



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXX No 147 29 FEBRUARY 2024 - Yekatit 21, 2016

Thursday

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Ethio-Kenya cooperation remains steadfast: Premier

• Visit showcases enhanced ties

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA- As neighbors sharing a unified vision and destiny, the commitment of Ethiopia and Kenya to working together remains steadfast, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

Premier Abiy went to Nairobi on Tuesday evening for a two-day state visit and he was officially welcomed by President William Ruto at the State House Kenya.

In his official social media page Abiy said, “I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my brother, President William Ruto, for his gracious welcome to Kenya. Our comprehensive discussion today have not only strengthened our existing ties but also highlighted key areas for future collaboration. As neighbors sharing a unified vision and destiny, our commitment to working together remains steadfast.”

On his part, President William Ruto tweeted, “The long standing relation between Kenya and Ethiopia is the bedrock of our shared prosperity and regional stability. The State visit by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed goes further to cement our ties.”

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed
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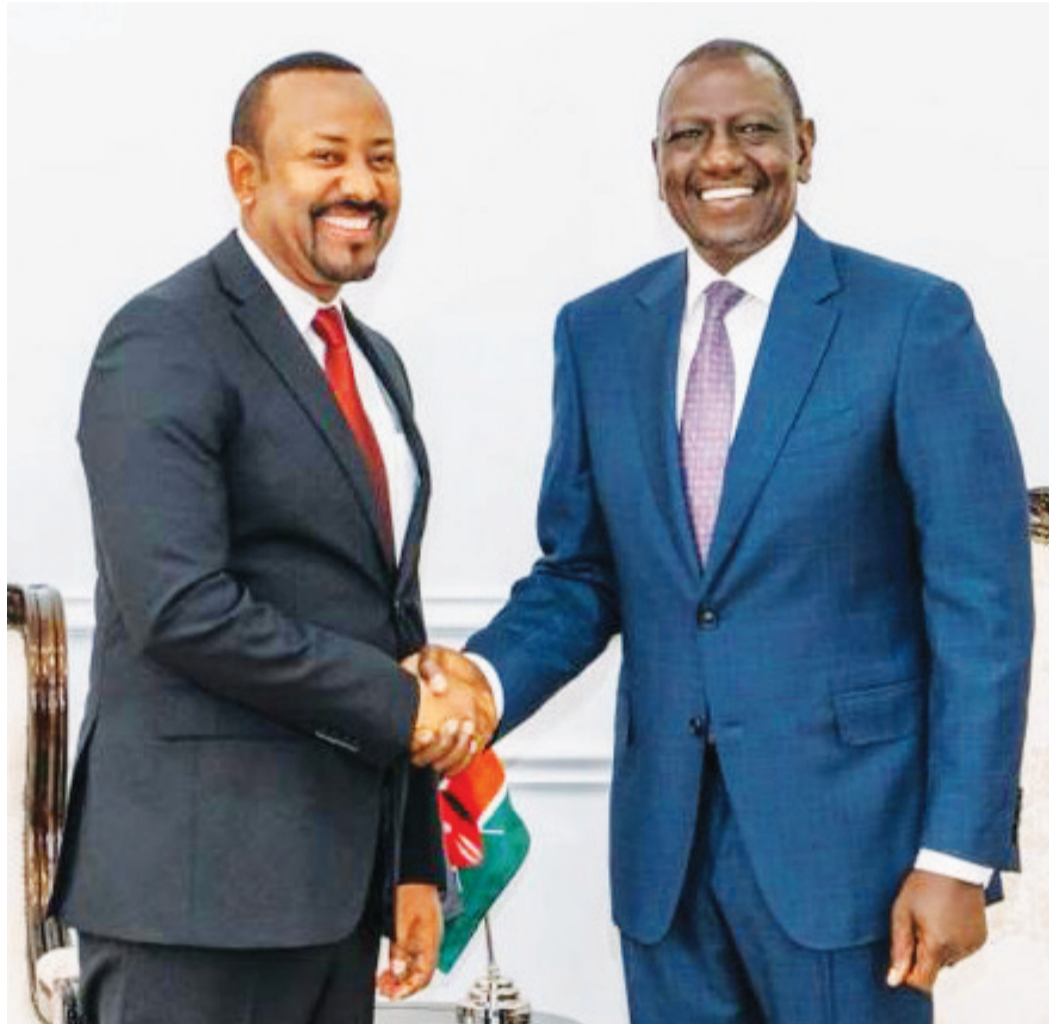


Photo: Hadush Abreha
Selemawit Kassa

Ethiopia to unveil water policy document

• Preparations in full swing to mark Adwa Victory

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Cognizant of water bodies’ critical contribution to ensuring political, geopolitical, and national interests, Ethiopia is going to unveil today a water policy document, the Government Communication Service (GCS) disclosed.

In a press conference she gave here yesterday, GCS State Minister Selemawit Kassa said that the
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Photo: Gebabo Gebrie
Costantinos Berhutesfa (PhD)

Expert weighs capital market's economic virtues

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA - The emergence of the capital market would be a significant step for Ethiopia to get involved in

See Expert weighs... Page 3

Credit rating service flickers hope to creditors, borrowers

BY YESUF ENDRIS

Since the reestablishment of Ethiopia’s Capital Market Authority, and Securities Exchange, the country’s financial institutions and businesses are expecting to have more financial sources including credit alternatives though the credit worthiness and confidence of businesses.

Many, if not all, of Ethiopia’s financial institutions, including Dashen Bank are providing credit service after conducting the necessary assessment about borrowers’ credit worthiness by their own.

Dashen Bank President Asfaw Alemu told The Ethiopian Herald that the independent credit rating service -which is expected to be provided by the recently reestablished accountable and transparent agencies, will lift-up the credibility of borrowers and help



Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

creditors to provide services based on legal and credible information.

“We are receiving complains of borrowers for the complex bureaucratic works to lend money. We are just passing through

complex assessment processes because of the absence of independent credit rating agencies. After the introduction of the service by independent agencies, I hope,

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Fertilizer utilization, soil fertility to beef up economic growth

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Back to the Roots: African Cultural Identity and Western Paradigm

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Africa’s debt crisis needs hold new approach

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Council to discuss transitional justice policy soon

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Ministry of Justice (MoJ) expressed that it would submit transitional justice policy to the Council of Ministers shortly after completing the final text.

In a press release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*, MoJ disclosed that it is striving to present the transitional justice policy document to the Council of Ministers soon after finalizing the final text based on the deliberations raised in various validation workshops.

The Ministry of Justice said in the release that it will continue to review and address the huge volume of inputs received during the validation workshops and via written submissions.

The next milestone involves completing the final text of the National Transitional Justice Policy and submitting the draft for approval of the Council of Ministers in the coming few weeks, the Ministry expressed.

In the release, MoJ stated that Ethiopia's extraordinary journey in the public consultation and policy design process has come a long way since the establishment



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MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

of the Transitional Justice Working Group of Experts (TJWGE) in November 2022.

The TJWGE concluded the most critical phases of its mandate – after holding 58 nationwide-in additions to 22 tailored workshops jointly organized with various local, regional, continental and international organizations, the release said.

It also noted that the TJWGE publicly issued the 'Transitional Justice Policy Options: A Comprehensive Report of the Public Consultations Process' in December 2023 and furthermore delivered the 'Draft National Transitional Justice Policy' in January 2024.

The release recalled that last week, the MoJ

conducted successful validation workshops on the Draft National Transitional Justice Policy.

Four consecutive events were organized in Addis Ababa with key stakeholders, namely leadership of political parties, representatives of democratic and human rights institutions.

Similarly, the ministry took positive validation on civil societies, media professionals, academia, transitional justice experts, UN family offices in Ethiopia, and embassies, representatives of the wider population from all regions including victims, women's associations, persons with disabilities, child rights defenders, youth associations, and IDPs, and federal and regional government, justice and security functionaries.

“On each of the occasions, participants were offered considerable space to voice their positions and share perspectives on the contents of the draft policy. Indeed, the level of engagement demonstrated by the public was not only reassuring, it also reaffirmed the public's greater sense of ownership and confidence in the process as offering a national solution grounded on accountability, truth, reconciliation and justice,” the release added.



Expert hails Digital Ethiopia 2025's outcomes in e-payment, gov't services

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Results that have been registered in the realization of Digital Ethiopia 2025 in terms of electronic payments, digitizing government services and expanding the digital infrastructure are promising, an expert in the area said.

Following the First Digital Week Ethiopia, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MinT) held yesterday the electronic government strategy workshop.

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) at the event, a digital technology consultant Lishan Alem (PhD) stated that the work that has been done to expand digital infrastructure and digitize government services under the umbrella Ethiopia Digital 2025 program is encouraging. “Ethiopia is on the right path to achieve the target and its telecommunications sector deserves special recognition.”

The expert noted; however, that consolidated effort should be made to produce more skilled labor and implement emerging technologies including block chain, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence. Moreover, it is crucial to make the training to keep up with the speed of emerging technologies to get better results in the area.

Compared to other countries, Ethiopia is far behind in technological penetration and a lot of work is needed to equip the youth with digital technology knowledge. Universities are providing the training, but now they are ahead of the curve especially with digital technology, Lishan elaborated.

Meanwhile, MinT National Electronics Government Strategy Coordination Desk Head Biruhtesfa Taye said the next 5-year strategy for the electronic government service and the institutional structure of government institutions has been prepared and the inputs are collected. These activities are instrumental to the realization of Digital Ethiopia 2025 vision.

Biruhtesfa further highlighted that the strategy includes infrastructure construction, application and human resource development, structure and budget and sets the government's digitization vision.



African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

Ethiopia requires compatible policies to fully exploit AfCFTA: AACCSA

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA-Ethiopia's economic plan should encompass policies targeting full utilization of Africa's free trade area, Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations (AACCSA) suggested.

AACCSA Secretary General Shibeshi Betemariam told local media that the country ought to formulate economic policies compatible to the protocols of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), in order to enhance the full utilization of the continental integrated

market.

“Countries like Kenya and Rwanda design their policies and strategies guided by their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ethiopia has also designed its policies in response to SDGs but what remains is taking the AfCFTA protocol such as protocol of trades on goods, services and investment into account,” he underscored.

With regard to digital transaction, he indicated that the government has formulated Digital Ethiopia 2025 which aimed at integrating states, creating efficiency and convenience and linking Ethiopia's economy with neighboring

countries.

Furthermore, the Secretary General said that it would have great impact on global value chain in allowing cross border market linkage not only in between neighboring countries but also across the globe.

Emphasizing that being producer is not mandatory to engage in digital transaction, creating platform would serve the nation hugely. To this end, he indicated that there are emerging platforms such as Ride, delivery, digital health and other services.

Similarly, government is hugely investing on data centers such as Ethiotelcom and Safaricom, he noted.

MWU plans establishing Research Center to boost biodiversity, tourism

BY FIKADU BELAY

BALE ROBE – Madda Walabu University (MWU) unveiled new plan to establish an Ethiopian Mountain Research Center to preserve biodiversity and boost tourism potentials.

MWU President Ahmed Kelil (PhD) told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that it requires the establishment of a research center to safeguard the unique ecosystems found in Ethiopian mountains through conducting research, developing strategies, and implementing measures in cognizant of the country's rich diversity of topography, indigenous flora and fauna.

Expressing the university's commitment to the conservation of biodiversity and environmental protection and tourism, the President said, MWU is actively developing plans and implementing initiatives to boost tourism destinations.

One such initiative is the restoration of dense forests in the Bale Mountains, he said, adding that through tree planting and conservation activities, the university aims to restore ecological balance, protect biodiversity, and mitigate the effects of deforestation.

Preserving the existing forest stock is also a priority so as to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the region's ecosystems, according to Ahmed.

He further stated that the university is working



Photo: Hadash Abreha

Ahmed Kelil (PhD)

on establishing nurseries site to expand the availability of native plants across the country, which will contribute significantly to various research endeavors and provide practical learning opportunities for students and researchers.

The Bale National Park, on the other hand, needs fundamental development, management and conservation tasks. In support of this cause, MWU is prepared to collaborate by deploying experts with diverse training to provide the necessary resources, he said.

By undertaking these initiatives, the president noted that the completion of these projects might take up to three years, signifying a long-term commitment to the development, preservation, and sustainable management of Ethiopia's biodiversity.

Expert weighs...

debt-conversion and increase investment schemes among other macroeconomic outcomes, a noted economist said.

Public Policy Professor and Economist Costantinos Berhutesfa (PhD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that credit and capital markets facilitation help the country to manage the ever-intensifying debt crisis and promote investment structures.

Costantinos further stated that an efficient and development-oriented private sector would serve as the playground for the capital market's expansion and functionality. "In the process, the market provides credit ingredients that would enhance the role and contribution of the private sector in the national economy."

Establishing a capital market and strengthening the private sector's involvement on the shelf of priorities in the government's macro-economic reforms is of great significance to expand, modernize, and accelerate industrialization.

"Stock market plays a key role in the privatization of public enterprises, mobilizations of FDI resources and solves the debt overhang problems through debt-for-equity swaps, debt-for-development and wildlife preservation swaps and other debt conversion schemes."

According to him, the internationalization of stock exchange dealings would open the door to foreign investors and allow them to easily obtain shares and stock in Ethiopia which would help to promote the country's investment resources. "It is also highly critical for the developing country like Ethiopia to comprehensively strengthen the capacity of financial and capital markets towards promoting entrepreneurship."

Indeed, credit and capital markets would have the capacity to bring about sustainable development both at the national and continental level, the economist remarked.

It is to be recalled that the Ethiopian Capital Market Authority (CMA) has recently commenced operation. The CMA is one of the key institutions established as an autonomous Federal Government regulatory body to the issuance of capital market products.

Ethio-Kenya...

together with Kenyan President William Ruto visited the Suswa Substation in Kajiado County, which connects the two countries in electricity. The two leaders also held a wreath-laying ceremony at Uhuru Gardens.

It is to be recalled that President Ruto began his first regional tour from Ethiopia and made a day trip to Addis Ababa to participate in the launch of Safaricom Kenya's Ethiopian subsidiary on 6th October 2023. The President also held bilateral talks with Prime Minister Abiy.

According to Office of the Prime Minister,

the ceremony marked the beginning of a significant engagement where both leaders, along with their delegations, delved into extensive discussions on various subjects, including bilateral, regional, and multilateral issues.

The two leaders also acknowledged the deep and historical relations and economic connections between their nations, committing to strengthen their cooperation further. This meeting signifies a pivotal moment in enhancing diplomatic and economic ties, promising a future of increased collaboration between Ethiopia and Kenya, it was stated.

Ethiopia to unveil...

government has a firm belief in the importance of a strategy that will guide the country's stance on water bodies.

Noting the intertwining between Ethiopia's past problems and future opportunities with water bodies, the state minister indicated the new policy document reflects the country's stand on the Abbay River and the Red Sea.

The six-chapter document mainly highlights Ethiopia's journey to get a sovereign access to the sea. It would be an important input for scholars who wish to conduct research and studies on historical and political issues.

Selamawit further highlighted that the preparation to mark the 128th Adwa Victory is in full swing and efforts have been made

to utilize the event to celebrate the Ethiopian National Defense Force's (ENDF) noble sacrifice to peace and stability.

"The victory day will be marked by colorful events across the country and the main event will be in the newly-built Adwa Victory Memorial Museum in the metropolis. The celebration is intended to glorify Adwa Victory, the result of the selfless struggle of Ethiopians, and make the country a symbol of hope for the oppressed."

The Adwa Victory Day would be marked in all states and city administrations' institutions, Ethiopian diplomatic missions, and other institutions at the national level on Saturday, she remarked.

Credit rating...

the finance sector can credit borrowers easily," he commented.

It will also allow borrowers to obtain the highest amount of finance they deserve, according to Asfaw.

Accounting and Audit Board of Ethiopia Executive Director Hikmet Abdella said that investment will be boosted as credit rating service provides clear business outlook at the right time.

Taking the issue into consideration, Ethiopian Capital Market Authority has begun to deal with the establishment of credit rating service which accredits the financial and insurance status of borrowers, Authority's Legal Advisor, Estifanos Melkamu expressed.

He disclosed that the service is expected to be launched soon after ratifying preconditionsso

that both creditors and debtors will exchange deals based on legal information that could build confidence amongst them.

In the wake of introducing credit rating service to Ethiopia, Addis Chamber of Commerce and UAE National International Credit Rating Agency- ICRA have signed a memorandum of Understanding a month ago in Dubai.

In a workshop organized by the two organizations here in Addis Ababa last Tuesday, Ethiopian business owners and financial institutions also urged government bodies to hasten the establishment of credit rating service so as to solve the financial service problems.

Addis Chamber Secretary General Shibeshi Betemariam told *The Ethiopian Herald* that Ethiopian businesses are not competitive in

obtaining finance just because of absence of credit rating service.

Addis Chamber is now facilitating and supporting the government. "We know how the service is critical in this globalized economy. So, we are facilitating expertise discussions and guideline making processes" Shibeshi said while mentioning the main target is to benefit of business community and creditors. The decision to select service providers will be done by government bodies.

"Credit Rating helps creditors to assess the risk associated with insurance coverage, capitalreserve, and overall status of borrowers. Borrowers can also obtain credits at favorable terms including low rate and higher borrowing limit," he remarked.

Credit rating addresses one of the most

challenges that Ethiopian businesses are facing today. In fact, Shibeshi noted it is still one of important factor in which the investment and doing business in Ethiopia is on demand.

The service ensures credibility and reputation among creditors and borrowers, he said.

ICRA Global General Manager ,Zeeshan Khan also said that Africa, as a future economy, is getting into the way to make creditworthy investment through establishing credit rating service.

Including Ethiopian business, most of African financial market needs credit rating service. "Many businesses from Singapore and European countries are flowing into Dubai because they trust the business which is accredited by modern credit rating service," he underlined.

Opinion

Commemorating 50th anniversary of Ethiopia's revolution: Reflections on its legacy for country's foreign policy

BY HENOK GETACHEW AND
GIZACHEW ASRAT

Before 1974, Ethiopia's political system had often been characterized by narrowed civic space encumbering the active participation of citizens and their representatives in different fragile democratic institutions. As such, political institutions, which were pillars of democracy and supposed to manage the abuses of power, arrest corruption, and protect and safeguard political and civil rights, are too weak to overcome the entrenched authoritarian political culture and the precipitate of an authoritarian strategy. Consequently, intolerance, political violence, lack of compromises among different conflicting groups, and the inability of the state to deal with mounting challenges effectively had sent a warning signal to the establishment that it was losing its social base and legitimacy.

Undeniably, cognizant of the need to reform the existing political system that matches the order of the day was experimented with. The modernization efforts manifested in the forms of the introduction of the constitution and the establishment of institutions seemed to strengthen the Imperial power and authority until the mid-1970s rather than fixing the broken system and addressing the emerging demands for reforms. This circumstance led to a new chapter in the political history of the country.

One of the significant changes that happened to the political system of the twentieth century was the introduction of a new political arrangement deeply embedded in socialist ideology. This change was primarily brought about through revolution with a transformative effect on state and class structures. Fifty-seven years after the 1917 revolution in Russia, a revolution was made possible in Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Socialist Revolution, which erupted in February 1974, holds a significant place in the political history of Ethiopia. Rather than a singular, precipitous event, the revolution blossomed from a fertile ground of simmering social and economic discontent. The existing system's inherent contradictions, coupled with severe hardships, ignited nationwide unrest.

Firstly, a devastating drought, claiming countless lives through starvation and disease, exposed the regime's apathy, prompting students and intellectuals to shine a light on this tragedy. Secondly, urban populations grappled with unemployment, inflation, and food shortages, pushing students, workers, and even taxi drivers to voice their despair and demand action from a seemingly unresponsive government. These interwoven factors, fueled by desperation and a yearning for change, ultimately ignited the flames of revolution.

The socialist revolution has had a long-lasting impact on the state-society relationship by abolishing tenancy, introducing secularism, abolishing the Solomonic dynasty that remained in place for millennia, expropriating privately-owned properties, and shaking the embedded ideological structure. Furthermore, the revolution significantly impacted urban areas by nationalizing extra-houses and all financial institutions.

This political phenomenon was not a mere event that happened once upon a time in history. However, it marked a rupture in the long tradition of the state's political history. It ushered in a new beginning with a long-lasting implication for the domestic socio-economic and cultural structures as well as the external relations of the country. This phenomenon incentivizes close observers of Ethiopian politics to reflect on the event and the attendant consequences that last five decades and beyond.

Cognizant of the revolution's significant impact on the domestic structure, discussions in different quarters, particularly in the academia and media, emerged when celebrating the revolution's fiftieth anniversary in February 2024. Nevertheless, the revolution's legacy for Ethiopia's foreign policy must be discussed. This would give an excellent opportunity to deliberate on the revolution within the context of foreign policy.

The revolution, which toppled Emperor Haile Selassie and ushered in the Derg regime, marked a dramatic shift in the country's foreign policy. The Ethiopian Revolution's foreign policy was a nuanced tapestry woven with both change and continuity threads. Understanding this intricate history is crucial for analyzing Ethiopia's current stance in the international arena and its potential future trajectory.

Legacy of the Socialist Revolution on Ethiopia's Foreign Policy

The 1974 Ethiopian Revolution had an impact on Ethiopia's relationship with the West and global institutions. It brought about significant changes that continue to shape the country's foreign policy. Among the legacies of the revolution, we find the alliance shift. Following the revolution, the Marxist-Leninist Derg regime aligned itself with the former Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, distancing itself from the West, which was perceived as supportive of the old feudal order.

The revolution ushered in a wave of nationalization, aligning with socialist principles. Soviet advisors transformed the military and cultural exchange programs flourishes. This ideological shift brought Ethiopia closer to the Eastern Bloc, fostering an "us vs. them" mentality in the bipolar world. This led to substantial Soviet and Cuban aid and military support during the Ethiopian-Somali War.

Second, the revolution impact on Ethiopia's foreign policy was observed when the then government was leaning towards the socialist governments in forging a further cooperation and partnership in different domains. In relation to this, the outbreak of the revolution in part softened the hard-line approaches pursued by Libya and South Yemen vis-à-vis insurgency in Eritrea. In tandem with other factors, Aden and Tripoli began to mend their hitherto hostility with Addis Ababa in post-revolutionary periods. Furthermore, the effect of the revolution on the country's foreign policy was demonstrated through sponsoring Marxist-Leninist leaning movements in Africa.

Burdens of the Revolution

The Derg's Marxist-Leninist ideology created an ideological divide, pushing Ethiopia towards the Soviet Bloc and resulting in the simmering of tensions with Western powers. Since 1977, Ethiopia's foreign policy seemed to anchor on the principle of proletarian internationalism, which courted the support of the Soviet Union and its satellite states. In return for this move, the hitherto alliance with the United States forced to break. This shift in alliances was the logical consequence of the revolution that took place; Ethiopia had to abandon the previous alliance and form a new one. This resulted in sanctions and reduced aid, hindering economic development and international integration.

The Derg's radical policies and poor human rights records further strained relations with the West, further hampering Ethiopia's economic development and international standing. The revolution opened an opportunity for external actors to fuel domestic conflicts, such as the insurgencies in the north, causing suffering and hindering regional cooperation that moved beyond ideological divides. In this regard, the role of certain Arab states in providing psychological and military aid to Eritrean insurgency and Somalia's claim on Ogaden should be identified in part as the effect of the revolution, although some of them used to channel manifold support to movements battling the Ethiopian state prior to the outbreak of the revolution.

Internal fragility and political divisions exposed and exacerbated by the revolution had incentivized Mogadishu to launch an invasion on a grandeur dream of 'Greater Somalia'. Additionally, the economic impact of the revolution and lingering sanctions have made Ethiopia heavily reliant on foreign aid and investment, leaving it vulnerable to external pressures and hindering its pursuit of an independent foreign policy agenda.

Despite the changes owing to the revolution, certain continuities persisted. First, Ethiopia's commitment to non-alignment remained the guiding principle of the country amidst the revolution

period and thereafter. Despite its close relationship with the Soviet Union, Ethiopia did not completely abandon non-alignment and maintained a tenuous diplomatic relationship with the West. Indeed, economics and aid remained factors in the relationship between the West and the Ethiopian government.

Although the revolution helped both Ethiopia and the Soviet Union to build political relationship, the economic and social relationship between the two parties remained low. Likewise the Imperial era, the socialist government kept closer economic ties with the west. Nevertheless, the socialist government benefited from a small number of large-scale projects: armaments factory; cement and textile factories; and hydroelectric project. Ethiopia has adopted a pragmatic approach to foreign policy in a complex international landscape, aiming to secure diverse resources, maintain strategic flexibility, and defend its territorial integrity.

Second, despite the ideological shift in the wake of 1974, the revolution never shook Ethiopia's commitment to pan-Africanism. It rather emboldened the state to actively support the liberation movements in Angola, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, solidifying its anti-colonialist image and earning respect across the continent. Post-revolutionary Ethiopia's different forms of assistance such as military aid, training, free broadcasting radio, permanent representation, and financial assistance through the Liberation Committee to liberation movements in southern parts of the continent symbolized Ethiopia's subscription to the basic tenets of the OAU Charter.

Ultimately, this diplomatic move helped make an impression on the continental organization. Finally, Ethiopia actively participated in regional and international affairs, leading organizations like the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to African union (AU). This reflected its self-conception as a regional power and its commitment to multilateralism as a continuation of state foreign policy even after the revolution.

Does the 1974 revolution's impact on foreign policy persist across all regimes, or is it fading into history? This question is left to academicians and researchers.

About the writers

Henok Getachew (PhD) and Gizachew Asrat (PhD) are Senior Researchers in the African Affairs General Directorate at the Institute of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia. The views and reflections expressed here are solely their own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute of Foreign Affairs.

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

Editorial

Ethio-Kenya historic ties are key to transform Horn region

PM Abiy Ahmed arrived in Nairobi, Kenya, for a state visit last Tuesday. The visit is believed to further reinforce the existing strong ties between Ethiopia and Kenya. The two countries have been enjoying strong ties since the reign of the famous former leaders Emperor HaileSELLASIE I and Jomo Kenyatta which culminated in the signing of a security pact.

The relations have been diversified in many sectors and reached exemplary levels at present. For instance, Ethiopia is now supplying electricity to Kenya which covers 11 percent of the country's annual consumption. Ethiopia has also opened its telecom sector to the Kenyan telecom operator Safaricom which ended the sector's monopoly by the Ethiopian government owned telecom giant. This depicts Ethiopia's trust and regard to Kenya's involvement in its economic sector.

Ethiopia is also working towards utilizing Kenya's Lamu Port for its import and export activities. As a result of the large number of issues that the two countries share, it is common to hear many people, media ... etc mentioning the names of the two countries side by side.

For instance, both Ethiopia and Kenya are well known for their continentally and globally competent air lines. They also have good experience in the production of coffee, tea, livestock ... etc. In the world of athletics too, the two countries have set a marvelous influence that added the color and significance of the sport.

The people to people tie of the two countries is also cemented by the close cross border trade ties and other economic activities. Especially, Ethiopia and Kenya deserve due acknowledgement for their endeavor in facilitating cross border ties and trade between their peoples which ultimately helped in stabilizing the once tense situation there.

At this moment the two countries own the largest economies in the region. They are also hubs of destination to the region and connect it to the rest of the world. They also host many continental and global institutions.

Given all these common grounds that bring the two countries close together, there are also many areas where the two countries have to join hands more than ever and work on strenuously. Ethiopia and Kenya are found in the middle of a region, East Africa and Horn of Africa, that is notoriously known for its protracted war, conflict, unrest, climate change induced disaster, terrorism, illegal migration and human trafficking, among others.

These problems have smeared the image of the region which clouds the view of the world negatively. This will pose negative impact on the flow of foreign direct investment as well as tourism. Furthermore, it incurs economic loss as a result of the damages caused on infrastructure, facilities, transportation means, financial institutions as well as human lives.

But the two countries can bring about significant change if they work in close collaboration. They have to reinforce already started initiatives and programs that aim to tackle terrorism, illegal migration and human trafficking as well as illicit trade, among others.

Just as the strong foundation for the ever growing ties of the two countries was laid by Emperor HaileSELLASIE and President Kenyatta, PM Abiy and President Ruto in their latest meeting should come up with initiatives that further cement the relations and transform their region to a better level.

Opinion

Egypt's manipulation of the Arab League: A smear campaign against Ethiopia

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is no secret that Egypt has been deliberately cashing in on its political authority making use of the Arab League as an instrument to advance its own self-interest, for the most part in its unresolved dispute with Ethiopia. This has brought forth allegations that Cairo is taking advantage of the League to spine out detrimental narratives about Ethiopia.

It is generally acknowledged that since the laying of the foundation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), Ethiopia has been working cooperatively with downstream nations. From being part of the Declarations of Principle to signing a Memorandum of Understanding, the country has gone far to resolve contentious matter tactfully and serenely.

By hook or crook, the Arab League alleged manipulation as a misleading mask and less dominant entity will not help bring the intended target. Ethiopia accepts as true it is being unreasonably targeted and relegated within the league. As a matter of fact, Egypt's impact over the Arab League has formed a disproportion of power that strike at the foundations of the League's capability to neutrally.

In actual fact, the intrusions of Ethiopia's opponents against the dam to twist Ethiopia's arm has proved to be ineffective through the unwavering stance of the people of Ethiopia. It is undeniable that Ethiopia for long has been going to the ends of the earth to the issue of the project to be orchestrated by the continental bloc bringing the notion "African solutions to African problems" into being.

In spite of the fact that building the dam does not harm the downstream nations, Cairo and its partners have been preoccupied with a barefaced lies on the subject of the country's watershed project.

It is certain that by getting the most out of its influential presence in the region, Egypt is making an effort to manipulate decisions and strategies in its best interest, eventually utilizing the League as an institutional base for advancing its own agendas. This tactical maneuvering give the thumbs up to Egypt to uphold a noteworthy level of control and power within the Arab League influencing the underlying forces of decision-making within the organization.

Notwithstanding the fact that the construction of the dam arrived at a no-going-back point, Egypt has been persistently deviating from the present circumstances with the intention of globalizing the issue of the colossal project.

In addition to its political weight, Cairo holds a central position as a fundamental provider of agricultural commodities and water to some countries of the Arabian Peninsula. The arid nature of the deserts in these nations leaves them totally contingent on Egypt for essential resources. This dependence for vital provisions further Egypt's position of power within the region, giving it an additional tool to wield influence over other League members.

As it gives a lower profile to the capacity of the African Union to resolve African issues, in times past Egypt took the issue to the United Nations Security Council to make the technical issue a global predicament. But, it failed to attain its intended target with the matter placed back to the dominion of the African Union (AU). Apart from the fact that Ethiopia left no stone unturned to resolve quandaries circling around the dam through AU brokered deal, the downstream nations have been demonstrating their lack of concern about the continental bloc.

Against the background of numerous encounters, the people of Ethiopia perceived momentous chains by making the unattainable achievable and unachievable attainable.

Egypt's tactical use of its political and military power, together with its role as a provider of vital resources to other Arab nations, permits it to uphold a considerable extent of control and influence within the Arab League. This dynamic showcases the intricacies and power dynamics at play within the organization signifying in black and white the ways in which Egypt successfully influences its position to advance its own interests.

Notwithstanding the fact that building the dam does not halt the regular flow of water, Egypt has been mystifying time and time again the global community under the pretense of fair and equitable utilization of water.

Even worse, following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Ethiopia and Somaliland, the league has demonstrated its hidden agenda.

In relation to the issue, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) recently, announced that Arab League's statement against the Ethio-Somaliland MoU holds noting useful but contempt to African solutions to African problems.

Briefing journalists, MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador Meles Alem (PhD) said that the press statement by the Arab League undermines not only Ethiopia's role in the region, but also the old-aged Ethio-Arab diplomatic relationship.

"The Arab League statement is unacceptable. It is actually known that which country is pressuring the organization. I was attending the webinar session [of the meeting]. The statement released following the session contempt Africans clearly. Africans have the full potential to resolve their own problems. So, the statement by League undermines the notion of "African solutions to African Problems", he said.

Ethiopia and the Arab world have long standing diplomatic relationship which stood the test of time in the face of various regime changes. Contrary to this, the Arab League has released a statement which ignores the Ethio-Arab diplomacy, Amb. Meles noted.

"Egypt and the Arab League are the two sides of a coin. It needs to be told honestly. The statement by the Foreign Minister of Egypt is not useful too. It does not match with the relationship of the two countries."

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



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943
Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

Office of the CEO
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Business & Economy

Fertilizer utilization, soil fertility to beef up economic growth

BY MENGESHA AMARE

With the continuously growing human population, increasing crop production without experiencing a distraction impact on the environment is the main contest that agriculture is currently facing. Obviously, agriculture plays a significant role in beefing up economic growth. The rapid rise of the human population determines a growing demand for food and water, which results in higher energy usage and, therefore, the use of nonrenewable resources.

In Ethiopia, agriculture is the primary source of human welfare and economic growth and the main contributor to the economy. However, the production is categorized by low productivity, survival orientation, low level of technology, low level of inputs like fertilizer and pesticide, lack of road and market options, and extreme susceptibility to rain inconsistency.

Having this in mind, *The Ethiopian Herald* had a stay with Mohammed Jawar, an agro economist graduated from Addis Ababa University, to seek a piece of information about how can the agricultural productivity increase using fertilizers, swell soil fertility thereby coming up with remarkable economic progress and helping the farming community harvest the best yield using fertilizers.

He said, “The modern system of agriculture should be based on the reproduction of soil fertility, energy and resource conservation and environmental balance. This requires the skillful use of local resources and the development of methodical approaches and techniques to optimize destabilizing and stabilizing performance factors.”

As to him, food security has remained challenging for most developing countries like Ethiopia. For food self-sufficiency, crop productivity growth is vital in order to stimulate growth in other parts of the economy. Subsequently, agriculture is the key source of raw materials to food processing, beverage, and textile industries.

According to Mohammed, increasing area farming land is no longer a feasible strategy to feed the growing population. Hence, intensification strategies to increase crop productivity while protecting the environment have become essential to attaining agricultural growth, food needs, and nutrition security.

Furthermore, many constraints hamper agricultural productivity in Ethiopia. Of the key factors, soil fertility depletion is one. To increase crop production needs cumulative effort to use endorsed fertilizers, enhanced crop variety, and control of crop pest diseases. However, agriculture largely depends on the increasing use of chemical fertilizers.

He said, “Soil has been subjected to severe nutrient deficiency triggered by natural and man-made factors. Therefore, increasing agricultural productivity requires a range of measures, including appropriate use



of fertilizer, crop protection innovations, and improved seeds. Largely cereal-based mixed crop-livestock systems dominate Ethiopian rain-fed agriculture.”

He further elucidated that soil fertility reduction is the main contest that causes serious food insecurity and poverty. Increasing crop productivity remains the most feasible pathway for achieving the great challenge of feeding too many people. Nowadays, effective soil fertility amendment strategies are among the most essential needs for increasing soil fertility because soil nutrient deficiency is one of the major limiting factors for cereal crop yield reduction. Soil infertility is evolving as a serious problem causing low crop yields and food insecurity in the country.

Mohammed added, “To increase soil fertility, fertilizers, be they are organic, inorganic, or their integration, are used as the source of plant nutrients. Increasing soil fertility through fertilizer application is the common way of modern agricultural practice. Fertilizers are substances applied to the soil to supply essential nutrients to the plant tissue to increase the growth and yield the plants.”

Many fertilizer producers provide plant macro nutrients individually or in mixtures with the soil, and the application of macro nutrient fertilizers commonly affects nutrient accessibility to plants. Nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, and sulfur are essential plant macro nutrients, he opined.

Farmers are particularly hard hit, facing higher input costs while simultaneously facing a price-sensitive consumer market for their produce. Ethiopians are frustrated by rising costs, and the use of chemical fertilizers to increase crop production now is steadily increasing.

Fertilizer usage is of paramount importance in boosting agricultural production and productivity, and the determinants of its consumption. Though the high price of fertilizer is the major constraint for farmers, the effect of fertilizer use on the value of agricultural production and yield is positive, indeed! Modern agricultural practices have to be emphasized the massive use of chemicals, and this strategy has improved grain yields in several nations within the last decades. However, continual and excessive use of chemical fertilizers additionally leads to a decline in crop yields and soil fertility,

he added.

Therefore, the current agricultural experience concentrates on searching for changes to nonrenewable chemical fertilizers because of immense prices and environmental contamination. The discovery of an efficient method for the formulation of an eco-friendly, low price, and competent organic fertilizer is an essential task for the future agricultural development. Developing countries like Ethiopia should concentrate on sustainable sources and ways of soil fertility preservation and amendment in addition to chemical fertilizers. Sustainable soil fertility becomes the means to prove the increasing population’s food security and keeping the environment.

Of course, he said optimization of fertilizer use refers to maximizing farmer profit resulting from fertilizer use, while not greatly adding to farmer risk. Nutrient management is very critical to maximize crop yield and to sustain soil productivity. Poor farmers need to achieve high net returns on their investment with little risk while wealthier farmers may strive to maximize profit per hectare. Profit potential from fertilizer use varies greatly with crop-nutrient choices.

As learnt from Mohammed, fertilizers are essential inputs for modern agriculture, helping to provide the necessary nutrients that crops need to grow and produce high yields. However, overuse of fertilizers can lead to environmental problems, such as water pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and can also be costly for farmers. Therefore, it is important for farmers to use fertilizers efficiently to minimize waste and reduce environmental impacts while still maintaining high crop yields.

Farmers have to be provided with some long-term strategies for reducing fertilizer dependency and conclude with a call to action for farmers to adopt more efficient fertilizer management practices.

Different crops have varying nutrient requirements and uptake rates at different growth stages, and farmers must apply fertilizer when crops need it the most to avoid nutrient loss and improve soil fertility, Mohammed added.

Environmental factors, such as temperature and rainfall, also affect nutrient availability and uptake by crops, and farmers must adjust fertilizer application to suit varying

weather conditions. Besides, applying fertilizer at the right time and rate is crucial for maximizing soil fertility and boost its fruitfulness. Hence, farmers should consider the crop type, growth stage, and soil conditions when determining fertilizer timing and rate as applying fertilizer at the wrong time or rate can lead to nutrient loss and reduced fertility.

He said, “Therefore, maintaining healthy soil is crucial for optimizing productivity. Practices such as conservation tillage, cover cropping, and crop rotation can improve soil health and reduce the need for fertilizer. By improving soil health, farmers can reduce their reliance on synthetic fertilizers and promote long-term sustainability.”

As to Mohammed, farmers can integrate alternative fertilizers into their existing fertilizer management plans to improve soil fertility. Thus combining synthetic and organic fertilizers can provide a balanced approach to fertilizer use, reducing costs and environmental impacts while maintaining high crop yields.

He said fertilizers provide nutrients to plants and help increase or sustain optimal crop yield. They also improve fertilizer nutrient use efficiency and minimize environmental impacts, such as nitrate leaching, greenhouse gas emissions, soil pollution, and nutrient runoff. Organic fertilizers, which combine organic and mineral fertilizers, enhance crop development by providing necessary nutrients and improving soil properties. However, improper use of fertilizers and poor soil management can lead to declining soil capacity and productivity. Overall, fertilizers play a crucial role in enhancing agricultural productivity by providing essential nutrients, improving soil properties, and increasing crop yield.

The effectiveness of various types and norms of organic fertilizers in improving soil fertility, productivity and crop production quality, as well as crop rotation productivity in a comparative aspect with the estimated norms of mineral fertilizers for obtaining the planned yield. Green manure crops are of great importance in the reproduction of soil fertility and increasing crop yields.

In a nutshell, sustainable farming practice, such as integrated pest management and water conservation, can reduce the need for fertilizer and improve overall farm sustainability. By adopting a holistic approach to farming, farmers can reduce their reliance on synthetic fertilizers while maintaining high crop yields. For the effective use of various types of fertilizers, it is necessary to study their fertilizing properties, the effect on the agrochemical, agro physical parameters of the soil and the productivity of the arable land. In combination with manure and other organic fertilizers, as well as mineral fertilizers, green manure as one of the elements of the fertilizer system should become a very powerful means of raising crops and increasing soil fertility.

Art & Culture

Back to the Roots: African Cultural Identity and Western Paradigm

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Can Africa successfully advance towards its future by relying on Western paradigms of modernity and thrive in this age of global chaos and uncertain future? This may be taken, in a nutshell, as the most important existential question for Africans everywhere who are trying to create a common vision of their present and chart out a clear path to their future not only in arts and culture but also in all areas of life.

One of the leading themes that surfaced during the recently-concluded 37th AU summit of heads of states and governments was the need to reassert Pan-Africanism and African unity. The other, rather disturbing, themes were regional conflicts and domestic instability in many African countries, the need for expediting regional integration as a precondition for the ultimate unity of the continent and the failure to embrace Pan-Africanism instead of parochial regionalism or tribal nationalisms, among other things.

In general, Africa has no problem in designing its future course of action but its leaders rarely display the necessary commitments to realize these lofty visions. As it has become a well-established tradition, African leaders are so focused on their internal or domestic political issues so much so that they have no time or energy left to implement what they pledge to realize during their annual AU summits.

This year too, AU Secretary General Musa Faki Mohamed sounded disillusioned when he made his opening speech in which he presented a litany of failures. Most promises made at the previous summits still remain unfulfilled. Africa's common vision has not yet found expression. Most African countries are absorbed in their own problems and overlook Pan-African issues. The list can go on and on.

As a case in point, climate change or climate crisis as it is more often referred to, is believed to be the most pressing issue in Africa. Many countries are facing droughts, potential famines, desertification and food shortages in the form of food inflations or cost of living crises. As experts often point out, "Africa is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, and extreme weather events affecting various regions, impacting ecosystems and livelihoods, increasing water scarcity, and contributing to desertification." However, Africa has no integrated regional or national strategies to address these issues although many resolutions were adopted at annual summits and regional deliberations.

This is however only one example failure among many. Even African countries that have the resources and the expertise to address these pressing issues often lack the political will or enough commitment to live up to the challenges. African leaderships often talk about big issues like African

unity, regional integration, the creation of a borderless Africa where national borders would be open to all Africans who would move in all directions without travel documents. Yet, these visions fail to be realized or are quickly overlooked once the summits are over and it is almost always business as usual.

The same goes to the fate of arts and culture in Africa's unity and renaissance. There is however no word or catchphrase more forgotten than the term 'African renaissance'. The term came into existence back in the 1990s following the demise of Apartheid in South Africa and assumed more prominence in the following decades although most of the promises are still unfulfilled.

Africa has not yet witnessed the renaissance of its arts and cultures. It has not yet managed to reclaim its past cultures that were stolen from the continent by colonialism. Most of all Africa has not yet taken the first decisive steps in creating a common African identity or an Africa spiritual consciousness that would serve as a precondition for a return to the past in order to reclaim its lost identity.

As a popular saying has it, one has to move back first in order to jump out better. In other words, one has to go back in time in order to better embrace the future. Why go back in time? This is because Africa has clearly failed to use the Western paradigm of modernity to play catch up with the advanced continents simply because we are continuing to think like Westerners and act like Africans. These are two contradictory attitudes. Most successful countries have achieved a certain degree of cultural and material development simply by discovering their identities and acting accordingly.

For instance, the Chinese achieved what is rightly considered a miracle of social and economic progress by going back in time and critically analyzing their past in order to claim their future from the remains of their history. So did the Japanese who made a critical reappraisal of their history since what they call the Meiji Restoration and worked hard to salvage some of its lessons in order to emerge stronger and more developed from the ravages of the last war. We can keep on citing other examples. It is however disheartening to realize that only Africa has so far failed to undertake such a critical examination of its past in order to use the outcomes as the bases for its present and futures.

Arts and cultures are often regarded as secondary considerations or issues in nations or the rebuilding of an entire continent like Africa. More urgent issues are claiming our attentions. For the average African, climate change is more important than say a piece of aesthetic products in arts. Africans have to eat first in order to engage in artistic appreciation or a critical examination of their cultures.

The average African is still engaged in the daily activities to secure the means of survival for their families or communities.

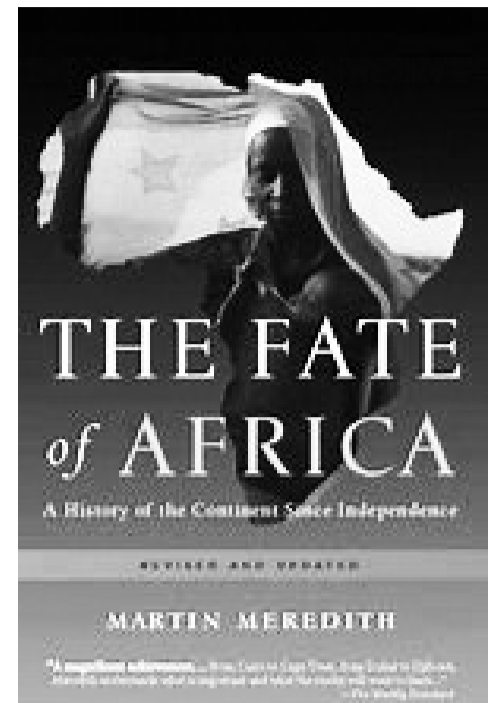
Most of all Africa has not yet taken the first decisive steps in creating a common African identity or an Africa spiritual consciousness that would serve as a precondition for a return to the past in order to reclaim its lost identity

Yet, the educated elites who should think or reflect on these issues on the part of the average African have failed to do so simply because they are allegedly engaged more on personal pursuits rather than on national or continental issues.

The few available cultural workers have a lot of work on their hands. With the necessary commitment to the cause of Africa's cultural renewal, it would be easier to address the challenges of creating an African cultural identity because, "The culture of Africa is varied and manifold, with various tribes depicting their unique characteristic and traits from the continent of Africa. It is a product of the diverse populations that inhabit the continent of Africa and the African Diaspora."

There are not only diverse African cultures but they are also many in numbers. There are over 3000 different ethnic groups speaking more than 2000 different languages in all of Africa. It is obviously impossible to deal with each of them in order to achieve Africa's cultural renaissance. Instead of that we can analyze each African culture and distill from it what is common to Africa and thus put what is important together and try to create a common African identity which is greater and more important than the individual ethnic or national identities. This is perhaps the most important approach for creating a common identity in Europe or America if not all over the world.

Africa cannot be an exception to the rule. Yet, it has to play its own game with its own rules and achieve something that is unique to the continent and its people. Europe and America were successful in this endeavors because they had historical advantages to come on top of the game of nation building and identity manifestations. Africa is retarded but it still has the opportunity to restart the work or continue on the road already charted by the great African leaders who put the main ideological pillar of African identity and



unity in the form of Pan-Africanism. What we lack at present is the determination to rise up to the occasion and make the dream come true.

Most observers of contemporary Africa often agree on some of the vital challenges Africa is facing at present. Most Africans are struggling with the challenges of climate change, regional and domestic national conflicts and the after effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that is still making life difficult if not hellish for many disadvantaged Africans. One item on the agenda should be added to the three issues mentioned above. That is building a common African identity and consciousness that would serve as the pillar for Africa's onward march towards the promised land of abundance and mental rehabilitation and freedom from Western paradigms of modernity.

As to Africa's vastness and richness of cultures and languages, one can for instance create linguistic clusters that can be used as common languages in the different regions as part of the building blocks of an All African common language and identity in the long run. As you cannot bring together the various religions and belief systems available in Africa, you may not be able to put together all languages in order to create one common African language. This is practically unrealizable. But when it comes to language it is possible to create clusters of regional entities where major languages are spoken by most people that could serve as common language.

If we want to bring together the people of the horn of Africa together culturally and linguistically we can start for instance by identifying the languages spoken by most people at the regional level and then try to make it the major language of communication in the region. This may be Arabic, Swahili, Afan Oromo or Amharic. Or we can perhaps start by selecting languages that could serve as the working languages of the AU.

This is what is being suggested with Amharic to become one of the working languages of the AU together with the other languages. We can for instance discard one or two foreign languages and replace them with African languages like Swahili, Amharic or any other language. However this can only be realized if Africans think not as a conglomeration of regions or national entities but as one continent with a common vision and a common dream of achieving modernity away from Western paradigms of inequality and domination.

Indepth

Africa's debt crisis needs bold new approach

It has not been easy for African states to finance their developmental and environmental policy objectives over the past few years. Recent events suggest that the situation may be improving. For the first time in two years, three African states have been able to access international financial markets, albeit at high interest rates. Kenya, for example, is now paying over 10% compared to about 7% in 2014.

Many African countries continue to face challenging sovereign debt situations. Total external debts as a share of Africa's export earnings increased from 74.5% in 2010 to 140% in 2022.

In 2022, African governments had to allocate about 12% of their revenues to servicing their debt. Between 2019 and 2022, 25 African governments allocated more resources to servicing their total debts than to the health of their citizens.

And in late 2023 the International Monetary Fund estimated that over half the low income African countries were either potentially or actually experiencing difficulties paying their debts.

This suggests that it will be very difficult for Africa to raise the US\$1.6 trillion that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimates it needs to reach the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.

One of the lessons of the COVID pandemic and the climate negotiations is that Africa can't count on the global community to provide it with sufficient new funds or with debt relief to deal with either its development needs or the consequences of crises such as pandemics or extreme weather events.

Its official bilateral creditors appear more focused on their own needs and on other parts of the world than on Africa. Commercial creditors are happy to provide financing when conditions are favorable and African debt can help them satisfy their investment mandates.

But they are less forthcoming when the going gets tough and the risks associated with the transaction – and for which they have been compensated – actually materialize.

This suggests that Africa needs to advocate more aggressively for its own interests. This year offers some good opportunities to promote a more effective approach to African debt.

Careful planning needed

There are two international conferences where global economic governance will be on the agenda. This is also the first year that the African Union participates as a full member in the G20. In addition, South Africa, the G20 chair in 2025, currently serves on the troika that manages the G20 process. (G20 Finance Ministers are scheduled to meet in Brazil 28-29 February).

Debt and development finance will be an



A mobile money stand in Accra, Ghana. Credit: IMF/Andrew Caballero-Reynolds

important topic in all these forums. African representatives can use their participation to advocate for a new approach to sovereign debt that is more responsive to African needs and concerns. They can also lobby other participating states and non-state actors for their support.

But African states will need to plan carefully. Their starting point should be the well-recognized fact that the current sovereign debt restructuring process is not working for anyone. The G20 agreed a Common Framework that was supposed to help resolve the sovereign debt crises in low income countries.

Four African countries applied to have their debts restructured through the framework. Despite years of negotiations, it has failed to fully resolve the debt crisis in three of them.

Countries outside the Common Framework, such as Sri Lanka, have not managed to fully resolve their debt crises either. This is costly for both debtors and creditors. It is therefore in everyone's interest to look for a new approach.

This requires all parties to be willing to entertain new ideas and to experiment with new approaches to old problems. African states should offer their own innovative proposals. They should also state that they are willing to take on new responsibilities if their creditors are willing to do the same.

They can remind their creditors that these experiments would not be taking place in a vacuum. They can be guided by the many existing, but under-utilized, international norms and standards applicable to responsible sovereign debt transactions, for example the Unctad principles on responsible sovereign debt transactions. Some of these relate to the conduct of sovereign borrowers.

Others focus on responsible lending behaviour and are often cited by creditors in their own policies dealing with environmental and social issues, social responsibility or human rights.

By basing any new approach on these international norms and standards, both debtors and creditors will merely be agreeing to implement principles that they have already accepted.

Working from this starting point, African states should make three specific proposals.

Concrete proposals

First, they should commit to making both the process for incurring debts and the terms of all their public debt transactions transparent.

This will ensure that their own citizens understand what obligations their governments are assuming on their behalf. It will encourage governments to adopt responsible borrowing and debt management practices.

They should also agree that they can be held accountable for their failure to comply with these transparent and responsible sovereign debt practices and procedures.

Second, African states should point out that there is a fundamental problem with a sovereign debt restructuring process that only focuses on the contractual obligations that the debtor state owes its creditors.

This focus means, in effect, that servicing its debt obligations will trump the debtor state's efforts to deal with the country's vulnerability to climate change and the loss of biodiversity, and with its poverty, inequality and unemployment challenges.

This follows from the fact that their creditors can use the restructuring process to force sovereign borrowers in difficulty, unlike corporations in bankruptcy, to pay those who lend them money without regard, for example, to the impact on their obligations to pensioners, public sector employees or the welfare of their citizens.

This exclusive focus on debt contracts is inconsistent with the international community's interest in addressing global challenges like climate and inequality.

This problem can be resolved if both creditors and debtors agree that they will adopt an approach to debt negotiations that incorporates the financial, economic, social, environmental, human rights and governance dimensions of sovereign debt crises.

Third, African states should propose that their creditors publicly commit to base the new approach to sovereign debt on an agreed list of international norms and standards relevant to responsible international financial practices.

These will include those dealing with transparency, climate and environmental issues, and social matters, including human rights.

(SOURCE: THE CONVERSATION)

And in late 2023 the International Monetary Fund estimated that over half the low income African countries were either potentially or actually experiencing difficulties paying their debts

Law & Politics

Reforming the UNSC: A timely quest

BY EYUEL KIFLU

Once considered the darkest and most destitute part of the world, Africa is now being seen as the continent of the future with a growing economy and young population. The youthful continent is becoming an epicenter of investments and trade. In spite of the negative pictures and news of conflicts and poverties, Africa is also presenting itself as a place of opportunity for growth and development.

With vast and untapped natural resources, the continent's contribution to global development cannot be undermined. The continent that has been tarnished by centuries of wrong narratives is presenting itself as the next powerhouse of the globe. With this comes an increased call for proportional representation of the continent in global institutions. The continental bloc, the African Union has already made the matter a priority.

Current world scenarios are behooving the international community to have an equal say in global international affairs. As political and socioeconomic crises rock the world, thus it has become imperative to change the current international structure in a way that would effectively address current issues. With the globe requiring a decisive and coordinated response, many contend that an equitable and participative international framework is necessary to address the concerns.

Furthermore, it has become clear that the issue of equitable and fair representation within the international bloc is a major injustice echoed by African countries and people from other aisles of the globe as well.

Despite having a population of over 1.4 billion, Africa is not represented in the highest global decision-making bodies, such as United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The continent has demanded equal representation and treatment in the largest arena in the world due to its rapid economic expansion and growing political strength.

For people advocating UN reform, the international blocs including the UNSC should be reorganized to offer everyone equal voice and should accommodate all parts of the world. Furthermore, given the tremendous changes occurring in the world, it is becoming increasingly clear that the international system needs to be reformed. Many believe that the moment has come to repair historical errors and update the worldwide system

Many countries, blocs, and leaders agree that Africa should be a part of this group. It was back in 2023, during the 36th African Union meeting in Addis Ababa that UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres declared it was just and proper that Africa be granted permanent membership in the UNSC.

Over the years, the issue of equal and fair representation attracted criticism of the Council as many see it as a political tool of the member countries to dictate global



geopolitics. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres described the non-inclusion of Africa in the UNSC permanent seat as a 'flagrant injustice'.

The quest for Africa's permanent seat at the UNSC has been a long-standing issue raised by the African Union and its member countries on various global stages. However, the issue has been placed on the back burner and the quest has not received a response to date.

African countries still lack representation and the ability to safeguard their interests at the UNSC for over 70 years, said Ambassador Jorge Catarino Cardoso, a Director of the Africa, Middle East, and Regional Organizations Directorate of the Angolan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"Africa has myriads of problems in relation to security and peace, yet discussions on these matters often exclude African nations' presence and voices, the ambassador told The Ethiopian Herald exclusively.

"Africa is currently represented on the UNSC through the A3, a group of non-permanent members," he said stressing the need to transform this non-permanency into a permanent feature of the Security Council.

The absence of permanent seats of Africa on the UNSC creates an imbalance. This situation fails to adequately represent the interests of the African people, stated Ambassador Salah S. Hammad, Senior Human Rights Expert of the Department of Political Affairs of AUC.

He elucidated that 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," he added.

Also, during the 37th 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 where AUC Moussa Faki Mahamat Chairperson emphasized the need for concerted efforts to secure Africa's representation

Ambassador Salah emphasized the urgent need for change to enable Africa to contribute to building a stable, united, prosperous, and peaceful continent. The ongoing negotiations through the C10 aim to secure Africa's permanent representation in the Security Council, and the ambassador expressed his eagerness for immediate outcomes in this regard.

Africa has been persistently advocating for a permanent seat in order to ensure that the interests of the largest continent are adequately represented in global decision-making processes.

With Africa increasingly becoming a target of conflicts, militants, and coup d'états activities, having a permanent seat on the UNSC would enable Africa to effectively manage its security and peace, also added Ambassador Jorge

The push for Africa's representation in global affairs aligns with Agenda 2063, a strategic framework led by the African Union. The AU is committed to ensuring Africa's comprehensive representation in the international arena, including UN reform. Furthermore, there is a growing intention to assume leadership positions in various UN agencies, as Africa's voice needs to be heard on global issues, ambassador Salah said.

Ambassador Jorge noted that Africa has initiated the process of securing at least two permanent seats for the continent, aligning

with the Ezulwini Consensus, which outlines Africa's views on how peace and security issues should be addressed at the UN.

Moussa Faki 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 toward a brighter future.

Mentioning the support of the United States, Russia, China, the UK, and France for at least one African permanent member, Guterres expressed hope that a partial reform of the Security Council could correct this injustice and allow Africa to have at least one permanent member.

In an exclusive interview this week, the EU said that it is in favor of the AU's bid for a proper representation not only in the UNSC but also in all multilateral forums.

EU representative to the AU, Ambassador Javier Nino Perez stated that the European bloc has strongly supported AU's accession to the G20. It was even engaged in the dialogue with non-European G20 members supporting the African bid. Later, the continent was admitted to the club of 20. This is an example to follow to reform other multilateral institutions like the UNSC.

"We are extremely pleased that AU will sit together with its sister organizations. This reflects the logic of having Africa more meaningfully represented in the international forum," said the Ambassador.

Accordingly, UNSC, as to the Ambassador, is to be reformed necessitates the consent of the five permanent members where four of whom are not from European nations. "What Africa needs to do is to engage in a dialogue with those five permanent states and with the rest of international communities to reform the security bloc," he said.

Women in Focus

Unleashing the potential: Empowering women to lead, inspire

BY HIZKEL HAILU

In a society where girls are often discouraged from pursuing education and reaching leadership positions, it is crucial to question the reasons behind this disparity. Instead of being promoted academically or professionally, girls are often expected to prioritize their family duties until they get married and then assume the role of leading their own families. Such expectations imposed by family, society, religion, and culture have had a profound impact on many individuals and created barriers to reaching their full potential.

However, there are those who are striving to change this narrative. One such inspiring figure is Zainab Haji Aden, whom The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) has approached her to share her experience. She is currently serving as Deputy Head of Somali State Investment and Industry Bureau.

Born and raised in Jigjiga, Zainab attributes her success to the support and encouragement she received from her parents, who placed great importance on education. She acknowledges that her studies and hard work have propelled her from humble beginnings to her current position. She is also grateful for the privilege of having a family that fosters a culture of learning and achievement.

According to her, the perception that girls are meant solely for marriage and not for education or positions of responsibility is a social construct rather than a divine decree. She believes that such thinking has caused immense harm and that only a few individuals have managed to overcome societal barriers and achieve success through their own efforts. However, she recognizes that there is a positive shift occurring, with more attention being given to girls' education and an increasing number of women assuming professional and leadership roles in various fields, including education.

Zeineb's educational journey took her to different schools in Jigjiga for her primary and secondary education. She pursued a BA degree in the field of management through distance education at Haramaya University and later obtained a master's degree in Agricultural Economics. During her undergraduate studies, she volunteered at State's Youth and Sports Bureau, where she contributed to various awareness-raising activities for the youth. This experience paved the way for her to join the workforce, eventually leading to her appointment as the Acting Head of Women and Children Department and later as Director of Women and Children's Bureau.

As the only female cabinet member in the State, she served as both a role model and a trailblazer. While she takes pride in being a source of inspiration to others, she also expresses a sense of loneliness due to the lack of female counterparts in the cabinet. However, she notes that progress has been made, with the number of female

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To create a more inclusive and equitable society, it is essential to challenge traditional norms and stereotypes that hinder women's progress

cabinet members increasing to four, and the representation of women in deputy leadership roles across various institutions in the State exceeding 15.

“This progress is a result of Prime Minister Abiy Ahimed's (PhD) commitment to gender equality and his efforts to empower women. Under his leadership, initiatives have been implemented to promote women's participation in decision-making processes and leadership roles. Premier's inclusive policies and support have created an environment that encourages and facilitates the advancement of women in various sectors”.

She values the positive impact of these measures and believes that they have played a significant role in increasing the representation of women in key positions. She further expressed her gratitude for the opportunities provided and the ongoing commitment to gender equality in the country.

According to her, even though many-sided efforts are being made to empower women; much more actions remain to be done. She emphasized that women possess the talent and capability to excel in leadership positions. While the constitution grants women their rights, she believes that there is a discrepancy between rights on paper and the implementation of policies in practice.

Zainab emphasizes that a girl's leadership role begins at home, where women play a crucial role in nurturing morally upright citizens who contribute positively to the country. She



Zainab Haji Aden, Deputy Head of Somali State Investment and Industry Bureau

believes that the management of a household is an essential responsibility that equips women with valuable skills and experiences applicable to the professional world.

Drawing from her personal experience, she proves that it is possible to balance family responsibilities, marriage, and work. As a mother and a professional, she fulfills her duties diligently, ensuring that her work and family life are harmoniously intertwined. She carries out her work with dedication, demonstrating careful resource management and a meticulous approach to problem-solving.

She once had the opportunity to visit The Netherlands, where she witnessed women occupying various positions of leadership. She admired the level of development in the country, where women actively participated in construction work, often traditionally considered as men's job. This experience reinforced her belief that Ethiopian women possess great strength and potential. She equally admits that there is still gap in having support from their counterparts, men's. Despite this, Zainab remains committed to empowering women and stand always by the side of them and to offer the needed guidance and support to produce female leaders.

As to her, the advent of technology, particularly the accessibility of mobile phones in rural areas, has played a significant role in raising awareness and empowering women. Women in rural communities of the State are now engaging in various activities to improve their lives, inspired by the lifestyle and opportunities they observe in urban areas. Nevertheless, she emphasizes that there is still work to be done in reaching those who are isolated from information and have limited opportunities for change.

When faced with challenges, she adopts a thoughtful approach, avoiding hasty decisions. She believes in seeking wisdom

and exercising patience, drawing parallels between her leadership style and motherhood. Just as a mother endeavors to guide and nurture her children, Zainab sees her employees as a part of her work family, actively working to resolve issues and create a harmonious environment.

Desperation has no place in her mindset. She firmly believes that with determination, resilience, and a supportive environment, women can overcome any obstacles they face. She encourages women to pursue education, develop their skills, and actively seek opportunities for growth and advancement.

Her story is just one example of the many women around the world who can break the glass ceiling and leading change. This story also serves as a reminder that gender should never be a limitation to one's aspirations and achievements. Empowering women is not only a matter of justice and equality but also a catalyst for societal progress and development.

To create a more inclusive and equitable society, it is essential to challenge traditional norms and stereotypes that hinder women's progress. This requires a concerted effort from families, communities, religious and educational institutions, governments, as well as stakeholders and development partners to promote gender equality, provide equal opportunities, and foster an environment that supports women's aspirations.

Through investing in girls' education, providing mentorship and support networks, and implementing policies that promote gender parity in leadership positions, we can create a future where women have an equal voice and influence in shaping society. It is through the collective effort of individuals like Zainab and the commitment of society at large that we can break down barriers, create opportunities, and empower women to lead change in every sphere of life.

Society



Adwa Victory Memorial: Beyond preserving Ethiopia's history

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

The Adwa Victory Memorial Museum stands as a testament to honor those who paid the ultimate sacrifice to defend their country's territorial integrity and sovereignty from invading foreign armed forces.

It is widely recognized that during the late 19th century, European powers embarked on the scramble for Africa to divide the continent along ethnic lines and establish vassal states under their subjugation. However, in the case of Ethiopia, their conspiracy to control Ethiopia turned out to be a nightmare. Thanks to its brave children, by successfully resisting the advancement of colonial power and the ultimate price paid to safeguard its territorial integrity and independence, Ethiopia remained the only African nation that was never colonized by colonizers and a nation that can sustain its sovereignty.

It is a known fact that following the stratagem of European colonizers, many African nations found themselves under the yoke of colonial rule, with countries' wealth and resources being stolen, local populations exploited for labor, and their cultures and languages suppressed. However, Ethiopia's victory at the Battle of Adwa in 1896 marked a pivotal movement in the struggle against colonialism. As European powers sought to assert their dominance, Ethiopia stood firm and emerged victorious in a single day, reshaping the political landscape and garnering recognition as a sovereign state.

As preparations are underway to commemorate the Adwa Victory Day, the inauguration of the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum built in the heart of the capital Addis Ababa has captured headlines and hearts alike. Many view the museum as a symbol of freedom, sovereignty, unity that exhibits the struggle and sacrifice paid for independence. It also serves as a source of pride, strength, dignity and a beacon of hope for future generations.

According to Moges Temesgen, a resident of Addis Ababa and an expert in leadership and change management, the significance of the newly inaugurated Adwa Victory Memorial

Museum in portraying the decisive point in the history of Ethiopia and Ethiopians is immense. Among others, it commemorates Ethiopia's resistance against colonial power, portrays the indomitable spirit and unity of Ethiopians to safeguard their country from invading forces, as well as the magnitude of the Victory of Adwa. Equally important, it marks Ethiopia's inspiration for Africans and Black people around the world for freedom.

He stressed that the Victory of Adwa was not only a military triumph counted against the invading Fascist Italy forces by Ethiopian patriots at the Battle of Adwa and heralded Ethiopia's sovereignty, but it was also an incident that inspired freedom fighters across Africa and beyond to resist colonialists and fight for freedom.

The Museum's exhibits, which include artifacts, documents, and photographs detailing the Battle of Adwa and Ethiopia's struggle against colonialism, offer visitors a profound insight into the sacrifices made by Ethiopians from all walks of life. From the drum that heralded the war to the weapons and attire worn by patriots, each item serves as a reminder of Ethiopia's resilience and determination.

Getnet Alebachew is a Junior School Teacher in Shoa Robit Town, North Shoa Zone of Amhara State. He also hailed the Museum as a fitting tribute to the fallen heroes of Ethiopians regardless of any differences. The Battle of Adwa did not only secure Ethiopia's independence but also inspired the broader independence movement across Africa.

"In my view, the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum stands as a testament to Ethiopia's enduring spirit and the continent's collective struggle for freedom and sovereignty. By commemorating the triumphs and sacrifices of the past, it inspires future generations to uphold the values of justice, dignity, and unity," he added.

According to him, the Museum could play a crucial role in preserving and passing down the history of Ethiopia and Africa, particularly regarding the Battle of Adwa.

It could also serve as a repository for



The Adwa Victory Memorial Museum stands as a testament to Ethiopia's enduring spirit and the continent's collective struggle for freedom and sovereignty

historical artifacts, documents, photographs, and artworks related to the Battle of Adwa. These artifacts are carefully preserved and displayed, allowing visitors to directly engage with tangible pieces of history. By safeguarding these artifacts, the Museum ensures their long-term preservation for future generations.

In general, it will also let citizens and international visitors learn more about the Battle of Adwa and its significance. The Museum provides historical context, narrates the battle's events, and explores its impact on Ethiopia, Africa, and the broader global context. Through exhibits, displays, and multimedia presentations, the museum helps visitors develop a deeper understanding of this pivotal moment in history.

It is clear that the Battle of Adwa holds significant historical and symbolic importance for Ethiopia and Africa.

"We know it is a landmark event that demonstrates African resilience, resistance against colonialism, and the preservation of national sovereignty. Having this Museum could promote these narratives; foster a sense of national pride and Pan-African identity. It highlights the achievements of Ethiopian forces and their role in inspiring the then anti-colonial movements across the continent."

He underlined that the Museum pays homage to the heroes and heroines who fought in the Battle of Adwa. It also highlights the contributions of key figures such as Emperor Menelik II, Empress Taytu Betul, and various military commanders and the deeds of the brave Ethiopians from all segments of society. By commemorating these individuals, the Museum helps to preserve their legacies and ensure that their stories are remembered and honored not only by Ethiopians but also the global community.

The construction of the Museum could provide opportunities for historians, academics, and researchers to study primary sources, conduct research, and contribute to the understanding of this historical event to the posterities. "I believe the Museum's archives and library facilities could support scholarly inquiries and facilitate the production of new knowledge", he underlined.

It is clear that the Museum will attract more tourists and visitors from around the world, contributing to cultural tourism and generating economic benefits for the local community, he said, adding that the Museum's presence could encourage visitors to explore and learn about Ethiopians' culture, and to engage in local businesses and services. This tourism-driven economic impact can support local development and in return paves ways in creating opportunities aside from contributing to the preservation of cultural heritage.

International News

One million vaccine doses administered to children living in humanitarian settings in the Horn of Africa

One million doses of life-saving vaccines have been administered to children living across Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, thanks to the Zero-Dose Immunization Programme (ZIP). Funded by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and led by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in the Horn of Africa, ZIP is responding to the humanitarian challenge of identifying and vaccinating zero-dose children living in fragile settings that are beyond the reach of government health services. More than half of the 2.71 million children in the region aged under five years have never received a vaccine in their lives.

“Children living in hard-to-reach communities now have a fighting chance for a better future,” said Thabani Maphosa, Managing Director of Country Programmes Delivery at Gavi. “But our work is not done: millions of children who are already vulnerable due to conflict, natural disasters and other challenges continue to be under-

served by traditional health systems, and systemically miss out on essential vaccines. Innovative partnerships such as this one with the IRC are essential if we are to ensure no child is left behind.”

In partnership with Flowminder, ThinkPlace and a broad coalition of local civil society organisations, the IRC is building on its humanitarian expertise to successfully deliver results through ZIP. In Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, humanitarian negotiators are working closely with vaccination teams to access communities living in conflict-ridden areas and vaccinate children who are the hardest to reach. According to the latest data, at the beginning of the programme only 16% of the total targeted areas in the region were accessible. Through successful negotiation, 77% can now be accessed to deliver immunisation. Partners are also integrating health programmes to provide services, including nutrition, and vaccines in one

place.

“Through innovative strategies and strategic partnerships, the IRC-led Gavi REACH consortium is bridging the equity gap in immunisation, extending Ministry of Health immunisation programmes to populations in fragile, conflict and humanitarian settings that are beyond the reach of traditional health systems or government support,” said Shiferaw Demissie, Project Director for Gavi REACH at the IRC. “The IRC is committed not only to expanding immunisation coverage to some of the most vulnerable populations, but also to utilising Gavi REACH as a gateway to extend additional critical services, such as primary health care, nutrition and other services, to these communities.”

The Horn of Africa is grappling with multiple crises. In addition to the millions of lives lost due to conflict, millions more have been displaced and are facing extreme

shortages of food and water. Climate change, extreme droughts and flooding are also exacerbating instability, making it increasingly difficult to access communities in need of basic health services, and to prevent and control the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases.

In 2021, there were more than 4.5 million zero-dose children living across the 11 target ZIP countries. Recognising that new methods were necessary to address low immunisation coverage and equity gaps, Gavi launched ZIP, dedicating up to US\$ 100 million and leveraging new partnerships to identify and reach zero-dose children living in fragile and conflict settings across Africa. The IRC and World Vision were selected to lead the initiative in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel regions respectively, due to their extensive experience in conflict areas and strong footprint in remote areas.

Source: Gavi

Morocco plans to manufacture its first Aircraft by 2030

Morocco’s Minister of Industry and Trade, Ryad Mezzour, revealed in a live interview on February 27 an ambitious initiative that could lift the increasingly thriving Moroccan aerospace industry to new heights.

In an interview with the “Al-Sharq Bloomberg” channel, Mezzour announced that Morocco is committed to manufacturing the first entirely Moroccan-made aircraft within the next six years.

Mezzour described the aeronautical industry sector in Morocco as “fairly acceptable,” noting that the country occupies the 20th position worldwide in the aeronautics field.

He enthusiastically highlighted Morocco’s ability to produce aircraft parts, stressing the recent inauguration of a production site specializing in the manufacture of a highly sensitive engine part, a part which is manufactured in only five countries in the world.

Morocco, he said, has solid expertise in the aeronautics sector and has presented the manufacturing of a complete aircraft as a future objective.

“This set bar could be reached before the year 2030, thus marking a significant stage in the industrial history of the country,” Mezzour stressed.

As the aerospace industry is more complex than the automobile sector, the minister argued, “achieving this objective would position Morocco as a key player in the industrial field, capable

of producing a varied range of complex products.”

He highlighted “Morocco’s commitment to strengthening its international partnerships as part of its win-win approach,” recalling the partnerships established with emerging and developing countries in Africa, emphasizing the Kingdom’s confidence in the capacities of the African continent.

Mezzour outlined Morocco’s overall industrial vision, which he said encompasses areas such as food and health security, energy sovereignty and the transition to renewable energies in the wake of the COVID crisis.

He went on to speak of the significance of free trade agreements for Morocco’s industrial vision, arguing that the country is one of the champions of regional integration and intra-African solidarity on the economic front.

“Morocco aims to increase intra-African trade, from 15% to 26% in the future, thanks to a clear cooperation strategy between coastal and Mediterranean countries” he declared.

The minister’s upbeat comments come as Morocco is in the process of building an integrated production chain, particularly in the field of batteries, to ensure a prosperous industrial future.

Morocco has a bold goal for its industrial future, aiming to establish a regional aerospace powerhouse while pursuing sustainable economic growth.

Source: Mororco world news

Boon for Laikipia farmers adapting modern farming technologies

Following perennial drought in Laikipia County that has resulted in food shortage, farmers in Matanya have devised innovative ways to tap runoff water for farming.

The innovation which involves constructing shallow farm ponds of about a meter deep to harvest both runoff and rain water can hold water in the ground for about four months which boost soil moisture and hence ensure farm produce thrive even during dry periods.

The farming technology which is in pilot phase, introduced and supported by Akina foundation, an Indian based organisation that seeks to address climate change challenges, has since seen about 25 farmers in Matanya, Laikipia central embrace the innovation aimed at increasing their productivity.

The organisation is working in collaboration with Egerton University which supplies farmers with drought resistant crops like maize, sorghum, millet, sweet potatoes and Napier grass.

Patrick Ndumia, a farmer and one of the beneficiaries of the technology says that in the past three years, he had not harvested any crops due to drought but after embracing use of farm ponds, he was able to get sufficient harvest last year.

“I am happy with this new farming method, there are some changes compared with previous years when we had no farm ponds. It was very dry unlike now where I have plenty of food, thanks to these ponds,” says Ndumia.

He reveals that farm ponds retain water that drips underground to be utilised by the crops during dry weather.

Muriithi Kihuria, another beneficiary noted

that with the farm ponds, he has been able to support his family and urged residents to embrace the technology in a bid to address food insecurity in the county.

“After benefiting from this farm pond, I have harvested sufficient food and I applaud the donors for promoting modern farming. My call is to residents to embrace the technology in alleviating hunger,” notes Kihuria.

Another farmer Julia Nyeri also lauded the modern farming method by noting it had helped to alleviate hunger in the community and at the same time appreciated the drought resistant crops they had received from Egerton University.

Akina foundation director Avijit Malik said that the farming technology was ideal in dry areas since it was cheap and affordable to implement in addressing food shortage.

“The challenge farmers experience here is that they don’t get sufficient rainfall and to address that especially during drought season, they only need about 200 cubic meters of water,” reveals Malik.

He points out that, after engaging with the farmers in Matanya, they noticed that due to adverse climate change they experienced crop failure which resulted in Akina coming up with the farm ponds system to address the effects of drought.

Malik said that they piloted pond farming in July 2023 and now about 31 ponds have been constructed across Matanya to conserve moisture and boost crop production.

He noted that with sufficient resources, they will be able to support all the farmers in the county and hence appealed to agricultural stakeholders for partnership and funding.

Source: Kenya News Agency



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

HU graduates 640 students in various fields of study

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Haramaya University (HU) has graduated 640 students, from which 151 are women, with first, second, and third degrees in a variety of educational subjects.

This 68th round of the HU graduation ceremony was attended by several guests, including State Minister Dr. Ayele Teshome of the Ministry of Health, higher-ranking government officials, and members of the University Management.

HU Academic Affairs Vice President and President's Representative Professor Mengstu Urge said that the University now teaches around 26,000 students in a variety of subjects. As a result, one graduate in the third degree, 78 graduates in the second degree, 17 in specialty, 6 in sub-specialty, and 363 in the first degree in health and medical sciences completed this graduation program. In addition to health science students, 102 students from business, public administration, and information technology graduated, totaling it 640 students.

"Since its establishment, HU has taught and graduated over 128,000 students, including this year's graduates, who have significantly impacted the country,"



hence, he urged the graduates to fulfill their obligations by doing good things that would benefit future generations in the professions they pursue.

Ethiopian Ministry of Health State Minister Dr. Ayele Teshome for his part noted that efforts are being undertaken to balance the nation's demand for health and medical services with their accessibility at the national level currently.

"In light of this, HU is carrying out its obligation by developing knowledgeable human resources. This year's graduates are

among those who must put their acquired knowledge into practice and apply it for the benefit of the country and its citizens." He emphasized that graduates, based on their theoretical and practical expertise, should be innovative and problem solvers. This would let them contribute to their country by transforming obstacles into opportunities.

Haramaya University College of Health and Medical Sciences Chief Executive Director Dr. Ahmed Mohamed said that the university has educated and graduated



over 9,000 students in the fields of health and medicine, and 358 of the 363 students have passed the national exit exam.

In this approach, HU is aiming to balance the positive outcomes by assuring educational quality. Furthermore, the HU has received and educated 118 students from Somaliland, Puntland, South Sudan, and Djibouti in undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. This not only raises the university's profile but also helps to promote regional cooperation with other regional countries.