



Yenenesh Temesgen (PhD)

## Ethiopian diplomacy ushers collective peace, dev't in HoA

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA-** Ethiopia's diplomacy, which prioritized peace and shared development, is essential to the attainment of the common goals of the Horn of Africa (HoA) countries, an expert in the issue said.

Speaking to the Ethiopia Press Agency (EPA), Dila University Peace and Security Studies Lecturer Yenenesh Temesgen (PhD) stated that the country has retained its longstanding principle of peaceful co-existence with neighboring states and nonaggression.

"Accordingly, the successive African leaders have been prioritizing relations with HoA countries and promoting a peaceful and tolerant approach in

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Photo: Hadash Abreha

## Ethiopia, Malta confer business, investment opportunities

### • First bilateral business forum takes place in Addis

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA-**Ethiopian and Maltese officials discussed opportunities of boosting business and investment cooperation at the

first business forum held yesterday in Addis Ababa.

Speaking at the Forum, Foreign State Minister Ambassador Misganu Arega said that the forum which is the first of its kind

in the formal diplomatic history of the two countries is the reflection of the rising bilateral business exchanges.

It is a high time in which Ethiopia is facili

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Benalf Andualem

Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

## MoP engages over 9 mln citizens in community dialogue

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Ministry of Peace (MoP) said it has engaged over nine million citizens in community dialogue that it said to have played a significant role to ensure lasting peace and stability across the country.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*,

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## Regional dev't demands infrastructure, resource exchange: Experts

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – Countries in the Eastern Africa region ought to expand infrastructure and exchange resources to achieve mutual development, experts suggested.

Institute of Foreign Affairs (IFA), African Affairs - Senior Researcher Gizachew Asirat (PhD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that countries in the Eastern Africa region need to expand infrastructural devel

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Gizachew Asrat (PhD)



Arega Shumetie (PhD)

Industrial parks' vital role for fostering economic development

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# News



## UNFPA, Itochu partner to empower Ethiopian women

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA** - UNFPA and Itochu Corporation of Japan announced partnership to empower women and girls of Ethiopia through menstrual health, hygiene and livelihood promotion.

During the project signing ceremony, of Itochu Corporation Commercial Representative Office General Manager, Shinoda Akiko expressed that the Corporation collaborated with UNFPA to disseminate knowledge about menstrual health and hygiene while building skills through sewing training to improve livelihood.

Shinoda said Itochu is dedicated to improving period poverty in Ethiopia focusing on educating about menstrual health, conducting training in sewing absorbent sanitary shorts and reusable sanitary pads.

Accordingly, Itochu Corporation commits to contribute a portion of its sales revenue to UNFPA, supporting the implementation of a project on women's and girls' empowerment through menstrual health, hygiene, and livelihood enhancement, Shinoda said, reiterating the Corporation's technical support to produce high-quality reusable sanitary pads and absorbent sanitary shorts in Ethiopia.

UNFPA Country Representative, Koffi Kouame added that the collaboration with Itochu Corporation will significantly contribute to changing women's and girls' lives by improving their menstrual health and hygiene, and livelihood.

The Representative noted that the project is expected to be a trigger to expand the reusable sanitary items manufacturing business with active youth participation.

Ambassador of Japan to Ethiopia, Ambassador Shibata Hironori disclosed that Japan is ready to support to the beneficiary and address such issues for those women and girls who have been exposed to sexual exploitation and thereby by empower, improve rural women education and employment opportunity.

According to the Ambassador, a co-creation environment is critical among governments, international organizations', and private sectors to realize women's empowerment.

He said the project will become one of the model cases where different sectors work together to achieve a common goal in sustainable manner and empowering of women is one of the priority areas of the government of Japan.

## Chamber pushes for policy revision in investors' land acquisition

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

**ADDIS ABABA**- The government needs to consider a policy revision that ensures investors' outside industrial parks access to land, the European Chamber in Ethiopia said.

The document titled 'Access to land: streamlining land acquisition for investors outside industrial parks' discusses land related challenges faced by investors outside industrial parks.

Speaking at the event, European Chamber for Ethiopia Board Chairperson Ben Depraetere said, "Our vision is to contribute to Ethiopia's emergence in becoming one of the favorable business destinations in Africa and fostering an inclusive economy."

To achieve this, the Chamber is committed to facilitate information exchange, fostering networking platforms and engaging in continuous dialogues with stakeholders to enhance the business environment, the chairperson added.

Delivering a keynote speech, Deputy Head of Mission of the EU Delegation to Ethiopia David Krivanek (PhD) said, "The EU has been and continues to be Ethiopia's trusted partner. Our commitment to supporting Ethiopia in its endeavors has been clear and consistent. EU's preferential and non-reciprocate market 'Everything but arms' has provided immense opportunity in trade and investment to the Union and Ethiopia." European Chamber Ethiopia Executive Director Bahru Temesgen on his part stated that investors need lands out of industrial parks is due to investments that cannot be carried out in the parks.

Investments like horticulture need a vast land out of industrial parks. That is the reason to conduct a research on policy brief. "Apart from AGOA, Ethiopia can use the European



initiative 'Everything but Arms' to create better economic cooperation with EU."

A representative from the Ethiopian Investment Commission indicated the issue of land acquisition is one of the most important things to deal with. Land is the prior need for every investor and there is no challenge in finding developed lands in industrial parks. "Out of the industrial parks, the authority is given to states to administer their lands so that it is obvious to find different implementations."

According to the presented document, bureaucratic delays across administrative tiers, insufficient pre-allocation of land, excessive compensation demand, and complication in compensation management are some of the pressing challenges in the area.

The policy brief also forwarded some recommendations including promoting clear and consistent policies that promote transparency, fairness, and effective land administration to encourage investment and economic development.

Enhancing the capacity of land administration offices, fostering federal-state coordination, implementing anti-corruption measures, and ensuring transparent land registry are the key suggestions from the policy brief. It also evaluated Proclamation No. 1161/2019 concerning the exploration of land holdings for public purposes.

## Ministry, universities pledge to excel public health system

### •Launch Nat'l Doctor of Public Health program

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** -The Ministry of Health (MoH) in cooperation with Haramaya University and Addis Ababa University officially launched the national Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) program to transform the health sector in Ethiopia.

Speaking at the launching workshop yesterday, MoH Human Resource Development Improvement Lead Executive Officer Assegid Samuel said that the launching of the program, which is the first in the country, would be a milestone to advance public health practitioners in leadership positions in the health system.

He further remarked that the project is also bedrock to build the capacity of leaders in the area that enabled professionals manage address public health problems.

Stating the readiness of the universities to the project implementation, he said that training is planned to be commenced in the coming two months.

"The Ministry's has been supporting and engaging in identifying potential candidates,



Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

mobilizing resources, supporting program implementation, and sharing local and national data for research purposes," he added.

Haramaya University College of Health and Medical Science Chief Executive Director Ahmed Mohammed (MD) on his part remarked that this event is a significant milestone in the journey of Haramaya University, a leading senior higher institution in Ethiopia, towards excellence in education, research and community service.

As to Ahmed, the program has been specifically designed to produce highly qualified professionals who are well-equipped

to address the 21st-century public health challenges through practice-based research and effective responses to public health emergencies.

Unlike a traditional PhD in public health, Ahmed noted that the DrPH program takes a broader focus, aiming to develop a diversified skill set that is directly applicable to addressing the pressing public health issues of our time.

"The launching of the DrPH program at Haramaya University is a testament to our commitment to advancing public health and addressing the critical health challenges of

our time," the director emphasized.

Moreover, he emphasized that the program is also believed to produce highly qualified professionals who will lead the way in transforming public health practice, research, and policy in Ethiopia and beyond.

Addis Continental Institute of Public Health Director Yemane Berehane (Prof.) said that given the complexity of the challenges in the country, the establishment of the project a blue print to shape its health systems to support progress towards universal health coverage.

"As a diverse country with diverse health-problems, Ethiopia requires adaptive, culturally sensitive, and innovative approaches parallel with the principles of public health," Yemane remarked.

Yemane emphasized that the program have also included competencies such as innovative thinking, leadership skills, and inspiring the communities and stakeholders to collaborate and partner for a common goal.

At the event, the national DrPH established technical advisory committee comprised of ten to back the successful progress of the program.

# News

## Gov't implementing multi-pronged strategy amid inflationary pressures

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Government of Ethiopia has been taking monetary, fiscal and development policy measures that stabilize inflation, Finance State Minister Eyob Tekelegn told ENA.

According to him, the government is enforcing stringent budgetary discipline on government institutions for the remainder of the Ethiopian fiscal year.

"Our budget is constrained with high demand and limited resources, "Eyob said, adding" this compels institutions to optimize cost, enhance efficiency and find innovative solutions with fewer resources."

In tandem with this, the National Bank has implemented reforms restricting large transactions, capping bank lending at 14% annual growth to curb money supply, and regulating government borrowing rates.

Loan dependence is aggressively cut with direct government borrowing limited to one-third of the previous year's level through deficit reduction efforts, the state minister elaborated.

Combating food price inflation is a central priority, according to Eyob.

"The key lies in producing goods in large quantities and ensuring well-regulated market distribution, which undoubtedly brings about positive pricing changes," he stressed.

Therefore, increased budgetary allocations are targeting productive agricultural sectors, while the Homegrown Economic Reform Agenda aims to streamline the business environment and distribution efficiencies.

While initially challenging, the policy actions are gaining encouraging traction, the state minister noted, pointing out "price stability and significant reductions in some sales, while prices remain stable in others." Yet, the inflationary buildup necessitates a



Eyob Tekelegn

measured, long-term strategy, he said.

With regard to product price reductions, Eyob revealed that regulatory bodies are directed to robustly monitor against unjustified price hikes.

"If civil servants, leaders and businesses prioritize curbing inflation, stable price can be attained for improved economic conditions nationwide," he stated, reiterating the government's resolute commitment to this agenda through monetary, fiscal and development-driven interventions."

Recall that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, while addressing the 28th regular session of the House of People's Representatives, said the government's preventive measures against inflation have yielded promising results.

According to him, inflation was reduced to 28.5 percent from the previous 30 percent. This achievement is regarded as a positive beginning, and there are high expectations for further improvements this Ethiopian fiscal year.

## Ethiopia, Malta confer business...

tating opportunities to build practical cooperation. "We have witnessed tangible progress in our bilateral cooperation and partnership in the past three years; (we) signed MoUs in the areas of aviation, cyber security, and tourism development. This business forum will further help to cement the relation," he said.

Despite the historic relationship, the economic and investment cooperation was not seen a significant development, he said, expressing that Ethiopia would help Maltese businesses politically and in any available ways to achieve new age in cooperation.

The cooperation between the two countries is expected to be boosted through exploring opportunities and reaching more agreements in various areas, he noted

Ethiopian Investment Commissioner, Hanna Arayaselassie on her part said that the government has opened several investment sectors (including the telecom industry) to private companies with incentives.

The manufacturing sector, physical and digital infrastructure development, agro-processing, tourism and others are lucrative for Maltese businesses, she highlighted.

Maltese Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Ronald Micallef also stated that the relation with Ethiopia will help his country to easily penetrate the African market.

Mentioning that trade and economy are the key areas the two nations are partnering, the Ambassador said, Ethiopia has the market with growing economy that Maltese companies can take part.

At the event, Trade Malta CEO, Anton Buttigieg indicated that Maltese companies will invest in Ethiopia considering available resources and business preconditions.

Ethiopia and Malta have longstanding diplomatic relations that dates back to the 1970s. The two countries began to enjoy the formal diplomatic relationship since the opening of the Maltese embassy in Addis Ababa in 2022, it was stated.

## MoP engages over...

MoP Minister Benalf Andualem stated that the government has been employing community dialogue as a means to bring sustainable peace and involves various segments of society in the process. The dialogue aims to curtail problems before they turn into violence, conflict and other social upheavals.

Accordingly, over the last six months, the MoP held community dialogues with more than nine million citizens across the country. "The ministry also held fruitful deliberations with people from different walks of lives and as elites stand at the forefront of nation-building, we organized various campaigns that aim to expedite their contribution in the process."

The minister also said that peace building efforts are widely accompanied by active community representation. To this end, the MoP has been establishing peace clubs in education institutions to help students to resolve their problems amicably.

Consolidated efforts are underway to create a harmonious teaching-learning environment in education institutions. In previous years, education institutions were a source of violence and conflict, he emphasized.

Likewise, the MoP has trained some 50,000 volunteer youths who are fresh university graduates in the national youth voluntary service program and deploy them in various parts of the

country. The program is instrumental to foster the values of unity, social cohesion and enable the university graduates to contribute for the peace of the country.

Benalf further mentioned the establishment of state leader's forum that aims to strengthen the relations among different states and foster federalism. "In this regard, the government has been working to build a true federalism that would solve the pressing challenges that the country has been encountering.

"Negotiation and dialogue are the critical steps to ensure peace and stability and Ethiopia's current challenges are not beyond roundtable discussion. The government is committed to solve differences with militant and civil groups through negotiation and in a peaceful manner." Moreover, addressing the pressing challenges via National Dialogue and other forums would make Ethiopia profitable in the long run and the door is open for any group that would accept government's call for peace.

The conflicts that have been taking place in the country would be solved through dialogue, discussion and negotiation. The root causes for most of the conflicts are identity, boundary, self-administration and other concerns, the minister remarked.

## Ethiopian diplomacy...

dealing with the latter."

Yenenesh also stated that Ethiopia has employed both the hard and soft diplomacy that makes the country a symbol of victory and unity in the African continent. Accordingly, Ethiopia won the Battle Adwa with hard diplomacy and showed its capacity to repel aggression. The country's soft diplomacy is also helping African countries to forge economic unity.

Ethiopia has gone beyond handling its own diplomacy in peaceful and careful manner, and the peace efforts it exerts when disagreements arise in neighboring states are praiseworthy.

According to her, efforts should be made to fight the destructive attempts of some interest groups that have been engaged in straining Ethiopia's relations with the rest of HoA countries. "Therefore, Ethiopia should make adequate preparations to withstand the pressures that are arising from its seaport

aspiration and devising strong diplomacy that involves ideas from different directions."

In addition, it is necessary to build citizens' understanding of seaport's benefits for Ethiopia's political stability and economic prowess. "Citizens should demonstrate the sense of bolognaises for Ethiopia's port aspiration and replicate the overwhelming support they showed to Abay Dam to the former."

Ethiopia's landlocked status has forced the country to pay heavy security and economic price and its sovereign access to the sea would enable it to benefit from the geopolitics and become active player in the region.

It is expected from every citizen to work for better Ethiopia and by supplementing its peace and development endeavors, they need to help the country to become the leading player in the HoA's socio-economic and political affairs, the expert remarked.

## Regional dev't demands...

opments and exchange of resources for mutual growth.

As to him, forming strong regional institutions is timely to promote social, economic, and political relations thereby addressing poverty. For instance, he said, Ethiopia's Abbay Dam is a flagship project that ensures mutual development and the country is attempting solve misunderstandings through a diplomatic approach.

Accordingly, countries in the Eastern Africa region need to exchange experience and knowledge to bring fruitful outcome that benefits all, Gizachew noted.

"If the Horn of African countries do not exercise the give and take principles, the number of unemployment, terrorism, instability, and illegal actors will be increased."

Likewise, he mentioned that institutions and administrations will be fragile as well as regional crises also occurred.

"Therefore, to end such challenges, countries

primarily should be work to solve internal problems, pay serious attention to common agenda, political commitment and create trustworthiness," Gizachew added.

Ethiopian Economics Association Expert, Arega Shumetie (PhD) on his part said that countries should fill their gaps by exchanging resources to improve the economy of the Eastern Africa region and to achieve political acceptance in the international arena shortly.

Arega suggested that the east African countries should focus on strengthening cooperation to bring economic integration, peaceful interaction which pays off them with price stability, increased production and productivity and peaceful activities.

Currently the region is witnessing a glimpse of hope for the growing cooperation among the countries, as Ethiopia made an agreement with Somaliland, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Djibouti on seaport access, energy supply, infrastructural and economic development deal among others.

# Opinion

## Multilateral Aid should go beyond daily consumption

BY GETACHEW MINAS

As a developing country, Ethiopia has been a recipient of multilateral aid from different international organizations and donor nations. Multilateral aid is assistance delivered by several countries or international organizations to a developing country. The delivery of such assistance from these sources is coordinated through agencies dedicated to these efforts. Ethiopia has been facing multifaceted socio-economic challenges which it could not remove without external aid. It has been faced with food insecurity that resulted from lack of peace and security within its regions.

Farmers could not produce agricultural output which they needed for their own survival. These produces used to be exported to earn foreign exchange with which the country could have imported inputs such as fertilizers, machineries, and improved seeds. These inputs could have increased agricultural productivity and employment in the sector. Multilateral aid donors provided food aid to the people who have faced cycles of droughts. Added to this were social conflicts, skirmishes, battles, fights and combats some of which transformed into major wars in the different parts of the country. These conflicts have hampered the delivery of multilateral assistance where it is critically needed.

Ethiopia is subject to unfavorable socio-economic conditions due to social conflicts mentioned earlier. These and other development issues have made the country subject to international aid. Some of the major multilateral organizations providing aid to the country include the United Nations (UN), World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), African Development Bank (AfDB), and European Union (EU).

The UN delivers assistance to Ethiopia based on its policy and program. It takes into consideration the socio-economic conditions the country finds itself in. It undertakes a thorough study of the level of poverty reigning in Ethiopia and the reasons for it. The UN assigns its various agencies based on the need of the Ethiopian people. These agencies include the World Food Program (WFP), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). They have all been actively involved in providing humanitarian assistance to developing countries including Ethiopia.

Apart from humanitarian assistance, these agencies have been providing development support to Ethiopia. These

supports are provided on the basis of sector development programs and projects of the country. The objectives of these programs originate from the overall policy of the government. The donor assistance is, therefore, aligned with the needs of the people and government of the country.

Generally, external assistance, including multilateral and bilateral aid, is intended to address issues of poverty, malnutrition and education. These issues are closely interrelated as hunger hampers students from attending schools located far away from their homes. The current policy of the Ethiopian government to feed students twice a day is exemplar though limited to the capital city. It may extend the feeding program to all regions of Ethiopia in the near future. The tax payers are also pleased about such programs of feeding as these are investments in the future generation. Both the multilateral and bilateral donors should assist such programs with the goal of developing the youth.

Most of the multilateral aid agencies focusing on Ethiopia provide assistance for its development programs and projects. The WB provides financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. It is not a bank in the ordinary sense but a unique partnership to reduce poverty and support development. It has six stages in its project cycle and these include identification; preparation; appraisal; negotiation; board presentation; implementation and supervision; evaluation. Some project ideas never make it past the early phase of identification.

The WB supports Ethiopia to expand access to education and nutrition services, boost resilience, and build social cohesion. The Bank continues to be a major source of finance to sectors such as infrastructure, education, health, and agriculture. These sectors are essential for growth and development of the country.

The IMF is a source of finance needed for the stabilization of the Ethiopian economy. The IMF may provide financial support for implementation of the economic reforms crafted for sustainable economic development. Sustainability is crucial to ensure continuous support to the poor people of Ethiopia. The continuous flow of development finance builds confidence in people who are engaged in productive activities in their residence. These activities are financed by other sources of funding including the AfDB.

The bank supports Ethiopia with financial resources for infrastructure projects, poverty reduction programs, and other development initiatives. Its support

is critical for advancing growth and development in the various sectors of the economy. It guarantees productivity, employment and income generation for the people. Of course, these funds flow through the instrumentality of government agencies responsible for development. Ethiopia also receives aid from the EU, both bilaterally and multilaterally through EU-funded programs. This assistance is delivered to various sectors, including health, education, and governance.

Donors include many individual countries that contribute bilateral aid to Ethiopia. These countries may offer financial assistance, technical expertise, and resources for specific projects related to the country's goals of development. It is important to note that the details of assistance programs and the involved institutions may change over time due to geopolitical developments, changes in political situations, and emerging priorities.

However, the implementation of development programs is subject to conditions of multilateral aid to Ethiopia. This refers to financial assistance provided by multiple countries or international organizations to support the economic development of the country. These aid packages often come with conditions, which are requirements that Ethiopia must meet to receive the aid. These conditions may vary based on the principles applied by the multilateral organization providing the aid. Some of the basic conditions require Ethiopia to implement sound economic and fiscal policies to ensure macroeconomic stability. This could involve controlling inflation, maintaining a balanced budget, and adopting market-oriented economic reforms.

Multilateral assistance normally comes with conditions related to structural reforms. This covers areas such as governance, public administration, and legal systems. It also includes measures that enhance transparency, reduce corruption, and improve the overall efficiency of government institutions. Moreover, some multilateral aid packages may involve conditions related to social and environmental policies. Ethiopia may be required to implement these policies.

Multilateral aid is also related to conditions of trade and market liberalization. This condition may involve opening up markets, reducing trade barriers, and implementing policies and programs that promote economic liberalization. This is designed for creating a competitive and open economy. The multilateral aid donors also demand respect for human rights and democracy in the country. To this effect, multilateral aid may be tied to the promotion and protection of human

rights and democratic principles. As aid recipient country, Ethiopia may be expected to make progress in areas such as freedom of expression, rule of law, and democratic governance that may be hampered by social unrest and instability.

Multilateral donors give priority to anti-corruption measures. Their aid packages include conditions aimed at combating corruption. Ethiopia as a recipient country may be required to implement measures that increase transparency, strengthened anti-corruption institutions, and prosecute corrupt practices. Multilateral donors also focus on guaranteeing that the benefits of economic reforms reach the most vulnerable people of Ethiopia. This may imply the establishment of social safety-nets to protect the poor people against the harmful and depressing impacts of economic restructuring. Multilateral organizations usually require recipient countries such as Ethiopia to establish strong and reliable monitoring and evaluation system to trace progress in meeting the agreed-upon conditions. This implies that regular reporting and assessment may be necessary for continued access to aid.

It is useful and crucial to note that the specific conditions of multilateral aid can vary based on the nature of policies and programs of the donors. Depending on the goal of the organization providing the assistance, the negotiations may take place between the donor and recipient countries such as Ethiopia to make adjustments. These adjustments are made taking the real conditions of the recipient country. If the true picture is blurred it hampers the flow of development assistance into the recipient country. It may even lead to abuse of resources by both the donor and the recipient during implementation of programs and projects.

The responsibility for keeping abuse of resources at bay lies mainly with the representatives of the donor agency in the country. They have to pay serious attention to the implementation of activities in line with agreements entered with the Ethiopian government agencies. Of course, they have to take the unique circumstances of the recipient. Additionally, it is argued that some donor conditions may be too stringent; they may not adequately assess the current needs and challenges of Ethiopia, engulfed with social, economic and political crises.

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

# Editorial

## Comprehensive diplomatic approach to realize Ethiopia's access aspiration

Since the past six months, Ethiopia has been expressing its aspiration to access a reliable sea to the rest of the world.

Mainly, by considering its large population, rapid economic growth, as well as growing regional influence, and issues interrelated with national security; the country has been expressing its pursuit of access to the sea in the spirit of cooperation and under "Give and Take" principle.

Consequently, following the extensive diplomatic engagement in the issue, these days, the international community has become clearer about Ethiopia's aspiration to access the sea.

Understandably, there are a number of valid reasons for Ethiopia to pursue seaports. First, in today's world order, having access to the sea is not a luxury; but a matter of existence for the reason that not having reliable access to the sea does not give Ethiopia complete security.

Principally, at the present day, superpowers are competing to have shares in the areas to put pressure thereby realizing their geo-economics and geostrategic interests because of the geopolitical location of the area. As documents indicate, the post-9/11 period saw a return of foreign military bases in the Horn of Africa region on an unprecedented scale which brought security threats not only to Ethiopia but also countries of the Horn and beyond. In essence of this, Ethiopia's presence in the area is critical not only to secure its own economic benefits and security; but also countries of the Horn and beyond.

Second, with the highest number of population, untapped natural resources and promising economic prospects, a nation's demand for a port is also a question of economic existence.

What is more, having access to the sea determines not only the fate of this generation but also transcends to the next generations.

The other way round, securing reliable and diverse sea access for Ethiopia has also greater benefit for other countries too as it promotes economic cooperation and integration among the East African countries and the region.

On account of these and other matters, Ethiopia's quest for access to sea is an issue that cannot be underestimated or interpreted in a different way.

In his recent short stay with local media, Foreign Minister Taye-Atske Selassie also stated the effort Ethiopia has been exerting to inform the international community about its demand for secure sovereign access to the sea.

According to FM Taye, Ethiopia should not be a holder of undue burdens and it should not be a victim of other countries' internal problems. Diplomatic tasks to inform the reality have been carried out during the past six months and it was almost successful.

"Direct access to the sea is a matter of our stability and national security that is why we are looking for seaports; which is very legitimate."

As it has been stated repeatedly, Ethiopia's ambition to have access to the sea is established based on mutual agreement, cooperation and with the principle of "Give and Take."

Thus, Ethiopia will further work with all countries in the region in a way ensuring its right to access seaports in a peaceful manner and in a more reciprocation. It is also ready to hold additional negotiations to diversify its seaport aspiration.

It will also continue its diplomatic work and point out carefully and clearly its truth to the global community to realize its aspiration.

# Opinion

## Why Ethiopia should nurture tourism as a strong pillar of its economy

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

In popular parlance, tourism is perceived as travels organized for leisure for older persons with wads of money in their wallets. This is partially true but tourism is far more than this. A wide stratum of people of all ages and ethnicity travel around the world on tour of different types and with different purpose. Leisure tourism is only one of these.

Tourism as defined by the UNWTO is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal, business or professional purposes.

After declining to roughly 407 million in the first year of the health crisis brought by COVID-19, the lowest figure recorded since 1989, global inbound tourist arrivals showed strong signs of recovery in the following years, totaling just under 1.3 billion in 2023.

After descending to 1.3 trillion U.S. dollars in 2020 due to the onset of the health crisis, this market's revenue worldwide surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2023, peaking at roughly 2.9 trillion dollars in 2023.

In Ethiopia, the Travel & Tourism market is expected to generate a revenue of US\$2,297.00m by 2024, with a projected annual growth rate of 5.89% from 2024. People travel across the world for pleasure and relaxation. It includes activities such as sightseeing, beach vacations, and cultural experiences. Some are engaged in adventure tourism and this type of tourism involves activities that are physically challenging and adventurous, such as hiking, rock climbing, and white-water rafting.

Ecotourism, the main subject of this contribution focuses on visiting natural environments and promoting conservation and sustainability. It involves activities like wildlife watching, nature walks, and visiting national parks.

Moreover, cultural tourism involves exploring the history, traditions, and customs of a particular destination. It includes visiting museums, historical sites, attending festivals, and experiencing local cuisine. Medical tourism involves traveling to another country to receive medical treatment or procedures. It is often done to access specialized healthcare services or to save costs. For example, quite a few Ethiopians travel to South Africa, India and Thailand to seek special medical treatment from well-known hospitals.

Religious tourism involves visiting destinations that hold religious significance. It includes pilgrimages to holy sites, attending religious ceremonies, and exploring religious history and culture.

Culinary tourism focuses on exploring the local cuisine and food culture of a destination. It includes food tours, cooking classes, and visiting local markets and restaurants.

Sports tourism involves traveling to attend or participate in sports events or activities. It includes attending major sporting events, participating in sports tournaments, and visiting sports museums or stadiums. Wellness tourism focuses on promoting health and well-being. It includes activities such as spa retreats, yoga and meditation retreats, and wellness workshops.

Educational tourism: Educational tourism involves traveling to learn about a specific subject or gain knowledge and skills. It includes language immersion programs, study abroad programs, and educational tours.

These are just a few examples of the different types of tourism, and often, a trip can involve a combination of these types.

Scientific Research based tourism is another form of tourism conducted with a basic objective of conducting researches in combination with touring around the research area primarily for leisure.

Conference tourism is a significant service system with a supply chain structure including academicians as service providers, accommodation and transportation facilitators, visa services, touristic activity providers, equipment and material suppliers, tourism agencies and catering services.

Special budgeted educational tour operations may be conducted for students across the country so that will be able to appreciate the natural resources and beauty of their country. On the other hand, cross cultural domestic and international program exchange activities could help to bring forth multiple sets of advantages for the youth in Ethiopia.

Tourism development is one of the pillars of Ethiopia's Ten Years Perspective Plan and is expected to siphon in foreign exchange earnings that the country needs to further accelerate the national reform program in the areas of agricultural modernization, manufacturing and construction industries for the country.

The writer believes that massive work still remains in marketing and promoting Ethiopia's ecotourism projects to the rest of the world. Local media and press need to prepare special promotional materials like video clippings, promotional flashcards, press kits and other materials to be used by tourists and researchers alike.

All concerned stakeholders need to work hand in hand with each other to improve the service delivery system in eco-tourism sites by introducing modern logistics, digital technologies and all accessories that tourists of all types may need.

Organizing casual visits will help tourists to come into close proximity with nature and is important for improving their quality of life. It will also help to revise their way of thinking about the local area and Ethiopia and even the African continent African continent. Moreover, such natural parks have huge educational value in the sense that any person with a higher capacity of observation can promote his or her knowledge about nature.

All eco-tourism projects and historical and natural sites visited by tourists will help to generate foreign exchange for the country and could increase he level off local and national economic development of the country.

All tourist sites in the country play a greater role in preserving the age old cultural heritages of the country including traditional artifacts, handicrafts, cultural costumes that depict the identity of the country and its people.

Commercialization of these artifacts and cultural heritages made by the members of communities will not only economically empower individual citizens but will also play an important role in community empowerment and development.

Ecotourism project including Chebera Churchura play an important role in preserving and conserving the ecology of the area in which they are developed and help to create a balance of nature in their respective areas.

Digitalization of the major services in the ecotourism project sites will increase efficiency of service delivery and will also play a vital role in promoting customer satisfaction. In addition, using IT facilities for marketing and promotion is very important for developing such projects.

Participation of the private sector in tourism development is an important policy option for further developing the sector. The private sector can make further investments in tourism and can increase the GDP of the country over time.



## The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays  
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

Office of the CEO

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The Ethiopian Herald

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# Business & Economy

## Industrial parks' vital role for fostering economic development

BY MENGESHA AMARE

With a view to accelerating the process of reforming the economy, Ethiopia has been focusing on utilization of technology so as to modernize the industry that would lead to the diversification of activities and the achievement of sustainable industrial development and economic advancement. The institutional system has to be well accessible to information, knowledge, new technology and proper financing in a bid to directly fuel progress towards achieving economic development thereby declaring sustainable economic progress.

Having this in mind, *The Ethiopian Herald* conducted interview with Samuel Utant an engineer graduated from Addis Ababa University in Industrial Engineering, to garner information about the principal role of industrial parks in fostering economic development and helping the nation have real progress.

He said, "Industrial parks are normally established to act as catalysts for trade, investment as a wider economic progress. Most often, they aim to boost competitiveness to make the economic transformation of the country which they are found quicker or most effective than would be possible without them. Industrial parks can be regarded as a solution to overcome a range of pitfalls and inadequacy thereby accelerating the economic development by attracting innovative businesses that can generate jobs, higher incomes and therefore more resources to companies, investments and institutions and to themselves."

According to Samuel, industrial parks can definitively exploit the local potential in supporting knowledge-based business development and outline an environment where they can interact with other supporting knowledge suppliers thus facilitating business and local development.

Yes, industrial parks in Ethiopia have, he said, shown progress and even companies are increasingly fond of engaging in the former. Of course, embarking on human capital combined with full-fledged investors, be they are local or foreign, has been enhanced the national economy and its technological capacity. Unequivocally, the progress gained in the development of technological capabilities will spill over to agriculture, manufacturing, mining, apparel, service and other related sectors thereby booming governance and institutional growth. Such a bold move will ultimately lead to economic development both in the sectors nationally and even regionally as efficiently as possible.

As to him, industrial parks development in Ethiopia has been booming and the majority of local companies have been running activities in various industrial parks. The number of companies and investors has revealed a significant increase in investment and production activities at Ethiopia's industrial parks highlighting their crucial role in import substitution and export diversification.

It is also well recognized that Ethiopia set up



*Industrial parks stimulating investment, creating massive job opportunities*

many industrial parks specialized in various sectors. As these parks have been established with the vision to make the country a leading manufacturing hub, the government has attached due emphasis to industrial parks development and expansion. Yes, investments by both local and foreign investors have resulted in the occupation of most industrial park units. True, growing prominence is recorded in industrial parks in manufacturing, textile, agro-processing pharmaceuticals, and agricultural products. Industrial parks have contributed a lot to the effort for replacing imported goods and services so as to meet the demands for local production.

He said, "The country has been registering remarkable achievements via encouraging activities in improving import substitution and export expansion. The country has also recorded concrete achievements in agro-processing. In the textile and garment sector, products manufactured in industrial parks meet global quality standards and are exported to major world markets. Textile and garment manufacturers are also contributing to import substitution by producing uniforms for various organizations, reducing the need for foreign imports."

He said industrial parks also foster mutually beneficial partnerships between industrial parks and surrounding communities. Principally, they are playing a pivotal role in Ethiopia's economic development by substituting imports, diversifying exports, and creating employment opportunities.

As investment and production continue to grow, these parks are poised to further strengthen the country's economic competitiveness by strengthening import substitution and export trade. Import substitution of textile and food items has already been bearing fruits. The country is also working to fully substitute imports of myriads of goods and services. Economic growth in Ethiopia is progressing at an impressive rate, where industrial parks have piqued the interest of international investors in the country's economy.

Yes, industrial parks in Ethiopia have significantly contributed to the nation's industrial development in terms of creating employment, increasing government revenue and export, diversifying the industrial

products, attracting Foreign Director Investment, and attracting foreign exchange.

Industrial parks can maximize resource integration for limited production factors within a certain spatial scope by attracting labor and capital-intensive domestic and foreign investment in manufacturing and service industries, for instance. Here, not only do industrial parks increase job opportunities but they also foster the effort geared towards bolstering homegrown economy and import substitution.

With regard to linkages with local economy and regional development, the various industrial parks can be a good indication. Industrialization conventionally includes manufacturing, mining, construction, and utilities such as water, electricity, and other related requirements.

Thus the country needs a development strategy that gives weight to the comprehensive development of industrial parks. The industrial parks development has now been blossoming to fuel economic development though a lot remains to be done to help all industrial parks go operational in full swing and enables the nation record notable progress.

He said, "By attracting labor and capital-intensive domestic and foreign investment in manufacturing and service industries, industrial parks are well expanding their engagement. Industrialization traditionally includes manufacturing, mining, construction, and utilities such as water, electricity, and gas but recently it have expanded to include the process of development that is balanced and sustainable as far as the sociopolitical and economic realms of a society are concerned."

He further stated that industrial parks have great importance for the economic development – from local, national, regional, continental and even global level. They represent modern platforms that provide excellent conditions for investment and development, encourage industrial development, and bring large benefits to countries.

He said that the way in which industrial parks, for many year, have been shaping the development of production, trade, transport and the economy in general, can best be observed through successful trajectory.

As to Samuel, for developing countries like ours, industrial parks are the most efficient way of stimulating economic development, modernizing the industry, embracing innovation, and increasing the number of jobs available. The most important thing is that the development of industrial parks attracts local and foreign investments by which economic development can be secured.

According to Samuel, the most successful example of this is China, which has gone through incredible development over four decades. China has reached such a level of development today as it has been providing financial and technical support to industrial parks under the auspices of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization – UNIDO.

"Industrial parks easily respond to new market demands, they are advancing and becoming an integral part of industrial development and beyond. They are of paramount importance in fostering growth of small and middle-sized enterprises in Ethiopia though a lot remains to be done."

As to him, industrial parks are really significantly useful in promoting entrepreneurship and socio-economic progress as they are ideal catalysts for industrialization and economic development and help put into place an infrastructure that fosters and attracts entrepreneurs of all scale and size. They have also promoted economic activity in various areas by providing citizens with better employment opportunities.

Fundamentally, he said, since the country has been facing problems following accelerated surge in population growth, Ethiopia has to work hard so as to transform the economy, reduce poverty, provide jobs, and achieve the ambitious aim of transitioning the economy to middle-income level.

Here, expanding and promoting industrial parks more is one part of the effort geared towards fostering economic development. Besides, the country has to expedite the new model to promote growth and create jobs thereby ensuring sustainable economic growth as expansion of industrial parks have been providing citizens with an opportunity to grow and further develop their business.

# Art & Culture

## Finding female painters and providing ample opportunities in the Art World

BY NAOL GIRMA

In a developing African country the milestone has been civil war and draggy harmful traditions. That always makes African people live under the dark shadows of poverty. Leave alone involve in modern art or sports deciding on the very significant matters of their own family has been rough for women. The art of painting in Ethiopia has its own ancient background mostly bound to the Orthodox Church's ways of painting. Not only by its own Christian ways of art but the country is also known as the first to be housing one of the world's first art studios.

Even though the Country has been a hub of ancient Christian painting works in Africa, be it the ancients or the modern times have been dominated by male painters for different reasons and it is a recent phenomenon that female artists joined the profession.

The art world is a diverse and dynamic space, yet the representation of female painters has historically been limited. However, recognizing the importance of gender equality and embracing the unique perspectives and talents of female artists are crucial for a thriving and inclusive art industry.

Creating partnerships between art institutions, organizations, and collectives can lead to collaborations that specifically focus on promoting and supporting female painters. These collaborations can result in joint exhibitions, workshops, and residencies, providing valuable resources and networking opportunities.

Financial barriers often limit the artistic pursuits of female painters. Establishing grants and funding opportunities specifically for female artists can alleviate these challenges and provide them with the resources necessary to create and exhibit their work.

In the digital age, online platforms and social media have become powerful tools for artists to showcase their work. Creating dedicated spaces that highlight the works of female painters can increase their visibility; connect them with art enthusiasts worldwide, and foster collaborations.

Gerar – The Creative Hub ( Gerar Yetebibian Meneharia), in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Ashberg Program, is dueto launch a project that aims to empower Ethiopian women visual



**C**reating partnerships between art institutions, organizations, and collectives can lead to collaborations that specifically focus on promoting and supporting female painters. These collaborations can result in joint exhibitions, workshops, and residencies, providing valuable resources and networking opportunities

artists through digital means. According to Seminas Hadera, the general manager of Gerar, the wisdom centre, "Every artist deserves to realize and take advantage of the opportunities that exist in this digital age. In particular, the Searching for Artists project is a project that allows women artists to get proper recognition for their creativity and talent. According to the CEO's speech; By providing digital skills training, developing

and implementing digital identity building practices, the project narrows the gender gap in the digital system for female artists. It also supports women artists to play a significant role in today's digital world by working to foster an inclusive and equitable art and creative system. The General Manager said that Searching for an Artist lays the groundwork for making a lasting impact by supporting creativity, encouraging inclusivity and identifying and solving the challenges faced by female artists. The project will improve the balanced distribution of cultural products and services, and enhance the mobility and working opportunities of artists and cultural professionals. He also said that he will give great support to ensure gender equality in art.

Through this project, 20 female artists will be working closely with and supporting them, and will be provided with training focused on branding, social media management, website usage, content preparation and market development strategies. This allows the artist to present their works to an audience, to take advantage of new market opportunities.

In order to be accessible to the wider art-loving community and in the global digital system, the project enhances the voice of female art professionals by recognizing the role of digital transformation and identity building in the rapid development.

The project will showcase the artworks of 20 female artists in order to create market linkages. In addition, Searching for Sealit will create job opportunities for 100 young people engaged in the fields of art and technology.

By increasing their exposure and generating fair market opportunities, the Finding Se'alit initiative seeks to establish a holistic brand for female creatives working in the visual arts. These artists will be able to exhibit their work, interact with larger audiences, and take advantage of new opportunities in the expanding global digital scene thanks to our funding. The goal of Finding Se'alit is to place 100 people working in the cultural and creative sectors. The project's goal is to empower the upcoming generation of talent and promote creativity by utilising the potential of emerging technology. In order to promote the artists and open up new markets, this project will also include an exhibition featuring the creations of twenty female visual artists.

"We think that every creative should have the opportunity to prosper in the digital age. According to Seminas Hadera, creator and manager of Gerar - The Creative Hub, "Finding Se'alit will open up new opportunities for women visual artists, ensuring their talent and creativity receive the recognition they deserve."

In addition to facilitating a balanced flow of cultural goods and services, the goals of the UNESCO-Ashberg Programme for Artists and Cultural Professionals are to safeguard and advance artistic freedom and the standing of artists and cultural professionals. It offers capacities, instruments, and technical support to encourage the establishment and growth of creative spaces.

Gerar - The Creative Hub, on the other hand, seeks to promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and job development in the cultural and creative sectors.

Intelligence, kindness, hard work, resilience she possesses. Her beauty transcends physical appearance, it is inside out. A woman is a force to reckon with.

### A WOMAN

BY TAPIWA CHABINGA  
(From Zambia)

A woman,  
Special in her own way,  
Is she even human?

How her hips sway,  
How she may labor even in vain  
But emerge with a smile  
Despite the pain,  
Oh woman,  
Graced with the abilities of a goddess,

She can make life,  
Heal a broken  
te, shape and mould.  
Her intelligent mind, who can predict?  
A woman is limitless, what can't she do?

## Global Affairs

## It's Africa's time to shine

With 20 percent of the global population and vast untapped natural resources, not forgetting its human capital, it is time Africa had its rightful seat at the global table, the United Nations Under Secretary and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Claver Gatete, has called.

Decrying that Africa has been on the back foot on the global stage when key political and economic decisions are made, Gatete says it is time Africa claimed its voice. Gatete told a recent conference of African finance ministers in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, that Africa is in a financial and fiscal crisis because a global financial system does not have the interests of the continent at heart.

#### Africa must be heard

“So, what will it take for African countries to really feel heard? Gatete asked.

“It is okay for us to say that 80 years ago, Africa was not at the table. It is probably acceptable to say that when the Millennium Development Goals were adopted, we were also at the periphery,” he said, adding, “But we will not be forgiven today if we do not occupy center stage as architects of a new global financial architecture that works for us.”

Africa, he noted, was facing multiple crises that it was not directly responsible for but bore the worst impacts from the Ukraine-Russia war, COVID-19, and high indebtedness to climate change.

The financial difficulties that Africa is currently facing are not solely the result of COVID-19 or recent conflicts but also have their roots in an inadequate global financial architecture and a multilateral financial system that does not adequately serve Africa's needs, Gatete told IPS.

Referring to the creation of the UN in 1945, Gatete pointed out that the five permanent members of the Security Council—China, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Russia—made up almost 50 percent of the world's population then, but today that figure is just 26 percent.

“While Africa now represents nearly 20 percent of the global population, it is not represented at the G7, whose proportion of the global population is only 9.7 percent. So how do you solve today's problems with outdated 80-year old structures that do not reflect the global shifts that have occurred?”

Africa has long pushed for a seat on the UN Security Council, calling for the reform of the United Nations in line with the Ezulwini Consensus, agreed in 2022. The Ezulwini Consensus is a position on international relations and UN reform agreed upon by the African Union. Africa wants at least two permanent seats and five non-permanent Security Council seats chosen by the African Union.



The African Union is pushing for Africa to have a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Credit: Busani Bafana/IPS

**While Africa now represents nearly 20 percent of the global population, it is not represented at the G7, whose proportion of the global population is only 9.7 percent. So how do you solve today's problems with outdated 80-year old structures that do not reflect the global shifts that have occurred?”**

Addressing the third summit of a group of developing countries (G77) in Uganda in January this year, UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres said there is agreement for Africa's representation on the Security Council.

“So for the first time, I'm hopeful that at least a partial reform of the UN Security Council could be possible for this flagrant injustice to be corrected and for Africa to have at least one permanent member in the Security Council,” Guterres said.

#### A green transition good for Africa

Highlighting that a productive green finance system in Africa has the potential to generate USD 3 trillion by 2030, Gatete urged that Africa needs to move from ‘potential’ to tangible actions with bankable regional projects.

Innovative instruments like debt-for-nature swaps, regional blue bonds, natural capital accounting, and regional carbon markets can provide financing that addresses debt issues and fosters environmental action, he noted, emphasizing that Africa wants a fair price for carbon trading.

“It does not make sense for African countries to earn less than USD 10 per ton of carbon while countries in Europe earn over USD 100.”

A call to change the global financial architecture

It is estimated that Africa spends nearly

USD 100 billion on debt repayments annually, forcing many governments to defer investments in social spending on health, education, and food security.

ECA Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, Hanan Morsy, weighed in, saying there is a need to reduce the debt burden on African countries to enable them to allocate more resources to critical sectors like healthcare and education instead of high debt service costs.

“It is imperative to enhance Africa's voice and representation, shifting from being rule takers to rule makers,” said Morsy, adding, “This involves bolstering international cooperation on taxation and combating IFFs, including reducing tax evasion and profit shifting.”

Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Monique Nsanzabaganwa, said Africa's potential to reclaim its long-overdue rightful treatment was materializing as the global landscape took multi-polar shapes and the African Union became a full member of the G20.

“Africa is stronger together,” Nsanzabaganwa said, adding, “I will argue that the value proposition of the African Union is indeed to foster coherence in our strategies and amplify our common voice.”

(SOURCE:INTER PRESS SERVICE)



# Law & Politics



## Africa's exclusion from the UNSC: A historical injustice

BY EYUEL KIFLU

When it comes to global security issues, five countries hold the power to make decisions that impact the entire planet, regardless of whether the issues directly affect them. These countries are the permanent members of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) including the United States, Russia, China, the UK, and France, the highest decision-making body for global security matters. In addition to these permanent seats, there are 10 seats allocated to non-permanent members.

Unfortunately, Africa, a continent plagued by numerous security challenges, is not represented by a permanent seat on the UNSC. Despite advocating for a permanent seat at the UNSC, Africa has yet to receive a just response. This glaring absence of African representation in the Council is a historical injustice, as highlighted by the UN Secretary-General.

Africa's absence becomes even more pronounced when its security and political concerns are being discussed and debated by powerful nations with veto powers. Over the years, the Council's unequal and unfair representation has drawn criticism, with many perceiving it as a means for member countries to manipulate global geopolitics. Recently, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres labeled Africa's exclusion from the UNSC permanent seat as a "flagrant injustice."

Established on January 17, 1946, the Security Council lies at the heart of an unjust global system. For decades, the African Union and its member countries have persistently raised the issue of Africa's rightful place on the

UNSC. However, the quest for a permanent seat has been relegated to the back burner, with no meaningful response thus far.

According to Ambassador Jorge Catarino Cardoso, Director of the Africa, Middle East, and Regional Organizations Directorate of the Angolan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African countries have lacked representation and the ability to safeguard their interests at the UNSC for over 70 years. "Africa faces a myriad of security and peace challenges, yet discussions pertaining to these issues often exclude African nations' presence and voices," emphasized the ambassador during an exclusive interview with The Ethiopian Herald.

Currently, Africa's representation on the UNSC is through the A3, a group of non-permanent members. However, Ambassador Cardoso stressed the need to transform this temporary arrangement into a permanent feature of the Security Council. The absence of permanent African seats on the UNSC creates an imbalance that fails to adequately represent the interests of the African people, as highlighted by Ambassador Salah S. Hammad, Senior Human Rights Expert of the Department of Political Affairs of the African Union Commission (AUC).

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

During the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government, securing Africa's rightful place

in the global arena ranked high on the agenda. AUC Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat emphasized the need for concerted efforts to secure Africa's representation.

Ambassador Salah underscored the urgency for change to enable Africa to contribute to building a stable, united, prosperous, and peaceful continent. He expressed eagerness for immediate outcomes from the ongoing negotiations through the C10 to secure Africa's permanent representation in the Security Council.

Africa's persistent advocacy for a permanent seat stems from the desire to ensure that the interests of the continent, with its vast population, abundant resources, and human capital, are adequately represented in global decision-making processes. This push aligns with Agenda 2063, a strategic framework led by the African Union, which aims to secure comprehensive representation for Africa in the international arena, including United Nations reform. Ambassador Salah emphasized that Africa's voice needs to be heard on global issues, leading to growing intentions to assume leadership positions in various UN agencies.

Ambassador Jorge acknowledged 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 emphasized the importance of collaboration among all concerned parties to strengthen a peaceful and prosperous Africa. Recurring conflicts, often fueled by militants and coup d'états, have hindered Africa's progress towards a brighter future.

While some support exists among the five

permanent members for at least one African permanent seat, 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.

As Claver Gatete, the United Nations Under-Secretary and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), recently stated, Africa, with its 20 percent share of the global population and vast untapped natural resources, including its human capital, must have its rightful seat at the global table.

Reflecting on the creation of the UN in 1945, Gatete pointed out that the five permanent members of the Security Council - China, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Russia - accounted for nearly 50 percent of the world's population at that time. However, today, that figure has dwindled to just 26 percent. This shift emphasizes the need for a more inclusive and representative Security Council that takes into account the changing dynamics of the global population.

As whole, Africa's exclusion from the United Nations Security Council is a historical injustice that must be rectified. With Africa increasingly becoming a target for conflicts, militants, and coup d'états, it is imperative that the continent has a permanent seat on the UNSC to effectively address its security and peace concerns. The African Union's efforts, through the C10 committee, to advocate for Africa's representation and the ongoing negotiations for reform are crucial steps towards achieving this goal. As the world moves forward, it is time to ensure that Africa's voice is heard and its interests are adequately represented in global decision-making processes.

# Planet Earth

## Climate change poses multiple problems against African women

BY STAFF REPORTER

Climate change is a looming global threat that poses its impact against humans, animals and the earth in general. Yet African continent, especially women suffer more from the impact and the unfair response to it, reports on studies indicate.

Across domestic courts in Africa, climate cases have been decided in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, with some cases pending in Uganda. However, climate litigation is still fairly new, according to The Conversation.

Climate lawsuits are an important way to access justice. This is particularly true for African women because, as research has shown, climate change affects women more than men in key areas including farming, health, water, access to electricity, migration and conflict.

I research how the law can be applied to cases of climate change, inclusive development, water governance and sustainability. In a recent paper on climate litigation in Nigeria and South Africa, I argue that the structure of legal institutions must be redesigned so that courts are more receptive to women's climate change claims.

There are three key interventions that would enhance women's access to climate justice. Firstly, data needs to be collected on women's and girl's experiences of climate change impact. Secondly, there needs to be legal aid for women to take up climate lawsuits. And thirdly, gender sensitive climate laws need to be passed and then effectively enforced.

If women are able to bring climate action effectively, it will lead to better protection of their rights. This will make them more resilient to climate change. It will also ensure better accountability of those responsible for climate change at various levels, from countries to corporations.

By 2050, an additional 158 million women and girls will experience poverty due to climate change and 236 million women will experience hunger.

Because they lack the resources to bring court cases, women often resort to protests and other informal mechanisms to obtain redress for environmental and other human rights violations, including land grabbing and environmental degradation by governments and companies.

Women's rights litigation brought by non-governmental organizations on the continent largely focuses on women's land rights, sexual and reproductive health, and civil and political rights. Climate change affects most of, if not all, these rights but has not yet been directly acknowledged as a cause of action.

In Nigeria, no climate change cases

### A proactive judiciary could also play a crucial role in interpreting existing human rights safeguards to advance women's climate justice

have been brought by women yet though the Climate Change Act 2021 provides for women's participation in climate governance. In South Africa, women's rights have been included in climate change policy and women-led non-governmental organizations are driving climate litigation. But this has not yet resulted in a sharp increase in the number of women instituting climate litigation.

Women cannot currently bring court cases against climate-induced harm because they don't have the evidence or data to prove how climate change is harming them, or whose fault this is. This is not necessarily because the harm is not happening but rather because there is a lack of data being collected on it.

For example, a group of Swiss women over the age of 64 tried to convince the Federal Supreme Court of Switzerland that women were more vulnerable to climate-induced heat waves than men. They used medical evidence showing that more women of this age died of heatstroke than men. But the court was not convinced that the women had suffered enough damage to bring a climate justice lawsuit. The case is now before the European Court of Human Rights.

This shows that without specific data showing how climate change affects women, African women are a long shot

from being able to sue for damage caused by climate change.

Women and women-headed households in Africa often live in poverty. This erodes their resilience and access to livelihood resources. In addition, indigent women cannot afford lawyers and other litigation costs.

The right to legal aid in most African legal systems is restricted. In South Africa, legal aid is mainly available for criminal defense or cases involving detention as in the Legal Aid South Africa Act 39 of 2014. Nigeria's Legal Aid Act 2011 provides legal support for criminal cases and civil matters. There is no specific legal aid that would support women in bringing climate change lawsuits.

Non-governmental organizations have been at the forefront of climate change advocacy and public interest litigation in Africa. They are often able to do this because they have external funding. In South Africa, non-governmental organizations have challenged the approval of coal-fired power stations, mines, or failures to conduct climate change impact assessments.

Nigerian women who sued multinational oil and gas companies for human rights violations were also supported by international non-governmental organizations. And the Centre for Oil Pollution Watch v. Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation case, in which the Nigerian Supreme Court upheld the right to institute legal action for environmental protection, was brought by an NGO on behalf of a community. Most women do not have access to the same kind of funding.

Domestic climate change governance systems need to focus on women's unique climate vulnerabilities. A proactive judiciary could also play a crucial role in interpreting existing human rights safeguards to advance women's climate justice.

In particular, there needs to be effective enforcement to avoid inaction or non-implementation of court decisions.

According to UN Foundation there are five ways in which gender inequality and climate change intersect, threatening livelihoods, well-being, and progress for girls and women around the world. The first one is that women face barriers to leaving areas prone to climate change and natural disaster. The World Bank's 2021 Groundswell report found that climate change could force up to 216 million people to move within their countries by 2050. Migration decision-making in the face of climate risks is informed by gender roles and responsibilities. Women often face increased barriers to leaving disaster-prone areas because of their caregiving obligations, lack of financial assets, and limited rights to land and property. When they do manage to leave, girls and women face higher risks of unemployment, child

marriage, human trafficking, and gender-based violence.

Women also face disproportionately high health risks from the effects of climate change. Climate change threatens reproductive and maternal health. Increases in temperature, rainfall, and humidity create favorable conditions for vector-borne diseases, such as malaria, dengue fever, and Zika virus, which can cause miscarriages, premature birth, and anemia among pregnant women. And the February 2022 report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found that girls and women are also at higher risk of food insecurity than boys and men, are more likely to die in extreme weather events, and are more likely to experience mental health impacts caused by climate change.

Gender-specific threats are also used to silence female environmental leaders, the foundation indicated. For generations, women across the world have shown resilience and leadership in protecting their communities, land, livelihoods, and natural resources. And yet, female environmental defenders consistently experience disproportionately high rates of gender-based violence as a result of their activism. These assaults range from verbal abuse and harassment based on sex, to intimidation, exclusion, sexual abuse, and rape. All are meant to undermine their voice and leadership in these movements.

Women are excluded from decision-making spaces and climate change negotiations. Despite the unequivocal value of women's participation in climate movements and their history as environmental defenders, men still fill 67% of climate-related decision-making roles and women's representation in national and global climate negotiating bodies remains below 30%. Women's leadership and full participation in the climate movement are essential if we want to design solutions and responses to the climate emergency that address women's differentiated needs and protect their rights.

Female-led groups do not receive sufficient climate funding. The Generation Equality Action Coalition on Feminist Action for Climate Justice found that just 3% of philanthropic environmental funding supports girls' and women's environmental activism. Additionally, female-led organizations, which are often small, have difficulty accessing funding from climate finance providers, which mostly invest in large-scale projects, starting at \$10 million. But because of their societally imposed caregiving roles, girls and women have a deep understanding and extensive knowledge of their natural environment and resources. Financing their vision and backing their ideas for sustainability is key for successful climate change adaptation and mitigation, regardless of the dollar value of their projects.