure the smooth functioning of these industries and contribute to their expansion.

Secondly, the project will strengthen Dire Dawa's capacity to provide uninterrupted water services throughout the city. This reliability is crucial for attracting investments in various sectors, as potential investors seek locations with robust infrastructure. Adequate water supply and sanitation facilities will contribute to the overall business environment, making Dire Dawa an attractive destination for entrepreneurs and companies, he noted.

Moreover, improved access to clean water

and proper sanitation will have a positive impact on public health. Waterborne diseases and poor sanitation conditions can hinder economic development by causing illness and reducing productivity. The Dire Dawa project aims to mitigate these challenges, leading to better health outcomes, increased workforce productivity, and a healthier population overall.

Dire Dawa, with its strategic location and the presence of the free trade area, is a hub for economic activities. As to him, the completion of the water development project will significantly contribute to the city's economic growth and overall prosperity. The project's budget of 1.6 billion Birr underscores the seriousness of the City Administration's mission to ensure clean water access and proper sanitation facilities for all residents.

The project further encompasses various aspects, including the construction of new water storage reservoirs, the expansion of distribution networks, and the implementation of advanced technologies for efficient water management. These measures will strengthen the Authority's ability to provide uninterrupted services throughout the city and meet the increasing water demand.

Additionally, the collaboration between the City Administration and international partners reflects the recognition of the authority's efforts to improve water and sanitation services and its commitment to sustainable development. Such recognition not only boosts the city's image but also attracts potential investors who value sustainable practices and social responsibility. The availability of a reliable water supply and proper sanitation facilities will enhance public health, improve living conditions, and foster economic growth in

Dire Dawa.

These measures will enhance the authority's capacity to meet the growing demand for clean water and strengthen its ability to provide uninterrupted services across the city, he stressed. The authority has gained access to technical expertise and financial resources necessary for implementing large-scale projects from city administration, he expressed.

According to him, the collaboration reflects the international community's recognition of the authority's efforts to improve water and sanitation services and its commitment to sustainable development.

Remedan expressed his gratitude to the City Administration for its support and highlighted the water and sanitation project's potential to improve public health, enhance economic growth, and residents of the city.

All in all, the City's water development project represents a significant step forward in addressing the water and sanitation needs of its growing population. By ensuring access to clean water and improving sanitation infrastructure, the project will have far-reaching economic benefits. It will attract investments, stimulate business growth, and create employment opportunities in the region. Moreover, the authority's commitment to environmental sustainability and collaboration with international partners highlight its dedication to both present and future generations.

The economic benefits of this project extend beyond Dire Dawa. Ethiopia, as a whole, recognizes the importance of water supply for economic growth and sustainable development. The completion of this venture will serve as a model for effective water and sanitation management, setting an example for other states within the country. Moreover, it will contribute to the overall development and well-being of the city and its people, attracting investments, improving public health, and enhancing economic growth.

With the completion of this ambitious venture, the Dire Dawa City Administration aims to become a model for effective water and sanitation management, setting an example for other states and contributing to the overall development and well-being of the city and its people. The project's success will not only transform the lives of the residents but also positions Dire Dawa as an attractive destination for investors seeking sustainable growth opportunities.

As the Dire Dawa City Administration undertakes this groundbreaking water development project, it calls upon investors and stakeholders to collaborate in capacity building, technology transfer, input supply, sanitation, and financial support activities. By working together, they can ensure the realization of a prosperous and sustainable future for Dire Dawa, where access to clean water and sanitation facilities drives economic growth and improves the quality of life for all, he added.

# Art & Culture

## Book publishing in Ethiopia, new trends in global industry

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

In this article, publishing means not the printing press in general but book publishing although advances in publishing technology are closely linked to newspaper industry. In the case of Ethiopia, publishing started with newspapers and later on included books as new technology was introduced in the printing business which was a government monopoly.

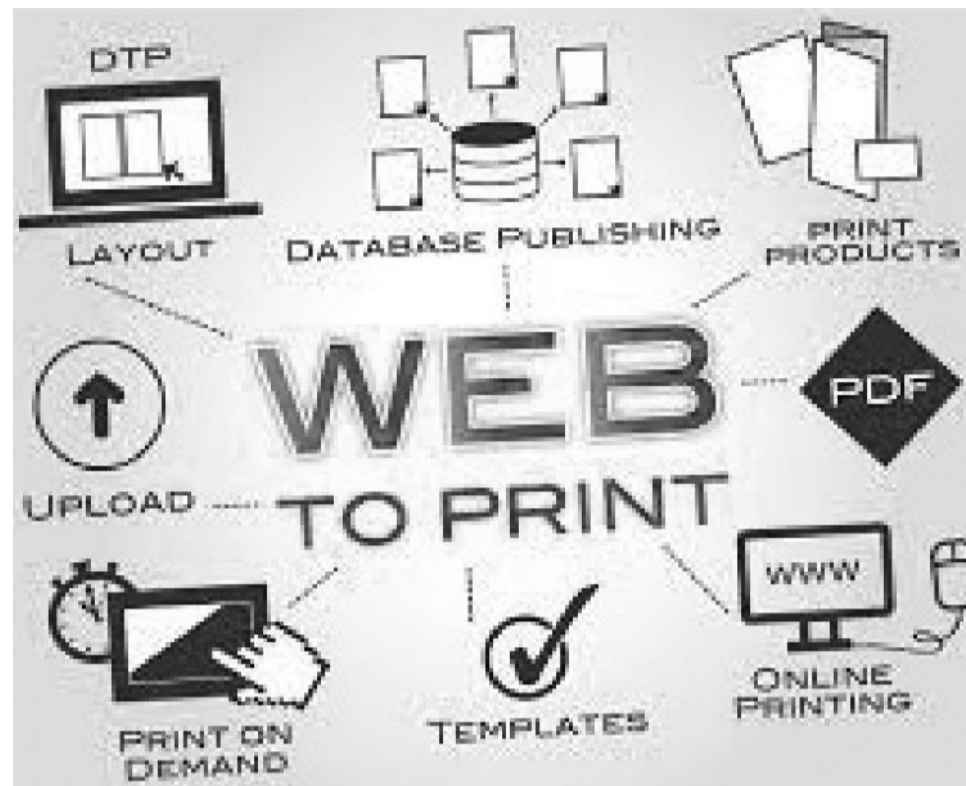
Printing and publishing do not denote the same activity. Printing is a general activity that includes newspaper, book and other materials that are produced by the printing press which is defined as, "machine by which text and images are transferred from movable type to paper or other media by means of ink." while publishing means "sharing your writing with someone else."

The following ideas are inspired by recent trends in book publishing in the Western world, the intention being a critical appraisal of publishing in Ethiopia as compared to modern trends in global publishing industry. What does the Ethiopian publishing industry which is stuck in stagnation as far as book published is concerned although modern printing technology has been introduced a long time ago or in the 19th century to be more exact?

In Europe, "book publishing was started in 1455 and the Gutenberg Bible was the first major book printed in Europe with movable type and 20 years later the first book in English was printed. Then in 1640, the Bay Psalms book was the first book printed in the North American British colonies." In other words, publishing means making content available to the public."

Nowadays, the development of publishing has created two methods or ways of publishing known as traditional publishing and self-publishing. There is a difference between the two types of publishing. What is known as traditional publishing is publishing as we have known it for a long time. That is to say that there are two distinct actors in the traditional publishing industry. There are publishing houses on the one side, the printers who print the books and the writers who prepare the manuscripts and hand them to the publishing houses. If we leave aside the printers whose role is only technical, that is to say, to print the books with their printing presses, we are left with the two actors that are vital for the survival of the publishing industry: publishers and writers.

In Europe, publishers emerged earlier than anywhere else, followed by the United States where book publishing was not only a massive industry in its own right, but also the motor that drove the development of the economy and society at large. The intellectual flourishing that was evident in the 20th century triggered the need to publish and disseminate new ideas. This in turn fueled the culture of book reading on a massive level and pushed educational



development at a momentum never seen before.

The growth of publishing in general and publishing houses in particular helped unprecedented growth in literature worldwide and brought about parallel developments in culture and the arts. In the old days, writers did their jobs on their own or with assistance from powerful and rich people from the ruling circles particularly in Europe. The 20th century gains in the development of printing and book publishing have, so to say, liberated writers not only from dependency on powerful people who helped them publish their books but also made them professional creators of ideas and stories.

This process helped writers gain professional independence but also offered unprecedented opportunities for them to improve their lives and become even prosperous. Nowadays, it is natural to talk about bestselling authors who struck it rich and became not only millionaires but also billionaires.

The second trend in global publishing, particularly in the West, is a phenomenon called self-publishing. When I first came across the term, I thought it meant that writers had started to publish their works by themselves, paying the printing houses the money needed for the job from their own pockets. However, I later on realized that I was mistaken in my assumption as I read more about self-publishing and then engaged in the self-publishing opportunity created by the American book trade conglomerate known as Amazon Books, owned by Jeff Bezos, the second richest man on our planet at present. Amazon has invented a new system that allows authors to publish their books by using the platforms of the company. This process is not only simple but also efficient as well as beneficial both to Amazon and to the authors who publish their books and earn royalties.

Authors at Amazon write and edit their books that are approved by editors and then given the green light for publishing. They use the templates provided by the publishers to upload, edit, and perform so many operations related to their books until they reach Amazon bookstores across the world for distribution. After this, the only thing they do is to wait for their royalties that are paid in accordance to the official agreements. In this way, authors can live and work at one end of the world sitting in the privacy of their homes and perform all the publishing process and collect their royalties from their local banks. Thus, the hassles of the traditional publishing system are now effectively overcome. How amazing if not miraculous is this!

This reminds me of the time when I first took my book manuscript to a local publisher back in the 1980s and all the ups and downs, the editing, and waiting for a year or more to collect your tiny royalties. Back then, the couple of publishers that were operating in Addis Ababa, namely Ethiopian Book Centre and Kuraz Publishing had a similar system of sharing the income from the sales they printed and covered all the printing costs.

First they collected their printing and distribution costs and then share the profits between themselves and the writers on the basis of 65% and 35% sharing agreement. At that time, writing books or publishing them was very demanding and the prospect of self-publishing was unthinkable. We had to take our handwritten manuscripts to the young typists around Piazza and then submit them to the editors who returned them with so many corrections and then you have to recopy the manuscripts and take them back to the typist and so on until your work is finally approved and sent to one of the printers in towns.

Amazon has indeed revolutionized publishing in general and self-publishing in particular thanks to the amazing

technological advances of recent decades and the parallel expansion in global book distribution and marketing in general. Yet, this does not mean that Amazon has created the perfect condition for authors as far their incomes are concerned. The few biggest publishing and distribution companies are controlling the production and distribution of books and royalties are fixed by them. Authors have no power or right to negotiate the level of royalties.

Until the end of the 19th century, Ethiopian church scribes and writers were using only their hands to work on parchment to write their books that were largely church liturgy. This was the only method for preparing manuscripts that lasted for hundreds of years. Although a certain Elen Sankrean, a Portuguese historian was quoted as indicating that religious books were printed as early as the 17th century, this was not confirmed by anyone who wrote on the history of printing or publishing in Ethiopia.

In more than 100 years, printing in Ethiopia has grown considerably both in terms of technology and the capital circulating in the industry. Starting with government-owned printing press, we now have private printers with varying capacities operating in the country. In contrast to this the book publishing industry has not grown at a pace many industry analysts would expect. There are various reasons for this lagging; some of which can be indicated as follows.

What drives the publishing industry is believed to be investment in the sector as well the proliferation of literature, the growth of a literate public, the number of people involved in the writing business. Book publishing in this country could not grow for these and other reasons. There are also other discouraging factors that are not conducive to the development of the publishing industry. Printers import most of the raw materials used in book printing such as paper pulps and ink. The absence of companies that produce pulps that goes into the production of printing papers.

To be fair or realistic, we can say that the above factors have been discouraging to the growth of the book publishing industry in Ethiopia. After more than one hundred years, the situation in book publishing as a business has not made considerable advances and Ethiopia remains one of the countries with the lowest number of new books published every year. The reading public is very small even by African standards and there are no professional writers, who can earn their living from writing and selling their books.

While the rest of the world has accessed the post-modern stage of publishing technological advancement, Ethiopia is still lagging or trailing behind and the actors and factors that drive the industry unfortunately seem indifferent and without initiatives to change this deplorable or unacceptable situation.

# Global Affairs



## Representing the unrepresented: The world can no longer ignore Africa

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

The last couple of years have seen expedited and increased calls for an equal representation of countries and continents at global stages. The world is moving into a multi-polar order with new and emerging state and non-state actors deepening their roles in global geopolitical matters.

The rise of the petrol-rich countries, also known as gulf nations such as the UAE, and Saudi Arabia, and the increasing assertiveness of Turkey, India and G20 nations have been flexing their muscles in all spheres. This shocked the world order to its core and resulted in reconfiguration of powers and alliances also presenting countries with a long list of foreign policy choices. Africa finds itself in a fiercely contested world and rapidly changing geopolitical developments. While the proliferation of actors could risk confrontations, it also expands alliance formations.

Blessed with vast natural resources and a youth population, Africa can no longer be a forgotten nation. And, the international community realizes that it cannot afford to leave behind a decisive continent. The continent's growing economy and political decisiveness entice countries and blocs to crave a cemented partnership with Africa.

The world also is trying to include Africa although the path towards equal and fair representation of global arrangements is bumpy. The inclusion of Africa and Egypt into BRICS and the admission of Africa in the G20 countries could be mentioned as a leapfrog step towards an inclusive world order.

While these developments send a positive signal, Africa still finds itself on the back foot in the major decisions of global

affairs some ironically on its internal matters. Having no seat in the United Nations Security Council means only member countries decide on outstanding peace and security matters, consequently creating fertile ground for external political intervention. On different occasions, the UNSC has passed wrong decisions and politically motivated measures against some countries that appeared contradictory to one of the veto-wielding nations. It is against this backdrop that the African countries are pushing for securing two permanent seats.

Ethiopia has been calling for Africa's permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council amidst foreign intervention in its internal matter. The African Union has been making its agenda in its summits. And, the quest also received similar attention. This year's meeting is at an important juncture when the continent is pushing for a fair representation on the world stage.

The 37<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) was held last week under the theme: "Educate an African Fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Building Resilient Education Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive, Lifelong, Quality, and Relevant Learning in Africa."

Speaking at the 37<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government, the issue of securing Africa's rightful place in the global arena was high on the agenda. Moussa Faki Mahamat emphasized the need for concerted efforts to secure Africa's representation.

The Commissioner stressed the importance of collaboration among all concerned parties to foster a strong, peaceful, and prosperous Africa. He highlighted that recurring conflicts, often fueled by militants and coup d'états, have hindered Africa's

progress towards a brighter future.

In his welcome remarks, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), underscored the importance of creating strong regional and continental platforms, emphasizing that these platforms are essential for addressing national development challenges from geopolitical, logistical, and security standpoints. He commended the African Union for its accession to the G20, as "marking a significant milestone" on the global stage.

"The Global South is becoming an unavoidable part of the solution to the main crises that afflict this planet.... Only an inclusive social project will allow us to establish prosperous, free, democratic, and sovereign societies," Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva stressed during the opening of the AU Assembly. President Lula offered to support the efforts of the African continent in closing the digital gap and reiterated his country's readiness to help advance technology, ensuring that governance mechanisms for Artificial Intelligence (AI) reflect the perspectives of the Global South.

"The country (Brazil) has committed to facilitating improved dialogue between the G20 and the High-Level Panel set up by the UN Secretary-General. This initiative aims to stimulate discussions about the Global Digital Compact, focusing on creating effective, equitable, and wide-reaching governance frameworks to support Africa's digital transformation", he noted

Ambassador Salah A. Hammad, Head of AGA Secretariat and Senior Human Rights Expert, highlighted Africa's significance as a player in international politics and forums. He lamented the absence of permanent seats for Africa on the UNSC, asserting that this situation fails to adequately represent the interests of the African people.

To address this imbalance, the African Union established the C10, a committee of ten heads of state and government, chaired by the President of Sierra Leone. The committee's mandate is to facilitate an African position on the reform of the UNSC, advocating for a minimum of two permanent seats for Africa and an increase in non-permanent seats to five, ensuring representation from each region of Africa in a rotational manner.

"I've seen the permanent members being favorable to at least one African permanent member, the United States said so. The Russian Federation said so. China has been positive in this regard, the UK and France too. So for the first time, I'm hopeful that at least a partial reform of the UN Security Council could be possible for this flagrant injustice to be corrected and for Africa to have at least one permanent member in the Security Council. It is not guaranteed, nothing that, of course, depends on the Secretary-General. It depends exclusively on Member States of the General Assembly. But for the first time, I think there are reasons to be hopeful."

It set the C-10 group in 2005 with the core mandate of canvassing support for one African position on reform of the Security Council.

On the reforms of international institutions and frameworks, the UN chief said, "The United Nations Security Council is paralyzed by geopolitical divisions. And its composition does not reflect the reality of today's world. It must be reformed."

He added, "The global financial system, including the Bretton Woods Institutions, has failed to provide a global safety net for developing countries in distress, as it was created after the Second World War in a different global economic situation."



# Law & Politics

## February: A month of independence, martyrdom

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

For many decades, the people of Africa have been wallowing in the quagmire of colonialism. Black people were suffering excruciating pain created by the system where black people were subjects and treated inhumanely.

Where Africans were in the darkness, a country from the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia, stood shoulder high to show what black people are capable of. Ethiopians, and all black people, will raise their heads whenever they talk about the bravery that Ethiopian patriots paid in the battle of Adwa. Ethiopia is the only nation that enjoys victory, not freedom, over colonialism and white supremacy. Through Adwa Victory, the black taught, for the first time, the world that every human being in the world is equal. That is why Ethiopia is still considered the light and an example to the whole African people to liberate themselves from the shackles of slavery and colonialism.

After the Adwa victory over the white colonial power, other African nations who were under colonialism started to ask for their freedom and paid the ultimate price to emancipate themselves from slavery. Ethiopia played a tremendous role in supporting African brothers and sisters by providing the necessary support to realize their freedom.

From all the months of the year, February is unique to black people. The month is known as the 'Month of Black History' because many African nations got their freedom. Throughout the world, black people celebrate the month to remember their pain and how their ancestors were the sacrificial lambs for the freedom of generations to come.

While the black community around the world enjoys the month, Ethiopia, on the other hand, remembers the month as the month of the most heinous massacre committed on its people by Fascist Italy. When the brave Ethiopians Abreha Deboch and Moges Asgedom attempted to assassinate Marshal Rodolfo Graziani, the troops of Fascist Italy took measures to kill more than 30 thousand Ethiopians without showing mercy. For this reason, Ethiopia remembers February 19 as Martyrs' Day for those who were brutally killed by the fascists. Parallel to Black History Month, Ethiopia also commemorates February as a month of martyrdom.

For its entire history, Ethiopia is well-known as the sovereign state and founding member of many international organizations, including the League of Nations, and the



current United Nations (UN). However, such privileges would not protect the nation from any foreign aggression. Ethiopia has the right to be protected from any unprovoked and aggressive invasion from any nation. Such rights could not stop fascist Italy from invading the sovereign nation and causing Italy to commit the century's most heinous crimes against humankind.

The fascist aggression was revenge for Italy's defeat in the Adwa war. The fascist had been preparing itself well for over 40 years to hit Ethiopians hard and bring them to their knees. To realize its dreams, fascist Italy started attempting its invasion of Ethiopia in 1934.

According to reports, "Italy deployed 685,000 soldiers, another 4,000 from Eritria and more than 285,000 soldiers from its colony in the former Italian Somaliland. Italy had 6,000 machine guns, 2000 artillery and 599 tanks as well as 390 aircraft. Italy later ordered and acquired 3,300 machine guns, 275 artillery pieces, 200 tanks and 205 aircraft. This was no match to the Ethiopian Army which consisted of 350,000-760,000 trained and untrained peasant soldiers with ammunition of 400,000 mainly old rifles; 234 antiquated artillery and 75 anti-tank guns; 4 tanks and 13 outmoded aircraft with four pilots."

All the artillery that the Italian Soldiers

got was so advanced to its Ethiopian counterparts. However, Ethiopian patriots and soldiers were untouchable for those well-advanced troops of Italy. Ethiopians showed their unwavering stand towards their motherland even when they were fighting uneven forces.

According to Wikipedia, "Following the defeat of the Ethiopian forces under his command at the Battle of Maychew on 31 March 1936; Emperor Haile Selassie left Ethiopia to address the League of Nations to plead for their assistance against the Italians."

According to Ian Campbell's book 'The Addis Ababa Massacre: Italy's National Shame', in June 1936, just after Italian armies had entered the Ethiopian capital, Mussolini ordered his viceroy that 'all rebels taken prisoner to be shot'. The book also stated, "About 19,000 men, women and children were murdered in Addis Ababa in three days of mayhem from 19-21 February 1937. Some were shot or hanged, others burned to death when their huts were set on fire, and some were beaten to death with clubs, shovels or pitchforks. Yet more were drowned, by being dropped down wells or thrown into the river. The perpetrators were Fascist militia, Fascist-approved immigrant civilians, Libyans and other colonial troops (askari). With some reluctance, ordinary Italian soldiers and carabinieri joined in,

too."

"In exile in London, Emperor Haile Selassie had encouraged such Ethiopian 'resistance' to Fascist rule. Almost immediately after the grenades detonated, Italian forces, in a moment of mutual terror, fired into the crowd. However, by the afternoon, local Fascist party boss, Guido Cortese, a young colonialist intellectual rather than a thug, had issued his followers with a carte blanche to do what they liked in the city," Campbell elaborated in his book.

Reports prevail that in 1946 when Haile Selassie's restored government presented evidence and appealed to the United Nations half a million of his subjects fell during Italian rule and asked for justice. Unfortunately, the United Nations ignored the matter. Italian perpetrators avoided justice and the Italian public has typically viewed the country's imperial record as beneficent.

All and all, Ethiopians have seen the two sides of life; having destroyed the Italian invasion in Adwa, and remembering the martyrs of February 19. The month of February is a memorial for Ethiopian fathers and forefathers who paid their bones and blood both for the independence of brother African nations and the lives sacrificed to the evil massacre of fascist Italy.

# INTERNATIONAL News

## Chinese President congratulates African leaders on 37<sup>th</sup> AU Summit

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday sent a congratulatory message to the 37th African Union (AU) summit.

Xi pointed out that the world today is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century, and the Global South represented by China and Africa is booming, which has a profound impact on the course of world history.

The AU brings African countries together to seek strength through unity, and promote integration as well as the building of free trade areas, Xi said.

The AU's successful accession to the G20 has further enhanced Africa's representation and lifted its voice in global governance, and China extends heartfelt congratulations on that, he added.

The Chinese president stressed that over the past year, China-Africa relations have grown deeper. As the China-Africa Leaders' Dialogue was successfully held, the two sides decided to support each other in exploring their modernization paths and jointly create a favorable environment for realizing their development visions, Xi added.

The new session of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation is going to be held in 2024, Xi noted.

He said that he stands ready to work with leaders of African countries, with a focus on the benefits of people from both sides, to draw up a new blueprint for China-Africa cooperation and promote the joint building of a high-level China-Africa community with a shared future.

*Source: Xinhua*

## Climate change, hunger and HIV are a triple threat to vulnerable African women

"I have no other way out," said Inês, a mother of four in the Mutauanha Piloto neighborhood of Nampula, Mozambique, who was interviewed by a member of my team. "I have children to support, I have to take risks."

Every year, Inês cultivates a small crop of tomatoes and onions to sell, and every year, it gets harder to produce enough. So she turned to sex work in exchange for food. In 2007, she learned she was HIV-positive.

I have been working in the field of HIV care and research for over 20 years as an infectious disease physician and epidemiologist, and I've heard many similar stories of women endangering their health to cope with food insecurity against the backdrop of climate change.

In Africa alone, an estimated 140 million people face acute food insecurity. Recent extreme droughts coupled with erratic flooding in such countries as Burundi and South Sudan are rapidly damaging crop yields and displacing people. Globally, recent armed conflict will continue to exacerbate hunger, starvation and death.

For women like Inês, the increased risk of HIV acquisition compounds the climate change/food insecurity threat.

In concert with ministries of health, my ICAP at Columbia University colleagues and I analyzed data from a multinational project in sub-Saharan Africa testing hundreds of thousands of people for HIV, in addition to assessing access to — and factors associated with — HIV prevention and treatment. Looking at data from six countries in southern and eastern Africa with high HIV burden, we found that food insecurity was associated with a two-fold increase in HIV acquisition in women, but not men, which might have been driven by an increase in women having sex for money, food or gifts.

Women with severe food insecurity also reported more forced and condomless sex

with partners whose HIV status they did not know. Young food-insecure women had more significantly older partners than food-secure women and unmarried women were shown to be at higher risk of severe hunger. Our data support other studies from this region, which have shown that hunger drives risk behaviors.

The intersection between food insecurity and HIV acquisition isn't just tied to increased risk-taking, but one's ability to maintain treatment. In the Solutions 4 Sustainability study, a separate study I conducted with my ICAP at Columbia University colleagues and the Mozambique National Institute of Health after the devastating cyclones of 2019, a focus group of women living with HIV reported that the most significant post-cyclone hardship they faced was a lack of food.

As one woman from the study stated, "You won't have the strength to take those pills [antiretrovirals], those pills require you to eat."

Another participant observed the exchange of food for sex in the temporary communities set up for those displaced after the cyclone:

"There was no way to ... minimize these issues of violence, sexual abuse because although people have moved from one place to another, sex always goes with them."

The implications of climate change on HIV health outcomes have not historically been made obvious, but as an international development community, we are beginning to see the range of risk behaviors associated with climate change impacts, especially among women. We have a responsibility to establish programming that reflects what we know.

Our research across the six sub-Saharan African countries showed that women receiving food support had almost 70 percent fewer new HIV infections, possibly due to less high-risk sex. It is vital to provide food support directly to women in communities with high HIV burden,

especially young or unmarried women. In tandem with food support, women should also be linked to HIV prevention services at a minimum during food shortages or climate catastrophes.

International development funders must begin considering the climate change/food insecurity health nexus in their programming requests to ensure that the "last mile" of those at risk of and those living with HIV have access to long-term solutions to barriers they confront every day to achieve health.

September's African Climate Summit highlighted the potential of Africa's ability to lead on innovative solutions to the climate crisis, which, in turn, would require the world's industrialized countries largely responsible for the pollution causing climate change to invest in these efforts. This, too, could be a mechanism through which industrialized nations provide support during times of economic and climate catastrophe as a catalyst for HIV prevention.

Over the past two decades, I have observed historic advances made in HIV prevention, care and treatment firsthand. Antiretroviral pills can now be taken just once a day and pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, is increasingly available worldwide. Studies have shown that countries hardest hit by HIV in southern Africa are seeing major declines in new infections and improved viral suppression.

But our study suggests these hard-won gains are at risk, especially for women. Young, unmarried women will be left behind in the fight against HIV if we do not develop solutions that look at the bigger picture of global public health.

As we watch nations around the world face unprecedented food shortages, brought on not only by climate disaster but rising conflict, we will see rising levels of disease forcing women to take greater and greater risks just to survive — unless the world acts now.

*Source: the hill.com*

## ECA's Gatete advocates for skills-based education for Africa's technological advancement

**Addis Ababa, 19 February 2024 (ECA)** - "Our conversations should not only be about how many are schooled, but rather how many are skilled," said Claver Gatete, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Speaking at the 2024 edition of the annual ECA Africa Business Forum (ABF2024), held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 19 February 2024, he highlighted the importance of shifting the focus of education to address its relevance and inclusivity in the digital age.

With hundreds of participants, including government and private sector representatives from across Africa and beyond, ABF2024 served as a hotbed for discussions on the transformative power of technology and innovation for the continent's future.

Mr. Gatete highlighted the potential of Africa to become a global solutions

powerhouse through concentrated efforts in science and technology.

"Investment in these fields is crucial for job creation, boosting productivity, and enhancing competitiveness," said Mr. Gatete, underscoring the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning as critical tools to address social and economic challenges.

While acknowledging the significant growth in broadband access and the mobile money market's value at \$836.5 billion, Mr. Gatete stressed that these achievements pale in comparison to the vast potential available. He raised crucial questions about bridging the digital skills gap for 650 million workers by 2030 and generating millions of jobs for Africa's youth.

"The potential of Africa's digital economy is enormous. However, realizing this potential rests on closing critical gaps in digital skills, data generation, and utilization, as well as

the requisite infrastructure," he added.

Doron Avni, Google's Vice President for Emerging Markets, underscored the transformative power of AI and its potential role in enabling sustainable and inclusive growth in Africa. He called for inclusive AI education and government investment in this area, adding that "making AI and building AI for Africa by Africa" is something Google strongly supports.

Representing the Nigerian President at the forum, the Minister of State for Education, Yusuf Tanko Sununu, called for a radical approach to education, stating, "It's time to think outside the box if we must achieve the transformation we want." He highlighted the necessity of integrating technology into educational systems.

The need for educational reform across Africa was also echoed by Zimbabwe's Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development, Prof.

Amon Murwira. He advocated for moving from a system that produces mere talkers to cultivating doers, particularly in technology and STEM fields, to ensure sustainable industrialization and modernization in Africa.

In the same vein, Botswana's Minister of Communications, Knowledge and Technology, Thulaganyo Merafe Segokgo, pointed out that technology and innovation have the potential to significantly boost Africa's transformation while ensuring an eco-friendly future for the continent. He noted that Botswana has made good strides in building "digital infrastructure that leaves no one behind."

The forum was a convergence point for public-private partnerships, with tech giants like Google leading the charge, illustrating the collaborative efforts needed to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

*Source: UNECA*

# Planet Earth

## African's

## should intensify collaboration to solve climate finance challenges

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Climate financing in Africa refers to the financial assistance offered to African countries to help them address climate change concerns and transition to low-carbon, climate-resilient economies. This money can come from a range of sources, including bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial organizations, private sector investments, and domestic resources.

It also serves a variety of functions, including assisting African nations in executing their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, which specify their pledges to decrease greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change. It assists them in developing resilience to climate change impacts such as harsh weather, sea-level rise, and droughts, all of which disproportionately affect the region's most vulnerable communities.

Climate finance is essential for supporting climate-friendly sustainable development by investing in renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable agriculture, and other climate-friendly projects that boost economic growth and reduce poverty. Because developing countries lack finances, it assists them in mobilizing extra money for African climate action, including novel financing methods like climate funds, green bonds, and carbon markets.

Despite recent improvements, there is still a huge financial gap for climate action in Africa compared to available resources. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, stated, "We have heard many pledges regarding supporting us to address climate change but promised resources never come. In the meantime, Science tells us that Africa is warming faster than the rest of the world."

It is true that there are still several obstacles pertaining to climate finance in Africa, which may make it more difficult to carry out projects for sustainable development and climate action. These difficulties may include restricted access to financing since many African countries encounter difficulties obtaining climate funding because of their inability to create bankable projects, their lack of financial resources, and their weak institutional frameworks. This makes it more difficult for them to carry out low-carbon and climate-resilient initiatives.

Furthermore, finance for climate change entails large transaction costs. For African nations, obtaining climate money may be a difficult and drawn-out procedure with expensive transaction fees. This may deter prospective donors and cause a hold-up in the execution of climate projects. The lack

of coherence and coordination amongst the various parties participating in climate finance, such as government agencies, development partners, and private sector investors, may be the other most difficult aspect of climate finance. This may lead to dispersed efforts, redundant tasks, and ineffective resource usage.

They are further limited by the fact that many African countries lack the organizational and technical ability required to design, carry out, and successfully monitor climate programs. This may make it more difficult for them to obtain finance, create solid ideas, and guarantee the long-term viability of their investments. Climate-related uncertainty, political instability, and regulatory changes are among the hazards that climate financing initiatives in Africa frequently face. These dangers have the potential to discourage lenders and investors from lending money to local climate projects.

More crucially, climate finance has hampered private-sector participation, despite the fact that private-sector investment is critical to scaling up climate action in Africa. Because there are insufficient incentives and supportive settings to attract private investments. This reduces the ability to use private sector money for climate programs.

According to Kenyan President William Ruto, there is a need to strengthen international financial support and cooperation to mitigate the impact of continental climate change. Apart from strengthened International financial aid cooperation, Africa needs to use the promising progress it is making in technological development to solve the pressure of climate change.

Besides international donor countries and the financial system are also expected to support the strategic development work that Africa is doing due to climate change. The continental green industrialization initiative announced by the Pan-African idea should be further strengthened for renewable energy alternative development cooperation, he emphasized.

AU Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable

Environment (ARBE) Commissioner Ambassador Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko in her part noted that climate change is having a major impact on social and economic development in Africa. Hence, to provide a reliable response to the impact of climate change, regional and international agreements and laws should be implemented in an appropriate manner.

Although donor countries and international organizations that support the continent in preventing climate change have not implemented their promises, the African Union is organizing and working on a continental climate finance department that supports the capacity building of its member countries on climate change. She explained that this will help Africa strengthen its financial capacity to combat climate change on a continental scale.

Despite progress in recent years, climate financing is a challenge for African countries. To address this challenge, African governments need to strengthen their domestic policies and institutions, improve access to climate finance, and enhance coordination with international partners to maximize the impact of investments in climate resilience and mitigation efforts.

According to Moussa Faki Mahamat, resources are a key challenge to mitigating climate change in Africa. Therefore, it is time for Africa to look inward to save our people from the impacts of climate change and fund our development pathways. There are multiple transboundary initiatives we can finance with domestic resources, for the benefit of all member states involved especially in the area of renewable energy to address energy poverty and in relation to clean mobility. Africa has what it takes to liberate itself from underdevelopment and the devastating impacts of climate change.

Besides, "let us seize this moment and translate the outcomes of the Africa Climate Summit into concrete actions. Together, we can make a difference and ensure a better future for generations to come and to achieve the Africa We Want".

In general, African governments, development partners, and other stakeholders must work together to strengthen institutional capacity, improve coordination mechanisms, increase transparency and accountability, and create an environment that is supportive of sustainable investment in climate resilience and mitigation initiatives to address climate finance challenges, including the need for necessary resources. By overcoming these impediments, African countries may fully leverage climate finance to propel sustainable growth and tackle the pressing issues brought about by climate change.

**To provide a reliable response to the impact of climate change, regional and international agreements and laws should be implemented in an appropriate manner**